**Women** **Can** **Dump** **Jerks** **Without** **Help** **of** Lawyers

Judy Jarvis

**The** date escapes me. At what point did **women** in America become victims? Exactly when did females, who are, after all, **the** majority in this country, forget how to tell pa**the**tic and sexually clumsy men “no”? At what point did we give up our drive for equality, let out a collective whine and ask **the** government for special **help**? Probably about **the** same time we stopped calling men who employed tactless sexual come-ons harmless **jerks** and began calling **the**m criminals.

I know this isn't very fashionable **the**se days, but I'm having a hard time understanding this country's hysteria over sexual harassment. I find it very hard to think **of** Bob Packwood, for example, as a criminal. He's a guy who apparently couldn't stop himself from slobbering over **women** who had no interest in him, who made a fool **of** himself. This is a criminal? All Packwood was—and still is, for all we know—was a tactless, sexually maladjusted old man. Is that a crime worth running **the** man out **of** **the** U.S. Senate?

And, **of** course, **the**re's **the** lecher **of** **the** hour, our unfaithful president. He may well be a criminal for o**the**r reasons, for lying under oath, for asking o**the**rs to lie for him, but was his alleged pitch to Paula Jones criminal? Was it worth putting our nation's business on hold for a year or more?

As a woman who's dealt for years with guys like Bill Clinton who **can**'t wait to show you **the**ir private parts, or ask to see yours, he's more pa**the**tic than criminal. I'm not a lawyer. And I'm not a member **of** Congress. Clinton may well deserve to be impeached if Congress thinks he's abused **the** power **of** **the** presidency. But as a woman, all I see is a case born **of** a woman's inability to tell an overly aggressive man where to go.

Ditto with Clarence Thomas. Maybe he talked dirty to Anita Hill. Maybe he didn't. Something obviously went on between **the** two **of** **the**m that was sexually charged. But if he did leave pubic hairs on her Coke **can** or talk to her about X-rated films, isn't that a pretty sad way to get a date?

Look what the Hill-Thomas hearings brought: the most regulated workplaces in the world. You can't tell dirty jokes. You can't put up pictures of your loved ones in bikinis, especially if her breasts are bigger than your female co-workers’. You can't look at someone with a glint in your eye.

But, the most chilling aspect of this sexual harassment movement is the indoctrination of our young into the culture of victimhood. Our children are being told now that if they are bullied by the opposite sex, this is sexual harassment. The Supreme Court has accepted a case in which a 10-year-old was allegedly sexually harassed.

Apparently, the young girl was bothered repeatedly by a boy who said nasty things to her, who touched her and whose teacher was a moron and didn't help her at all. The girl's parents sued, and now the school may end up being responsible for this boy's crummy behavior. But as they say, bad cases make bad law. And if the Supremes decide that the school is responsible any time a kid is offended or bullied or taunted, or, yes, in extreme cases, actually touched, maybe even assaulted, then say goodbye to the normal, experimental, groping, hormonally charged lifestyle of the American kid. Imagine a world where bra-snapping, wedgies, graffiti in the bathrooms about Susie and Tom, playground taunts about who's gay and who is not will be prosecuted as criminal offenses.

For those of you who think that's progress, think again. Do we really want our girls to grow up believing that they can't tell a jerky boy to get lost without hiring a lawyer? Do we really want an aggressive girl who bothers the hell out of a teen-age crush, who sends sexy notes to him, who corners him in the hall, to be a criminal? Because that's the direction we're headed. In fact, we're already halfway there.

My husband likes to tease me that I think sex makes the world go round, that I see most of life's dramas and many of life's news stories as having a sexual plot. I do. And that's just life. Boy meets girl. Girl meets boy. Either they get together or they don't. Can't we keep the lawyers out of it?

SOURCE: *Mobile Register,* October 16, 1998. Reprinted with permission.