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BONNIE ERBE: This week on *To the Contrary*, first, are colleges to blame for campus rape? Then, men define success in surprising ways. Behind the headlines: how a young American woman was imprisoned by an Afghan family.

(Musical break.)

MS. ERBE: Hello. I'm Bonnie Erbe. Welcome to *To the Contrary*, a discussion of news and social trends from diverse perspectives. Up first, sexual assault on campus.

A new report says most colleges are doing a poor job of stopping sexual assault or helping victims. The study rated 300 colleges across the U.S. using a letter grade system. Eighty percent received a C or below. The report, by two women's groups, says almost one third of sexual assault policies did not meet federal standards.

One college is already being sued for ineffective anti-rape policies. The lawsuit charges the University of Connecticut did not properly respond to sexual assault complaints lodged by seven women.

Sex crime prevention remains a very hot topic. A recent blog post continues to draw both criticism and praise for saying young women should be warned of the link between binge drinking and rape. Some believe it's sensible advice; others say it's blaming the victim.

MS. ERBE: So, Dr. Avis Jones-DeWeever, is it sexist just to warn college women away from drinking to try to cut the number of sexual assaults?

AVIS JONES-DEWEEVER: Well, the short answer is, yes. Anytime your anti-rape message is to look at the behavior of the victim versus that of the perpetrator, it's not only sexist; your whole process is not as effective as it otherwise could be.

GENEVIEVE WOOD: And I'll say the short answer is no because it's the truth. We know that women who are drinking are much more apt to be a victim of sexual assault on campus. So I think withholding any information like that is not doing them justice.

ANUSHAY HOSSAIN: I would have to agree with Avis. I think it's completely sexist. It's completely shifting the responsibility on the victim and taking away the responsibility that the rapist has to not rape.

FRANCESCA CHAMBERS: The short answer is no. Listen, if you leave your house unlocked, are you responsible if it gets robbed? No. But did you do everything that you could to protect yourself from getting robbed? No. And that's what we're looking at here.

MS. ERBE: But Vice President Joe Biden said this week that – his analogy – you have a very good analogy – his analogy was if a guy walks out of a bar dead drunk and he gets mugged, is it his fault? No. So why should women be at fault if they get drunk and get raped?

MS. CHAMBERS: Well, I'm not saying that they should be at fault. I want to be very clear about that. But, again, there are things that they can do to stop this from happening. One of the things that they tell you to do is take different patterns when you walk home so that you're never taking the same one so that you can't get stalked. The other things that they tell you to do are take mace. And, by the way, those blue lights on college campuses are completely ineffective. They are not helpful. I would not count on that if you're a young college woman to stop you from getting raped.

MS. HOSSAIN: But they also tell you to walk with a friend, you know, do the buddy system. And a lot of the times, you get raped by the person who is walking you home. It's completely dismissive of the fact of intimate partner violence, which is off the charts on college campuses as well. We need to have a discussion about why men are raping and it's not because women are drinking.

MS. ERBE: Well, why is that?

MS. HOSSAIN: I think that they feel they can get away with it. And you know what's so sad? It's 2013 and they are getting away with it. I cannot believe the statistics are so shocking. And I cannot believe we are still victim blaming. I think people's responses to the statistics show how alive and well victim blame is.

MS. WOOD: And the fact is the statistics for both drinking and date rape on college campuses has increased. I mean, that's what ought to be scaring parents.

Look, I think any parent sending a child to college these days ought to not just listen to the tour guide who gives you the campus tour and talks about the wonderful things about the campus. They should be going in and looking at the crime statistics on that campus which are, finally – no matter what college you think, they're going to be a lot higher than you expect. and find – and making sure that whatever school their child picks, they know that and they take every precaution to make sure they're not a victim of it, because you're right. It doesn't mean that the victim is at fault, but look, there are bad people out there and they're going to do bad things. And sometimes it's rape. And you should be doing whatever you can to arm somebody not to become a victim.

MS. ERBE: So is it the colleges' burden to – you know, when you go to college, presumably you're 18 year of age. Is it the college's job to protect you from rape more than they're doing so now, which, according to this report, is not very much?

MS. WOOD: Sure. I think colleges should be doing more, but, I mean, look, 18 is not old enough to drink anywhere in this country. So if you're not enforcing those

laws, that's one thing. May be of age for consensual sex, but rape, we know, is not consensual sex.

MS. HOSSAIN: The colleges have a huge responsibility though. I mean, I remember when I was in college, just the other day – you know, a few years ago, cheating was such a big deal. We knew that we couldn't cheat. If we cheated, we would be kicked out. We need to have the same attitude. I feel like men are getting this message that universities don't want to deal with it. They're going to help you cover it up. They want to cover it up. It's bad press for them. And we need to change this attitude. A C average is not acceptable.

MS. JONES-DEWEEVER: And why not focus more on men, educating men about what they need to do? You know, really, men need to understand that what you're looking for is not to just hear no. What you're looking for is an affirmative yes. And if you're not really trying to get an affirmative yes, then what you're doing may not in fact be consensual. We also need to give men information about what you can do when you see a buddy of yours doing something that he shouldn't be doing. You know, we need to arm people with information, not just women but also men.

MS. ERBE: And I think everybody around this table would agree on that, but what is wrong with adding the part about warning college women of the statistics that show a link between drinking and sexual assault?

MS. JONES-DEWEEVER: What I think is that you can warn both men and women about it. The statistics say that 80 percent of both men and women who were involved in sexual assault have been drinking. So why not tell both men and women, hey, when you are inebriated, your decision processing skills are not the best for men. And for women, you become physically unable to protect yourself, even at a more degree.

MS. ERBE: Anushay, welcome to the panel, by the way. What else should colleges be doing to protect women that they're not doing? I mean, do they have to have armed guards at every – in front of every dorm room?

MS. HOSSAIN: It doesn't have to be armed guards. They really have to be prosecuting these perpetrators accurately. And I feel like it's almost condescending to have this approach towards women like, oh, you know, if you get drunk, you might get raped? Really, thanks. You know, if I get drunk, a lot of things might happen. But that is not my responsibility for getting raped. I mean, it's good to be told, but the focus shouldn't be on that.

MS. CHAMBERS: But of these women who are raped, 72 percent of them admittedly say that they were intoxicated when it happened. So I do think you have to look at the link between rape and the drinking.

MS. HOSSAIN: But does that mean that if you drink, you should expect to be raped?

MS. CHAMBERS: No, but what you should be warned of is that you if you are getting very, very drunk, you should be worried about when you're walking home alone, not just getting raped, also getting mugged, anything.

MS. HOSSAIN: Getting hit by a car in the middle of the road.

MS. CHAMBERS: Exactly.

MS. HOSSAIN: But what message are we telling the men? Are we giving them any message?

MS. CHAMBERS: We're giving them a message –

MS. WOOD: There ought to be – there ought to be zero tolerance for this on any college – frankly, in society, right? There ought to be zero tolerance for this, but I think there's a coarsening of the culture on our college campuses because they reflect a larger culture. And there's a coarsening of the culture out there. And so I just don't think – it's sad, but I don't find it overly surprising that we're seeing these numbers.

MS. ERBE: And what do you do about that – I mean, college campuses and authorities can't be held responsible, I shouldn't think, for coarsening of the culture.

MS. WOOD: College campuses have become some of the most valueless places in American society. They teach that anything goes, everything is great, and whatever you want to do, you be it, OK? They teach very few values. They're moral relativism laboratories. And I think you're seeing what kind of society springs from that.

MS. JONES-DEWEEVER: Beyond the values questions, I mean, there are organizations like Men Can Stop Rape and a Call to Men that specifically focus on educating men around what their responsibilities are as men to not perpetrate violence against women. That's where we need to have the majority of the focus.

MS. ERBE: All right. That's it. Let us know what you think. Please follow me on Twitter, @BonnieErbe or #tothecontrary.

From college safety to defining success.

(Begin video segment.)

MS. ERBE: Contrary to popular belief, men are more likely than women to define having a loving marriage and raising children as an integral part of having it all, that according to a study released this week surveying professional men and women about how they approach and view success.

Almost 80 percent of men but only 66 percent of women equate having it all with being in a strong, loving marriage. A greater percentage of men include having children in their definition of success. And the study found men now value work-life balance as much as women.

LINDA DESCANO [President and CEO of Citi Women and Co.]: It's a shout out that as employers in institutions are thinking about their policies not to just think of them in the context of women, and that, you know, everyone, whether you're dealing with your children or you're dealing with your aging parents, there is a very large segment of population out there that is looking for flexibility.

When we ask them about the importance of parental leave policies, you know, as a corporate perk, 56 percent of women rated it as important but only 36 percent of men. That's a 20-point difference so perhaps fewer men just don't expect that their employer is going to deliver on their benefits.

MS. ERBE: The study also found that women are more likely to expect they'll make a number of career and job transitions on their professional paths.

(End video segment.)

MS. ERBE: So it sounds a little bit like this study found that roles are reversing, where men are expecting marriage and family as part of the success package, more of them, many more of them, and women are saying, geez, you know, if I want to get ahead, it means no marriage, no family.

MS. CHAMBERS: Well, there haven't been a lot of studies done on how men feel about these things. So it's sort of hard to compare to how men felt before versus how they feel now. But as far as how women feel about these issues now, I think that this is a result of society saying things like, lead in. We were just talking about that, Sheryl Sandberg, and saying, you know, girl power, more power to you. If you want to have a career and you don't want to have family. And I think that's what we're seeing.

MS. ERBE: But she has both. I'm not comparing her to the average woman. She's, you know, multi-gazillionaire (sp). But part of her message is not don't have kids. It's have kids and participate more at work.

MS. CHAMBERS: Sure. But it can be difficult as a woman to do that. Let's be realistic here. If you're going to get pregnant and have a child, you have to take off work to be able to do that. And then, moving forward, it becomes more difficult because you have to take care of the baby – and I know you can talk more about this. I don't actually have kids. But it does become – it is a difficulty for women in their careers if you have kids. That's just a fact.

MS. HOSSAIN: I think, actually, I was really surprised by the findings and I thought that they were fantastic. I thought it was completely reflective of the fact that men are more involved and invested in their families and their caretaking roles that were really kind of – the only option women had for centuries. But I think it's also reflective of the fact that today, in America, more women are the primary breadwinners in their families. So I think it's great. Work-life balance, I definitely think there should be more flex hours and such to accommodate working mothers, but I think that's a different issue.

MS. JONES-DEWEEVER: Well, not only to accommodate working mothers but to accommodate working fathers. I think that's a big takeaway for me from these survey findings is that men want to have the flexibility to also be able to spend time with their children. And what I think is important to note here is that women aren't just saying that we are totally rejecting the idea of marriage per se because don't want to have a partner in their lives. They're saying – really, is more important to have someone who's kind, who's loving, who's supportive as their partner. They don't necessarily need to have a ring on it. (Laughter.)

MS. ERBE: But one other possible interpretation, and the one that the Citi folks told us in that interview, was that women just don't expect corporations to provide family friendly benefits and so they're thinking, if I want to get ahead, it means no family. What do you think about that?

MS. WOOD: Well, I think even with benefits, I just think that, at the end of the day, sometimes meetings go long and they don't move, you know, recitals because your meeting goes long. And so I think, you know, even if there's flexibility, at the end of the day, if you're going to be a senior executive somewhere, it is tough not to be on call and be on this all the time.

And so I think – you know, women maybe more than men understand the challenges there. But, look, I think it's also something of – I think men are much more engaged with their families maybe now than in years past or at least sharing that load. I think you also –

MS. ERBE: Younger men.

MS. WOOD: Younger men, though my dad was extremely engaged with all that. But I think you also have more women today who aren't married or who don't have families, and not necessarily by choice because they wanted to move up the career ladder, but that is what's happened. And so I think you're seeing maybe more of a balance coming from that too.

MS. CHAMBERS: But I think to a certain extent that it is by choice. I mean, I was recently married but we don't have kids and we're not planning to have kids anytime soon. And it has everything to do with the career ladder thing. I know that if I do that, then it is going to disrupt my career or it's going to disrupt his career and that's

something that we have take into account there when determining whether we're going to have them or not or when we're going to have them.

MS. ERBE: Sorry. But do you see having kids ultimately as part of your definition of success?

MS. CHAMBERS: No. I personally don't think it contributes to the definition of success. Is it something I could see as being fulfilling? Yes. But I wouldn't define it as something that has to do with success. I see success – and I think most people in my generation see success as specifically something that has to do with your career. And that could be what we're seeing here too. When asked about success, they probably associated that with career versus home.

MS. WOOD: I know lots of moms who think raising their children well are just as important as any career they're ever going to have, and I would think they're right.

MS. HOSSAIN: But you know what I feel is a big problem that we're not talking about that people and women and their partners are accommodating corporate America instead of corporate America accommodating women and the fact that more women are in the workplace. And men probably don't need flex hours the way we need flex hours.

But also the great thing is I have flex hours. And when I'm at the park these days, I see more dads there than I think anybody in my mom's generation ever did. And, in fact, a lot of my friends and family, when I got married, were shocked at how much my husband does. And I was like, well, I wouldn't have married him or reproduced with him if I knew he was not going to help with the load. It's a huge load.

MS. ERBE: But a lot of companies, especially the Yahoo and Marissa Mayer, she said forget flex time. We need face time.

MS. HOSSAIN: And it was sad because she's a working mom. But, you know, I also heard that she did that not because of her approach to working from home but more so because the company was in shambles when she came in. And she needed to get it up the ground. And guess what? Profits are surging; it's doing very well; it's been rebranded. So, you know, Halleluiah to Marissa Meyer. I also didn't agree with – you know, she didn't want to take any maternity leave. I'm sure she has a lot of nannies at home. It's a little bit different. But you'll also notice that she didn't comment on it. She just went to work.

MS. ERBE: All right. Behind the headlines: an American bride in Kabul. This autobiographical memoir is the story of a young American Jewish woman who fell in love with an Afghani man and returned with him to home country. Feminist author Phyllis Chesler says there's a message in her story.

(Begin video segment.)

PHYLLIS CHESLER [Author, “An American Bride in Kabul”]: He was very westernized in the West, but when he returned home to claim his place in the scheme of things, given that his family was powerful, he had to follow their customs. He probably hoped that I would adjust. This was madness.

MS. ERBE: When Chesler arrived in Afghanistan in 1961 with her new husband, her passport was confiscated. She faced the repressive norms all women face in Afghan society. Chesler says she had no idea that she would become a prisoner of his family.

MS. CHESLER: I became a citizen of no country and the property of a polygamist Afghan family. And, by the way, my very good guy Afghan husband, like many, many, many Muslim men who marry Western women, he didn’t mention – after a two and a half year courtship, he never mentioned his father had three wives and 21 children and that I would be expected to live with my mother in law. What? And that I couldn’t go out on my own.

MS. ERBE: After just a few months, Chesler decided to return home. She tried to escape to the American Embassy but officials couldn’t help her, not without her passport. So she sought help elsewhere and found it from the wife of a German diplomat who arranged a flight out. But Chesler fell extremely sick with hepatitis.

MS. CHESLER: At the last moment, my father in law came and he very carefully and tensely said, well, I hear about your little plan and I think it’s better if you leave on an Afghan visa for reasons of health. And he gave me a visa. And I understand in retrospect that he probably didn’t know why his son, for whom he had such high hopes, had brought home a Jewish girl from America.

MS. ERBE: Whatever the means for her escape, Chesler was overjoyed to be back home.

MS. CHESLER: I had to fight it out in America when the State Department, the American State Department said, well, your visa is up. You have to go back to Afghanistan. I said, oh, no, no. I’ll chain myself to the Statue of Liberty. I’m not leaving.

MS. ERBE: Chesler says the experience shaped who she is today, an ardent feminist. She’s written numerous books and campaigns against the treatment of women in the Arab world. But some feminists, liberals and critics bristle at her strident condemnation.

MS. CHESLER: Feminists have understandably been very reluctant to finger point because they don’t want to be accused of being racists or being Islamophobes, and, therefore, they’ve lost an extraordinary opportunity to make common cause with Muslim feminists and Muslim dissidents with whom I work, who are anti-fundamentalism.

MS. ERBE: In her memoir, she writes, “I have offended everyone.” A “Boston Globe” critic said, “This is true.” But Chesler does not shy away from her committed attack on Islamic society.

MS. CHESLER: I’m a second wave feminist leader. And I think the difference is that I’m certainly anti-racist, but I’m not a multicultural relativist, and that means I don’t think all cultures are equal. I don’t think it’s OK to stone women or to force them into polygamist marriages when they’re eight or 12 years old.

(End video segment.)

MS. ERBE: So is it racist in your mind to talk the way she does about Islamic culture?

MS. HOSSAIN: You know, with all due respect to Chesler’s story and her journey, I really think that the – I think that the plight of Afghan women and girls is something that is so real and something that belongs really at the top of U.S. foreign policy priorities so I really don’t understand what her goal is because I feel like her story, the only thing it really does effectively is perpetuate negative scary stereotypes of, you know, the angry, scary Muslim men, and, you know, all the problems over there in the Muslim world. And it’s completely dismissive of the fact that you cannot generalize all Muslim countries, all Muslim men, and all Muslim women.

MS. WOOD: Well, I agree. You can’t generalize. But I do think that – I mean, I just was in Turkey this past summer and it’s got to be one of the most Westernized countries. It’s Muslim. But there was no doubt that men ran that society much more than women did. So I think drawing attention to it in the right way is important. It doesn’t mean that you’re casting a stone at everybody, but it does put it out there out-front. And there’s nothing better than a personal story to make people engaged with these issues and to make it be for real for them, especially when it’s being told by an American.

MS. HOSSAIN: But I feel like Chesler is casting a stone. And also, I felt like her story was kind of the cliff note, PG version of Betty Mahmoody “And Not Without My Daughter,” which was released I think in the late ’80s, early ’90s, which was exactly the same story, about an American woman who got married to a very westernized Iranian man, and then they went back there right at the height of the Iranian Revolution. And, you know, her passport was taken away and whatnot. But she was trapped for much longer. I mean, 10 weeks almost seems like a baby moon in comparison. So I feel like this story has a lot of echoes of a – (inaudible).

MS. ERBE: But tell me what’s wrong with – because, you know, you’re absolutely right. And the State Department is probably continuing what Hillary Clinton and Condoleezza Rice before her started, really targeting Afghan women, trying to help them have more freedom, have some laws that are in their favor. Why is it so bad if she points out her experience? Again, I’m not – I haven’t read every word she’s written. I don’t know what word she uses. But just to tell the story.

MS. HOSSAIN: I think it's fine for her to tell her story. And I think that it's going to, you know, sell a lot of her books. She's being so sensational about it. I feel like we need a more balanced discourse about this was my experience but there's so much good work being done here.

I mean, let's not forget that about 60 percent of Afghan women have medical degrees. They make up about 70 percent of teachers in their country and then, you know, over 20 years of wars, civil war, the U.S. occupation, you know, the Russian invasion. So much has happened to this society. And Herat is very different from Kabul. Kabul is very different from, you know, let's say Peshawar, the border of Pakistan-Afghanistan.

So I wish she was almost a little bit more inclusive and academic and factual about – I mean, I have been a feminism policy analyst in Washington, D.C., for a decade. I've worked on Nobel Peace Prize nominated Afghan women campaigns. And let me tell you, there's a lot of good work being done. And the entire attitude isn't, oh, we're fine in America, and let us help, you know, the brown women over there. I mean, let's be real, folks: 2013 American women are still fighting for rights as well.

MS. CHAMBERS: Well, she also is telling a story that also happened decades ago. And so I think that we have to draw attention to that, that now, there is a lot of good work being done but that may not have been the case when she was there. We're talking about the '60s.

MS. HOSSAIN: Yeah. I feel like she doesn't have that tone in, like, oh, this is my story, maybe things are better now. I almost feel like it's all very sensational.

MS. CHAMBERS: I also haven't read the book. You know, I couldn't point to the tone or all the words, but what I have read about the book, I just, like again to point out that she's not talking about something that happened in the last 10 years. She's talking about something that happened decades ago that was her experience.

MS. ERBE: But I've traveled widely in Islamic country – Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon, you know, it goes on and on. And I see a lot of women there – or I have met a lot of women there who are wearing, you know, the black outfits, and following their husbands, and not allowed to go out alone unescorted. And they tell me they are – that Islam is liberating to them. And that does bother me. You know, quickly, because we have 20 seconds, but what's your response?

MS. HOSSAIN: There could be a whole show on this. And I write so much about this issue. I just think that we have to be careful that we don't generalize. I also think it's – we have to acknowledge the fact that, of course, there's problems. There's problems of sexism even here. I feel like –

MS. ERBE: Sure. And we talk about that a lot, by the way.

MS. HOSSAIN: Yeah. And I feel like we live in a – the confrontation with patriarchy is something that women’s rights movements all over the world are still trying to conquer. So it’s very real.

MS. ERBE: All right. Great ending note. That’s it for this edition of *To the Contrary*. Please follow me on Twitter @BonnieErbe and #tothecontrary. And visit our website, [pbs.org/tothecontrary](http://pbs.org/tothecontrary), where the discussion continues. And whether you agree or think to the contrary, please join us next time.

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