

**5th ANNUAL VALENTINE'S DAY
DISTINGUISHED FAMILY
VIOLENCE LECTURE**

Thursday, February 14, 2008

Good afternoon. I am Glen Weissenberger, Dean of the DePaul University College of Law. I am pleased to welcome you to the fifth annual Valentine's Day Distinguished Family Violence Lecture, sponsored by our Schiller DuCanto & Fleck Family Law center. These lectures were designed to bring together those working in the field, including those in the criminal justice and legal systems, to gain new insights and inspiration. Thank you for your commitment to this issue, to seeking justice to victims and accountability for those who batter and assault.

This year's lecture, "Secrecy, Shame, and Stigmatization: Ending the Silence About Violence Against Women," focuses on the many ways that shame and stigmatization prevent women and girls from reporting sexual assault and seeking help, and how depressed reporting minimizes the extent of the problem of rape in our culture. Our reactor panel will

explore the structural and policy changes that can enhance reporting and help seeking.

We are please that Charlotte Pierce-Baker has honored us by becoming the fifth distinguished lecturer in this series. Professor Baker is the author of the highly regarded book, ‘Surviving the Silence: Black Women’s Stories of Rape,’ published in 1998 by W.W. Norton, and not out of print since.

In this luminous work, Ms. Pierce-Baker, herself a survivor of rape, presents the first opportunity for the voices of African American women surviving the trauma of rape to be heard. She argues that with the pressures on Black women to preserve the race and its image, black women have “sacrificed their souls.” Of the work Toni Morrison has written, “A book of such intelligent humanity its shocks strengthen us, and its terrors enlighten us...demand reading.”

Ms. Pierce-Baker serves as Professor of Women’s and Gender Studies with a secondary appointment in the Department of English at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee. She lectures and travels

widely to speak about issues of sexual assault, with special emphasis on black women.

Following the program, paperback copies of Professor Pierce-Baker's book will be available for purchase and signing.

Please help me welcome Charlotte Pierce-Baker.