

Initiate the Change

□ The fight to end rape is a fight for education, communication and cultural change

By Rene DeCair
Emerald Associate Editor

Rape. It's a sensitive subject that few people like to talk about.

But experts warn with rape on the rise, unless both men and women learn to communicate with one another and re-think their societal roles, this violent act against women won't go away.

Although statistics vary depending on the source, all groups working with rape victims agree the crime is extremely under-reported and occurs frequently.

Eugene's Sexual Assault Support Services reports one in four women will be sexually assaulted during her college years, and the age group of 18 to 24-year-olds has the most reported incidents of rape.

Moreover, SASS reports that of rape victims, 90 percent are women or girls, 75 percent know their assailant and less

than 10 percent report it to police.

In 1990 there were 1,330 reported rapes in Oregon.

To help halt the crime, experts say fundamental change needs to take place in our culture whereby women learn to be more assertive and men learn to respect women.

"What people can do is respect each other and communicate with one another about what our sexual wants and needs are," said Erin Collier, volunteer coordinator with SASS. "And people who do have power should respect those who don't have power."

This may sound like a tall order, but Collier and others working for change say they believe that through education and hard work, rape can be eliminated.

"I am optimistic that things will get better because everyday I work with volunteers who work to make things better," Collier said. "The (volunteers) are powerful and strong, so I'm optimistic that with people like that societal change is possible."

Moreover, Nadia Telsey, a self-defense instructor, who teaches what she calls

"self-defense from the inside out," believes assaults can be minimized if people learn general preventive techniques.

"When you hear about self-defense you hear about martial arts," Telsey said. "But I found that's not what self-defense is all about."

Most women know defense techniques, she said, but often don't implement them. For example, she said, people will often give out information over the phone or open the door at home without first looking to see who's there.

"You all know this stuff already," she said. "It's not about knowing, it's about doing it."

One of the most important things Telsey tells students is to trust their instincts and rely on intuition to keep them out of a dangerous situation.

"You get rid of your intuition, the head takes over and you walk into an assault," she said.

Too often, she said, women ignore their inner voice because they do not want to hurt someone's feelings or be embarrassed. For example, she said, the women killed by serial killer Ted Bundy may have been reluctant to help him carry things to his car when he faked a broken arm, but they did it anyway.

"We need to learn to put ourselves first even if it means hurting someone else's feelings," Telsey said. "Err on your own behalf."

But Bill Brotzman, co-director of the University's Men Against Rape, said what is also needed is education that goes beyond women taking self-defense classes.

His group, for example, speaks at high schools, fraternities and other places to educate people about rape.

"Women can go out and take self defense classes, but that doesn't completely protect them," Brotzman said. "The only way rape will end is if men stop raping."

And the only way men will stop, he said, is when male and female stereotypes are eliminated. Men need to realize that rape is everyone's problem, he said, and then join the fight to initiate cultural change.

"Basically every aspect of our society promotes rape," Brotzman said. "(Men who rape) get power. If you get away with it, you could also get recognition from your peers. That's a hard thing to fight."

And Brotzman said another difficult thing is getting men interested in the problem.

"You have men who say, 'I'm not going to be raped and I'm not going to rape; therefore, it's not my problem,'" Brotzman said. "Why would they want to question being on the top (of society)?"

Moreover, Erin McCarthy from the Dean of Students Office, which sponsors a class each term called Creating A Rape-free Environment, echoed Brotzman's sentiments saying the "rape culture" we live in needs to be changed.

People are socialized into believing men are superior and women are inferior, McCarthy said. "It seems that you're the odd one out if you're a woman and you stand up and say no."

Women need to learn to be assertive and men need to learn that when women say no they mean it, she said, and that "saying nothing doesn't mean yes."

People also need to think about rape more often and to ask themselves how they can prevent rape and help those who fear being raped, she said.

One person can make a difference, she said.

"People need to stop and think about things for more than the millisecond they do," McCarthy said. "If people are being afraid, respect that."

Tactics provided to promote safety from sexual assault

By Chandra Foote
Emerald Contributor

Sexual assault has been greatly publicized at the University within the past month, raising questions of who is at risk for an assault, who commits these assaults, and most importantly, how can assaults be prevented.

Sexual Assault Support Services of Lane County defines sexual assault as "any forced sexual contact that happens without a person's consent."

Anyone can be a victim of sexual abuse, regardless of age, race, gender or background, according to the SASS informational pamphlet.

Sexual offenders can be anyone including family, friends, acquaintances and co-workers. However, 80 to 90 percent of all rape victims know the assailant by name.

While stranger rape is not as common as acquaintance rape, stranger rape is more preventable than date rape, said Carey Drayton, director of the Office of Public Safety.

There are many protective measures available to women to protect themselves from stranger rape.

Being aware of your surroundings decreases the chance of becoming a victim, Drayton said. He also said that alcohol or drugs increases the chance of something happening that you don't want to happen, because intoxicants can dull the senses and limit a sense of awareness.

Another part of rape prevention is being assertive. Self-defense instructor Nadia Telsey, author of the handbook "Personal Safety for Women," said to "Respond assertively to any unwanted touches, questions, conversations."

This response ranges from naming the offensive behavior by saying "I'm uncomfortable with the way you are touching me," to stating, "Leave me alone!" when being bothered by a stranger.

Telsey said women are often taught to be passive. "Victim behavior comes from cultural expectations of us as women to be kind, friendly, helpful and quiet," she wrote.

Both Drayton and Telsey said that being prepared for situations can boost your personal safety.

Preparation includes knowing where you are going ahead of time so you won't get lost, parking your car in a well lit area, always having your keys ready

when going to your car or home and keeping your doors locked at home and in the car.

If you are being followed, Telsey advises going to a safe populated place, such as a fire station or an open store, to avoid leading the person to your home.

If you are assaulted, create a scene and yell repeatedly, she said. Another option is to physically resist assault by fighting back.

Telsey also wrote that non-resistance can sometimes be the best response. In each situation, validate the choice you made to deal with the assault, she said, because survival is the most important thing.

Project Safe Run, an organization in Eugene 11 years ago, also is involved in preventing assault against women. Safe Run provides dogs for rent for \$25.00 per month available to run with women.

Safe Run, available at 345-8086, is only one of the local, available services working toward rape prevention. Project Saferide, a campus organization sponsored by the Women's Center, provides free rides for women in and around campus. Located in the Women's Center, Saferide's number is 346-4239. Call 343-5513 to obtain more information about Telsey's self-defense seminars for women.

**Weekend
Special
\$48.00**

250 FREE MILES
Friday afternoon
to
Monday Morning

A-WAY
RENT A CAR
683-0874
110 W. 6th
(By the Hult Center)
Some Restrictions

THE SAGA CONTINUES...

It's Been A Wednesday Tradition Since 1989.



Eugene's family owned pizza restaurant, Track Town, has always stood for quality pizza at a reasonable price. Starting Spring term, the Wednesday medium one-item pizza will be \$6.95. But until then, Track Town invites you to join them in the Wednesday night countdown at the current price of \$5.95.

TRACK TOWN PIZZA
1809 Franklin Blvd. 484-2799

