

Sexual assault: not just women

WHY MEN NEED THEIR VOICES HEARD

BY MASON CRAWLEY
REPORTER

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM,) a time to acknowledge and support all survivors of sexual violence. Events are scheduled all month on campus to promote SAAM and get students involved in the discussion of helping those in need; no matter who you are, these events are designed to be inclusive for all students.

Though CCC is pushing inclusivity, and support for survivors, there is a noticeable lack of representation and support for men in the promotional material for SAAM around campus. The topic of sexual violence is a serious one, not exclusive to any gender, but the focus of the support is difficult to distribute equally without someone feeling slighted.

Statistics point out that one in three women are survivors of sexual violence, neglecting to mention the fact that around three percent of men in the U.S. have experienced sexual violence as well. These statistics can be found on RAIN.org. Though the statistics are fairly different, they both paint a clear picture that sexual violence does not discriminate.

Jairo Rodriguez, CCC's Associated Student Government President said, "When we think about

sexual assault, most of the time we think about women, when in reality it does happen to men."

Rodriguez also talked about the difficulties of balancing representation for everyone, and how women should be at the tip of the spear for support, without discrediting males in need. "It's a very heavy topic," CCC student Ian Holbrook said. "There is a stigma to be masculine and deal with any emotions on your own."

The lack of a strong male presence in the issue is obvious. "The majority of those seeking support from me are mostly women, some transsexual, and some male." CCC Sexual Assault Advocate Mary Vest said.

Supporting those affected by sexual violence is extremely important, said Vest. "To make a change towards a safer community, the change needs to start with the members of the community. It's an ongoing discussion."

"Grass roots" was a key phrase used by Emilie Azorr, a campus Administrative Assistant. Sexual assault is complicated, and there can be micro versions of sexual assault occurring without people even realizing it. The only way we can start a

change, Azorr said, is with us as individuals. The stigmas that keep people from expressing the need for help out of fear can only be erased with time and hard work.

Azorr and Vest were both very enthusiastic to talk about SAAM month in general, bringing up many thoughts on the issues we face with sexual violence. Vest talked in depth about the fact that we just don't know for certain how many men are affected by sexual violence. hard to say, and harder to address when men don't feel comfortable expressing themselves.

For those seeking support for themselves or those they know affected by sexual violence, Vest's office is located in Barlow Hall 202A the Oregon City campus. For individuals of any gender or orientation, counseling is available in the Bill Brod Community Center.

If you are in any way experiencing a crisis, or you just need someone to talk to, reach out to the 24-Hour Crisis Line at (503) 654-2288 or (888) 654-2288.

Male college students
are 5 times more at risk
of sexual assault than
non-students

1 in every 10 rape
victims are male

17.1 million women and
2.78 million men have
been victims of attempted
or completed rape

About 3% of men
have experienced
sexual violence



Statistics provided by RAIN.org