

## **Know The Facts**

*Safety improves with knowledge: help dispel the myths and silence surrounding sexual assault. A groundbreaking study by the National Center for Victims of Crime in 1992 revealed the true nature of rape and sexual violence in the United States. Here are some highlights from its findings:*

**\*In the United States, 1.3 women are raped every minute.** That results in 78 rapes each hour, 1,872 rapes each day, 56,160 rapes each month, and 683,280 rapes each year. **\*The United States has the world's highest rape rate** of the countries that publish such statistics: 4 times higher than Germany, 13 times higher than England, and 20 times higher than Japan. **\*One out of every three American women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime.** \*61% of all rape cases are victims less than 18 years old. 22% are between the ages of 18 and 24. 78% of rape victims know the attacker. **\*In a survey of college women, 38% reported sexual victimizations which met the legal definition of a rape or attempted rape, yet only 1 out of every 25 reported their assault to the police.** \*One in four college women have either been raped or suffered attempted rape. **\*In a study of college students, 35% of men indicated some likelihood that they would commit a violent rape of a woman who had fended off an advance if they were assured of getting away with it.** \*1 in 12 male students surveyed had committed acts that met the legal definition of rape. Furthermore, **84% of the men who had committed such acts said what they had done was definitely not rape.** \*75% of male students and 55% of female students involved in acquaintance rape had been drinking or using drugs. **\*Rape has a devastating impact on the mental health of victims. 31% of all victims develop Rape-Related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (RR-PTSD) sometime in their lifetimes.** \*Only 16% of rapes are ever reported to the police. **\*In a survey of victims who did not report rape or attempted rape to the police, the following was found as to why no report was made: 43% thought nothing could be done, 27% felt it was a private matter, 12% were afraid of police response, and 12% felt it was not important enough.**

**Sexual violence is an issue that cuts across the gender line. For info on what men can do to end sexual violence, visit <http://www.cs.utk.edu/~bartley/other/10Things.html>**

can men at Dartmouth have not formally held discussions about the statistics as of yet.

While the Sexual Assault Committee emphasized the privacy and self-education of the community, sponsoring a holistic, well-attended Asian Women Health Series last spring, the matter would not have surfaced in the first place without an aggregate perspective on sexual assault. When she joined Dartmouth as sexual abuse program coordinator in 1996, Susan Marine developed a new system of tracking demographic data in reports made to the Sexual Abuse Awareness Program. Unlike larger campuses, where it is nearly impossible to record basic information in reports from various sources, Dartmouth's program coordinates reports to sexual assault peer advisors, to deans, and to the program counselor herself (the majority of the women reflected in the statistics chose to visit Marine personally). Marine required all reporting sources to note (when possible) at minimum the following pieces of information: the victim's year, race/ethnicity, whether s/he was Greek-affiliated, and whether s/he was a varsity athlete. (The race of the assailant was reported in only half of sexual assault cases.)

Before the PAC Sexual Assault Committee decided to issue the letter, Shin had contacted a number of other universities, while its administrative members contacted colleagues about racially disproportionate reporting of sexual assault. But they all encountered the same fence. "A lot of schools don't break it down or won't release it nationally," said assistant dean Nora Yasumura, who was a member of the Committee. *Main Street's* efforts to contact other campus centers was similarly fruitless. One rape education director, Cornell University's Nina Campbell, spoke about the complications of such work, "I personally wouldn't want to be distracted tracking victims—I'm more interested in prevention."

Whether the efforts of the Committee succeeded in informing women is unknown. Statistics for the year the letter was released (1999-2000) showed Asian and Asian American women reporting cases at about 10%, a sharp drop. It is still unclear whether the letter successfully informed women, or whether sexual assault survivors feared greater scrutiny. Statistics for the year 2000-2001 were not kept, as Marine departed for a position elsewhere, but her successor, Abby Tassel, says she hopes to continue Marine's methodologies. Of the Sexual Assault Committee's six original members, however, only one has not graduated or moved on, and it remains to be seen whether an open conversation on sexual assault within and across communities will truly take place.

\* According to the Sexual Abuse Awareness Program, white, African American, Latina, and Native American students reported "proportionately," with some groups reporting "a little lower."