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WOMEN'S SYMPOSIUM

## SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUSES – EDUCATION & PREPAREDNESS

Posted by andree | Nov 24, 2015 | Blog, Guest Posts | 1



When Andree asked me to contribute an article on women's self-defense I began considering the many topics I have researched that I can write about.



Draft one was started the day after the terrorist attacks in Paris. It centered on the need to personally arm ourselves with the mental and physical tools of self-defense, in order to be better equipped to deal with the real life atrocities of our world.

Then, I watched the CNN documentary entitled 'Hunting Grounds.' This inspired me to change the focus of this blog to sexual assault on university campuses. Much of what was discussed in this documentary was the same information I have been reading about throughout the last 3 years pertaining to sexual assault, and its aftermath, on university campuses in the U.S. The documentary covered the statistics of assault, the

reporting of assault, and the way it is handled by school officials, police, victims, and other students, as well as the physical and psychological trauma experienced by it's victims.

Statistics indicate that 1 in 5 young women will be sexually assaulted in college before she finishes school, and she most likely will not report the rape. A study by the U.S. Justice Department found that more than 95% of students who are sexually assaulted remain silent. According to an article by Jessica Bliss, entitled, "Police, Experts: Alcohol Most Common in Sexual Assaults," 43% of women did not report because they felt that nothing would be done, 27% felt the crime was a private matter, 12% were afraid of police response, and 12% felt the assault was not important enough to report. Once a report is made, the victim becomes a victim once more through the handling of the process, also considered a second assault. The victim may be asked, "What could you have done differently?" "Were you drinking?" "What were you wearing?" "Why didn't you fight back?" "Why did you wait so long to report?" Some of the women interviewed in this documentary had not told their parents about the incident due to shame and embarrassment. They also faced name-calling, death threats, and isolation from peers.

According to research provided by clinical psychologist and forensic consultant, Dr. David Lisak, many college administrators are reluctant to address the problem of sexual violence on campus because of the negative publicity it would attract to their school, and the potential impact it would have on their athletic teams. The John Hopkins Undergraduate Research Journal of March 2012 reports that 1 in 3 college assaults that get reported are committed by student athletes who are popular and influential. It is much more a priority to make sure that a case against a star football player, potential Heisman trophy winner, be overturned to save the school embarrassment and funding issues. Most schools receive their funding and support from alumni,

so it behooves them to support the star athletes and financial supporters. At the end of the documentary, numbers of reported rapes versus the numbers that were found guilty were very low, and the punishment for the crime ranged from being suspended for one day of school to one semester. One decision that was utterly appalling was the punishment of suspension only after the final championships were over. Another was suspension after graduation. Still another was a \$25.00 fine. The list went on and on.

In an interview with David Lisak, only about 2-5% of reported cases are false accusations and most rapes are perpetrated by a very few number of men.

What is also troubling is the myth that that many men and women do not consider the assault to be “rape” if they were intoxicated and that “date rape” is not necessarily considered a “rape,” but merely a case of a nice guy who had a little “too much” to drink. Clearly, women and men leaving for college need to receive education on sexual assault prior to leaving home.



An idea for those who are studio owners would be a college preparatory class for both women and men outlining all areas of sexual assault, reporting, the aftermath, etc.

If you are serious about addressing sexual assault to our young women and men, I recommend researching as much as you can on the topic. I have put in countless hours reading books, research papers, documentaries, and more, so that I can be a better advocate to young women. Two books to read that provide education on the recent interest in college assaults are, *A Call to Action: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power*, by Jimmy Carter and *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town* by John Krakour.

This blog has come full circle back to the need to equip ourselves, and our loved ones, with the mental and

physical tools necessary to defend ourselves, and to bring about a change in our communities. How can we make a dent in such a huge problem? While we can't "change" the problem overnight, we can, as martial artists, and women, address the issue by educating ourselves, our children, and our students, while including basic self-defense principles, and boundary setting in our classes. We can hold seminars on self-defense and urge young women and men in college to become involved in a campus rape and assault crisis center. It takes courage to take a stand that may be met with antagonism. Two women in the documentary did just that, and together, they began a personal journey of healing, and encouraging other victims to step forward and report assaults. They challenged a Title IX complaint against the University of North Carolina, and were able to create attention to the issue of sexual assault and how it is dealt with on American universities. These courageous women were victims who saw the need and took the steps to create change. Lets us, as Martial Artists, find the courage to fight for what is right and fight against what is wrong.

Barbara White, 5th degree black belt

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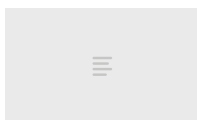
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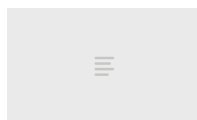
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**Bob White** on November 24, 2015 at 8:52 am

A very informative and interesting article. Barbara does her homework and I hope it helps our young people be better prepared and educated. There are some shocking statistics.

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