Saturday Night
Untold Stories of Sexual Assault at
Together our voices can be heard.
“It could really be any night—or day for that matter. We chose Saturday Night merely to start putting a face on this silent yet prolific problem—sexual assault.”

-Editors’ Letter from the first edition of *Saturday Night: Untold Stories of Sexual Assault at Duke*

To Our Readers:

The publication of the third edition of *Saturday Night* has proven to us that this community has embraced our message and that the publication is addressing a tangible need at Duke. Your reaction and support has left us overwhelmingly humbled and awed. It has also shown us that our work is not complete.

We have come a long way since the first edition, from navigating the ropes of publishing to spreading the publication’s message. From an incident of sexual assault on Duke’s campus in 2002 that inspired its inception, *Saturday Night* has become a visible force in classrooms, dorm rooms, and conversations. The essence of the publication, however, has not changed. The stories you will find are thought-provoking, compelling, and courageous—they are stories from survivors, their friends, and those who have been affected by sexual assault in other capacities.

In a world where we are inundated by statistics about rape and sexual assault on a daily basis, the publication takes the issues to a human level; to a Duke level. Statistics do not change a culture, but we hope that sharing stories, discussing, and acting upon them will.

Next Saturday night can be different.

Inspired,
The Editors of *Saturday Night*
Notes to Our Readers:

- All names in the narratives have been changed.
- If you would like to submit narratives or commentary for future editions, please visit our website for more information: www.duke.edu/web/saturdaynight or the Sexual Assault Support website: http://wc.studentaffairs.duke.edu/sass/. All submissions are held in strict confidence.
- The individuals in the photographs do not relate to the narratives in which they are featured. These individuals were gracious volunteers who were willing to be photographed for the publication.
- *Saturday Night: Untold Stories of Sexual Assault at Duke* is an Independent B publication authorized by the Duke University Publications Board. The publication is edited by Duke undergraduate students. Our advisor is Jean Leonard, Ph.D., Sexual Assault Support Services Coordinator at Duke University.
- This publication contains a variety of opinions concerning sexual assault. As editors, we do not endorse one particular view but leave it up to you, the reader, to decide where you stand.
- Please visit our website at www.duke.edu/web/saturdaynight. Electronic copies of all our editions are available there.

Acknowledgements for SN:

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In addition, we would like to acknowledge and thank the following organizations for their invaluable assistance and support of this publication:

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- The Women’s Studies Department at Duke University

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Dear Saturday Night,

I just read you for the 100th time, sitting at a small Starbuck’s table in Boston. Hundreds of miles from Duke, I am still brought to tears each time I touch your pages, read your words, and think about my own piece within your binding. It’s been three years today that I was sexually assaulted.

I always wonder if I screamed loud enough, if I protested as much as I could have... While that will remain unknown, you have given me the chance to say, loudly and unabashedly—STOP. I will no longer be a victim. I will no longer allow his force, or any force, to compromise my sexual self. As a community, we will not tolerate assault.

After the assault, I channeled my suffering into your pages, working relentlessly to help you exist. The men and women whose stories gave you content became my support system. I count many of them among my closest friends. You gave us a safe space—a place to share ourselves with each other and the rest of campus. Within your binding, we could express our biggest fears, frustrations, and hopes for the community. You gave us anonymity, shielding us from awkward looks on the quad, uncomfortable conversations, and skepticism from our peers.

Your narratives forever changed my understanding of strength, healing, and perseverance. I had no idea how disparate my experience had been from many of the survivors around me. As a survivor of a stranger attack, I was shielded from the guilt and self-doubt that plagues survivors of acquaintance violence. Thank you for helping me to understand this subtle, but critical difference. And thank you for highlighting the themes that ground all of our experiences—fear, vulnerability, pain, hope, healing.

Now, over 700 miles away from my life at Duke, I rarely think about my assault and the pain that followed. I think of you often, though, and how much you’ve given me. A copy of you sits on my desk and a number of my grad school classmates have read your narratives. They have commented on the tragic beauty of your existence and the power of your content. Despite combating a frighteningly common problem, you are a unique resource.

When I heard that a third edition was in progress, I was comforted to know that you are still there, still fighting to make the voices of survivors heard, still giving refuge to the exposed vulnerabilities of your contributors. Please know that your work is not going unnoticed.

Thank you.

With love,
Survivor
I come from a culture that somewhat cursorily nods in the direction of women’s rights, and then goes back to beating, raping and violating its women. I grew up seeing my father abuse my mother and I remember thinking that it was merely an expression of anger. I remember thinking that my father shouldn’t get so angry, and simultaneously denying the possibility that he got some perverse pleasure from my mother’s pain. If you were a woman and made your husband angry, you got beaten. That’s the way it works everywhere. Both my parents beat me, but again, it just seemed as though corporal punishment was merely a cultural difference in terms of discipline. This is not to say that I do not have memories of inexorably happy times with my family—indeed, I go out of my way to treasure these memories and perhaps even idealize them.

When I was 14, I got into a relationship with a boy 3 years older, from the same culture. He was somewhat violent, but treated me well, especially in comparison to the way my mother was treated at home. I thought I loved him and that he was my way out of the house I lived in. I loved him. Then, on New Year’s Day, the year I turned 16, after we had been dating for 2 years, he raped me.

I have only recently come to terms with the fact that he raped me. There was no alcohol involved. We were alone at his house, and I started to get uncomfortable with the extent of physical intimacy. He convinced me that it was New Year’s, his parents wouldn’t be home for a while, we had been going out for so long, didn’t I love him? Just before he entered me, I screamed “no.” It just didn’t feel right. He was on top of me, and he paused. I tried to roll out from under him, but he stopped me. He said that I couldn’t come this far and stop. He pinned my arms down, I struggled a little, and then gave up. I don’t know why I didn’t fight harder. He thrust in and out, in and out. It was over within 5 minutes. It was my first time.

Perhaps it was the fact that I hadn’t struggled. If I hadn’t wanted it, I should have fought harder. Perhaps I felt guilty that I wasn’t satisfying him. Perhaps, somewhere deep inside, I clung to the idea that it was his right as a man to take what he wanted from me. But the fact remains that I continued seeing him. Every opportunity we were alone in either of our houses, usually every week or so, he would rape me. I would say “no,” say that I didn’t want to, and he would pin me down and enter me nonetheless. Sometimes my continual crying would turn him off, and sometimes he would simply ignore me and continue. Other times he would tell me that when girls say “no,” it usually means “yes.” I still thought I loved him. After all, he would always apologize profusely, say that he was a man and couldn’t control himself while continually reminding me that it was because I allowed him his happiness that he was still with me. This cycle went on for six months until when my family (which did not know about this relationship) decided to move to the United States as my father was transferred here. I was sorry to say goodbye to him. I think he was sorry to see me go.

I met a boy at Duke and fell in love for the second time. It was only with the love and kindness of this boy, both inside and outside of the bedroom, that I began confronting my own ideas about what had happened, and absolving myself of the terrible guilt I felt for letting the rapes happen, and worse, letting them continue. I did tell him what happened and the conversation was, at best, brief and less than ideal. We have since broken up, and although the break-up was painful, I cannot help but feel immense gratitude for the relationship. He showed me that men can be kind, they can be tender, and they can, above all else, respect women. Making that initial step, breaking the silence, has allowed me to tell those that I am close to. This has, in turn, empowered me to work with other survivors of violence and to allow myself to heal.

Writing this story anonymously is perhaps the most sharing that I can do for now. I cannot emphasize enough how voicing my story, giving it space and having people hear it allows me to let go of it just a little bit more. The phrase “slaying my demons” does perhaps sound a little dramatic but I think the evocation is necessary. Telling my story, again and again, has indeed helped me slay some of my personal demons and I deeply appreciate the help I have had in the effort.
I only remember that we were in a bar when you told me, that we were recent college grads meeting after work for a beer, talking about politics and basketball. I don’t know how we arrived at the subject, how you came to tell me what happened to you in that public restroom almost 15 years earlier. I don’t know what prompted you to tell me this secret you’d been carrying all those years ...and I don’t remember - my head was reeling with this new narrative of You - what I even said in response, except for a cruelly inadequate “I’m sorry.”

I’m sorry, but I still have trouble putting myself back there, that night on a barstool years ago when you told me you’d been attacked by a grown man in a public restroom when you were just a small kid; how you thought at that moment he forced his way into the bathroom stall and put his big hands on you that you would not live to tell anyone.

You lived and you waited and you told me. Even your parents never knew, and when you pulled yourself out of that grimy bathroom stall, cleaned yourself up, and left, you were someone completely different from the child who went in, someone years older. Someone who had learned what it felt like to be permanently afraid, permanently vulnerable for the rest of your life. I remember you told me how that man appears in your dreams and that you still flash back to that bathroom stall, how you think about him and wonder if he hurt other children, if some were not as “lucky” as you were, escaping with your life, that day.

The one thing I remember clearly about the night you told me is how I saw you in a new light, not as less than a man for having faced this viciously unrelenting vulnerability, but as a Survivor.
Dirty.
gross, unclean,
stomach sick,
head spinning.
walking back,
cold morning air,
shoes on stone slabs,
don’t want to see anyone,
same clothes,
everyday jeans and shirt,
embarrassed.
deep pain,
bleeding soul,
guilt with anger,
who’s to blame?
earliest bus,
long ride and walk,
change to sleep.
scalding shower,
not hot enough,
to clean the scars.
a face like any other,
lies answer questions.

The night.
no drinks,
met a boy,
seemed nice,
and cute,
talked a bit,
‘bout movies,
what hadn’t been seen.
invited to watch,
follows in Faith,
single room,
offered a drink,
deprecated until...
pressure...
gave in and had one,
felt it hit the gut.
he made advances,
brushed off,
it took control,
although conscious,
feeling sick,
suggested lying,
less control.

The kill.
more forward,
gets physical,
rubbing and kissing,
despite struggle.
clothes removed,
frightened,
struggling to move,
arms over head,
locked.
Stabbed.
only a finger,
rough, thoughtless,
words weak,
silenced by kisses,
“shshshhhh.”
struggling harder,
can’t think,
small cry for why.
he decides to leave be,
a carcass of a soul,
bleeding in pain,
bleeding in shame.
Shame
Pain
HATE
Violation

A t-shirt from the Clothesline Project
The night started like any other. First were shots in the bathroom with my roommate while I showered because I was running late. Next came a few glasses of wine and dancing to Madonna’s “Like a Prayer” while I got dressed. As I slid on BCBG heels and ran my fingers through my long hair one more time I thought that, on this night, I was really a girl like any other.

He looked harmless as he stared back at me—a guy like any other. Clean-cut wearing jeans and a button-down shirt and no dirty sneakers from that dark, filthy alley people like him are expected to jump out from. We made our way onto the dance floor and our bodies snaked together to the music. I’ve always gotten real close when I dance.

The night came to a close and it was time to say good-bye. It was a farewell like any other—a slow kiss on the cheek and then he disappeared from sight. I thought how beautiful the night was as I floated home, melting under the stars. Two hours later the ringing of my phone pierced the silence and I woke abruptly. It was him. He wanted to come over for a little while and I grudgingly obliged. Ten minutes later he walked through my doorway and my intuition screamed. I politely told it to shut up and put on my most dazzling smile.
He was fierce and passionate and beautiful. We fell to my bed and he nuzzled my neck, my favorite spot. He kissed me on the cheek—a lover like any other. In minutes our clothes were strewn across the floor. His touch turned rough as he swallowed me underneath him. Then he was inside me. No questions asked. No negotiating.

I told him to stop. He told me to “hold on,” like I was a voice on the other end of his telephone, not a woman trapped under his body. I could feel his heartbeat as he crushed me. Thump, thump. I begged him to at least use a condom and he stared right through me, his lips now tight and his expression cold. The tears leaked from my eyes and slowly ran down my face, staining my sheets. I thought of my friends sleeping in the room next door—my valiant friends who would have broken down the door to rescue me from his grasp if only I had called for them. But I kept silent. I let my body go limp and waited for the storm to subside. And just like that, it was over. The next morning I couldn’t look into his betraying eyes. I opened the door just enough for him to get through and then slammed it on the world.

Afterward there were nightmares like any others, except my monster could have come out of a primetime TV sitcom instead of a horror movie. There were cold sweats, noisy memories and self-blame that I couldn’t quit. There was the lonely surrender to my tears late at night when I was too tired to fight the demons away. There was the pain of telling my friends and reliving that night on my mattress, like picking a scab after it had just started to heal and letting the misery rush forth to drown me. There was the special person that told me, “No offense, but you kind of put yourself in that position.” There was the shell of me, falling apart at the seams while pretending to be Daddy’s princess. There was the empty silence I wrapped myself in when it all was too much to bear.

I am a rape survivor like any other, wondering if I’m surviving or barely scraping by. I am a woman haunted. I go to school, I have a job and I go out with my friends, all the while carrying an invisible onus pressing down on me that only my heart feels. The questions run through my mind almost daily. Why didn’t I scream? Why didn’t I tell someone? Will he do this to someone else? Was I at fault because I had been drinking? Why did I let him in? Am I sick because my rapist had tasted so sweet? I had loved the feel of his lips on mine, now all I feel is the poison coursing through my veins when I think of him—the liquid hatred that freezes me in my tracks when I see his face.

With time I suspect these thoughts will fade, but imagine the scars they will leave in their place. There’s the distrust of men; the run I break into when I hear heavy footsteps behind me; the walls that I rapidly construct when a guy so much as looks my way. There are the friends who try to understand; the new love in my life who tries desperately, and sometimes futilely, to touch me in a way that won’t burn. There’s the shame and the mark I fear that I wear on my forehead for everyone to see. There’s a feeling of something that sets me apart that I can’t shake. But above all else, there’s hurt—a deep aching that has changed me in ways that keep me from recognizing myself and taints the relationships with everyone who touches my life.

I still have a life like any other. I still get up in the morning and brush my teeth. I still jog during the day under the brilliant sunshine. I still love the feel of the wind caressing my face. I still smile. Sometimes I even dare to laugh. I can still kiss with my eyes closed. I still love with all I have. He may have taken a part of me, but the most important parts are still mine. And I still have what I have always cherished most. Hope. So screw victim. I’m transcending.
assault, lingers.

campus is eerie late at night
(early in the morning, as it were)
and cold is seeping into my jacket.
   i hate winter.
but for now the leaves on the ground are orange
   ironic shades of fire
mimicking the light from lamps strategically placed to make us feel safe.
   i’m walking alone
   inhaling pure cold
clutching a designer bag that matches the designer outfit
clinging to the designer body that i say is one size smaller than it really is.
the bus groans in protest to the cold or late night darkness
   and solitary figures shuffle
   on and off,
   and i walk.
scanning eyes over the path
stepping right to take the long way around
a nearly unconscious memorial to the poor girl assaulted
   or maybe she wasn’t really,
   but that’s what i heard.
   and i am too busy to really care--
   to feel,
beyond a sympathetic and uncomprehending wrinkle of concern darting across my
   brow.--
who has time to care
when

LifeGradesInternshipBoyfriendDrugsSexAlcoholWeightHappinessSororitySiblingsParentsCareerHusbandFuture
are pushing and pulling us through a web of mostly meaningless associations.
and who would believe you
   do you believe yourself
       one
       two
       three
   YOU SLUT.
you were probably asking for it
deserving, even.
i am crying in a little ball on the white tiles of the bathroom floor
and being dragged home,
shuffled silently out the door.

one
two
two
three
eyes
neck

and i am pinned
to the bed
the sink
stifled by a clammy hand.
but who has time to be conscious of it.
just another thursday
saturday
summer night.
and my satin sash is on the floor.
pink blue purple careless on the white tiles.
Am I even there at all,
or just hovering overhead; a startled observer.

three times.

and do i have it in me to care,
if only in the inadvertent flinch to a welcomed touch that conjures unexplained
panic.

and tonight i simply take the long walk home
and walk a little faster when the shadows seem to linger too long
because there’s no time to be hurt
and who knows if it really happened

or really
if it even mattered.
Senior year, spring. My friend is writing a book, and I’m in it. It’s about dating and the hook up culture, and she interviews me about a variety of different relationship situations. Through this process of sharing stories, writing, rewriting and reading, I realize I have a story to tell.

In her book, she calls it rape, and, two years after that night transpired, she is the first one to label it as such.

Proofreading the manuscript, I am startled at the emotions that surfaced. I disconnect for a moment. The emotions are distant, the same waves of repulsion you feel when you hear about the grotesque experience of another woman, a stranger. I forget that the words describe me -- that it happened to me, that it was part of my life, that it lies in my past -- and only then can I feel awful for that girl.

Only then do I see it as rape.

Sophomore year, spring. It seemed like a good idea at first. My boyfriend of several months had broken up with me just before my semi-formal and I needed a date. My girlfriends, trying to cheer me, offered up suggestions. I was adamant that I avoid any sort of pressure situation. I wasn’t ready to be with anyone else, and I wasn’t too keen on going to my semi-formal at all. So we decided on the most harmless guy in the fraternity. Someone I’d met before. Someone who had a serious, long-time, long-distance girlfriend. Someone who was good friends with my friends’ dates. Someone who liked to dance, and who we agreed would make a good, platonic date.

When I asked him, I used those exact words. Platonic date.

I got ready with my sorority big sis and we went to get our dates from section. I was in a group with my best girlfriends, and all our dates were frat brothers. We ordered in, broke into the cheap champagne, and played a Beirut tournament. We went to semi, smiling for pictures and working the dance floor. He was a great date; paying attention to me, making sure I had a drink, asking me to dance. Everything was fine, normal, comfortable, and I was having fun.

Dancing, he started kissing me. Drunk, I kissed back.

We left just before 2AM. I went with my big sis and her date back to section to grab my stuff. I had every intention of returning to my own room and sleeping alone.

He stops me. Kisses me. Drunk, I kiss back. He pushes me onto the couch in his room, snaking his tongue between my lips. I’m confused, I don’t want to be there, but at the same time, it’s nice to be held. He holds me, too close. His hands move over my body, too purposefully. I can feel him pressing up against me, and the tingling sensation of panic begins to filter through the haze of one-too-many cocktails.

His hands are working to undress me, and I ask him to stop. I tell him to stop. I say it with as much force as I can summon, yet I sound weak. No. Stop. He thrusts himself inside me. Without warning, without consideration, preparation, or hesitation. He’s not using a condom, and I’m trapped. Drunk, he’s on top of me, the weight of his body bearing down on me, and he’s thrusting inside of me. Rhythmically, sloppily, forcefully.

He clamps his hand over my mouth. The same hand that he put innocently around my waist in pictures just hours before. The hand that celebrated in a high five when we won Beirut.
The hand that pulled my lips toward his while we danced. The hand that grasped my body when I tried to leave. The hand that pushed me onto the couch, the hand that held me there. The hand that moved over my body, groping at my clothes. The hand that stifled my breath, my scream.

And his eyes; he closes them occasionally, and I am thankful to escape from the piercing stare. He knows what he’s doing, his eyes are clear and purposeful as he looks down on my half naked body.

I try to disconnect, to numb myself and float away, high above my body. I sever the ties between conscious and corporeal. I am there, a passive observer to the ravaging of my own body; I see myself, limbs draping where they were flung carelessly onto a faded couch. I see his body on top of me, the reckless way he’s moving. And I watch my body, motionless. I see my own eyes, somehow bright in the darkness. Wide open, screaming. I see them screaming, omniscient, alert, and screaming the same piercing scream that sits in my throat. The scream that is held back by his hand, his fingers clenched over my mouth, gripping into my jaw.

In that moment, I know what is happening to me.

He finishes, and stumbles to bed. He passes out, and I lie there. Still. He’s sleeping, breathing, and I gather my things to leave. I am crying, but tears do not come. The corporeal, the conscious… they remain severed.

I wake up, and I do not call it rape.

I was drunk. I let him kiss me. I kissed back. I didn’t stop him, I didn’t push him off me. I led him on. I was asking for it. I deserved it. I remember how it happened, and I can’t see a way that it would be construed as a crime, as his fault. I was drunk, I let it happen. I cannot understand that I was a victim. I take no action, I simply never want to see him again.

I see him over the next weeks, months, over the next year until he graduates. I see him at homecoming after he has graduated. He smiles at me, tries to be my friend. He acts as if nothing happened that night, nothing out of the ordinary, nothing wrong in the least. He asks my friends why I won’t talk to him, why I avoid his eyes, refuse to acknowledge him though we inhabit the same social circle. I realize that he has not the slightest inkling that he hurt me; in his memory, there is no record of wrongdoing.

I read the biographical accounts of my story, and the tears come. In third person, I understand what happened. I feel sympathy for the girl in the story, for my third person self. My heart aches to read it, my mind shudders as I relive the story and the words trigger images buried in the corners of my mind.

First person I cannot feel that way. I cannot connect that girl in the story to myself nor my body. It is a cold, hard fact. Unfeeling and unwavering. An objective event. I try to avoid giving it any more consideration or feeling than that.

It was simply an unfortunate situation. That entire night was something I allowed to happen to me, and in giving permission, I was an equal perpetrator in the act. Rather than ruminating on it, I simply [try to] push it from my mind.

And yet it lingers, leaving innocent situations subject to the subtle traces of panic and fear that interject, seemingly at random. The disconnect between conscious and corporeal lingers with the memories. I wonder if I will ever fully reconcile my being with my body, if I will, one day, allow feelings to mingle with physical intimacy. I wonder if the trust emotional scars and physical triggers will fade, if I will fully regain my ability to trust.

But if not today, if not any day in the past two years, then when?
anyway

I told you no more drinks
You bought me another anyway.

I told you not this song
You got me to dance anyway.

I told you not there, please
Your fingertips lingered there anyway.

I told you good night
You were at my door at three A.M.
Anyway.

I really didn’t want to see you
But I felt guilty, so I let you in anyway.

I told you no, I don’t want to
You were inside me anyway.

I said stop,
You told me “hold on” anyway.

I pleaded, at least use a condom
You ignored me anyway.

I cried, not so rough
You played rough anyway.

I had friends sleeping in the next room—
big football players—
I kept silent anyway.

I didn’t want it—you disgusted me
But I let you do it anyway.

I hated you at my very core
You slept in my bed anyway.

I hugged myself and tried not to cry
My pillow case was soaked anyway.

I wanted to wash my disgust away
I smiled when you left anyway.

I loved those sheets
I threw them away anyway.

I went about my life and
willed that night to go away
It haunted me anyway.

I never wanted to hear your voice again
You called me anyway.

I saw you again and tried to stay calm
I threw up anyway.

Georgia Tech lost 75 to 81 that game
Guess you won anyway.

You were charmed by my innocence
You took it away anyway.

My confidence and strength inspired you
You crippled me anyway.

My smile stopped you dead in your
tracks.
You overran me anyway.

I thought you were harmless
You raped me anyway.

You took my life anyway from me—
scarred the deepest part of me
I am surviving anyway.
April 3, 2005

Dear Mom,

I had an intense night—I participated in the Take Back the Night speak-out. In fact, although I hadn’t planned to, I spoke. I really wish you could be supportive of my decision to be public about the things that I have experienced. Talking about it helps me, and if you think that this is some form of wallowing self-pity then you don’t understand the magnitude of this event and the negative ones in my past. Dad seemed to be concerned about the public-image perspective—that some people may judge me unkindly based on my coming out with this admission or based on the circumstances themselves. I want you to know that this is exactly the issue sexual assault survivors deal with all too often—and I have come to terms, for the most part, with my experiences. How I choose to share them is my decision. That being understood, maybe it’s asking a lot to wish for your (as Dad put it) “unconditional” support—but isn’t that the role you’ve always assured me you’d play if ever I was in a bad situation, any situation? If I am going to truly address this issue, I need you to at least acknowledge the effort it takes for me to admit what really happened, whether or not my fault, and not to repress it as if it weren’t a part of who I am now. Please do not be confused—I am not choosing to define myself by negative experiences, this one or any other. I am not wallowing, nor am I “setting myself back” by dealing with this directly. The activists have not
brainwashed me, and I have not gotten carried away by the momentum of this evening’s discussions and emotional outpourings. This is something that I consciously–openly–think about once a year, on this day, but it is also something I carry with me every day and think about always, even if I don’t make it a distinct part of my reality. I’m not trying to exhume buried experiences and use them to validate wild emotional outbursts or bad decisions, nor to jump back into them manically. My past is irrevocable, but how it affects me can be changed (positively) if I can handle facing it. You may not believe this is something that still concerns me, or something that contributes to my daily decisions or reactions or emotional phases, but it is. Please help me face the overwhelming self-doubt borne of the situations themselves by believing me, and believing that I am choosing the right steps—the right steps for me—toward healing from their damage.

It took a hundred people in a quiet audience to get me to admit—to them and at that same time to myself—the only true interpretation of what happened in Paris and what happened in Costa Rica. It took a microphone for me to say the word “rape” out loud, and almost another whole year to be able to actually say it again, even to myself.

I spoke tonight of the necessity to find support in whatever community you can find. It was similar to what I said last year but without specific description of the assaults. Last year I was caught up in the cathartic experience of speaking to an audience—especially this audience—and my actual point was probably lost to them. I am saddened that an entire year has gone by and yet my statement tonight was essentially the same, but this time in reaction to the realization that my only real support is the remote community of survivors, their friends, and activists. Last year I hardly knew what had happened to me, but I assumed that I would have at least my mother and father’s unmitigated support in dealing with it. This year, just today, it finally hit me (set off by my brief conversation with Dad) that although you believe my story (seemingly the most important part of someone’s support), you don’t believe that I am handling it the way I should when I want to talk about it. You disagree with one fundamental component of post-traumatic support: you don’t think I’m using the correct steps to heal, or you think that I’m making a bigger deal out of the healing process than it actually warrants. Having you respond in this way is almost as crushing as it would be if you didn’t believe the story itself. At least if you didn’t believe it, you wouldn’t think I had anything to be healing from, and I would just be acting a little crazy. Your reactions bring what haunts me frighteningly to life—that what happened isn’t a big enough deal to focus on it too terribly much. That saying yes, it happened, but let’s move on now—right now—is the only way to manage the pain I feel when I allow that memory to resurface. Repression leads to depression, Mother. I can’t handle it like you want me to, because it’s not something I can just put behind me like a messy breakup with a boyfriend or a bad grade on a test. It happened TO me, not because of me. I can approach it without making it my life, without sacrificing my life to some self-indulgent pity-land. I have met people whose lives have changed—even changed for the better—because of the way they handled what happened to them. This is not being reactive, it’s being proactive. And if the only way I can keep this event in my life from hitting me like a truck once a year is to break down that pain into little absorbable chunks, little bits of bitter energy I can take each day and use to move on, in my own way, then I’m gonna talk about it. I can’t make you listen, but you can’t make me silent.

Love,
A.
Participants tied ribbons honoring survivors in their lives for the “I Tied a Ribbon Campaign” during Sexual Assault Prevention Week.

For my sister women of color survivors at Duke... with hope that we can continue to break the silence and support each other.

For you for showing me “survivor” does not mean “damaged.”
Stuck in the middle a series of gray, frigid, sub-zero degree days, I decided to break the monotony of my dissertation research and an overall case of mild winter depression by fixing dinner for a friend. I cooked up a spinach lasagna from scratch, nothing extravagant, but perhaps enough to impress Anna, the latest of my French crushes. Or, perhaps not. Another woman fallen prey to my incessant need to convert all heterosexuals to the queerside. As we were finishing dinner, the battery acid taste of nervousness seeped into my mouth, changing an otherwise talkative woman into a monosyllabic stutterer. I would have thought that at thirty, the singular presence of a beautiful, intelligent woman wouldn’t give me the spins. Apparently I was wrong.

While washing the dishes at the sink, Anna stood next to me, occasionally brushing against my left side. The mere presence of the high-cheekboned, square-jawed, black haired French woman rendered me silent. All I wanted to do was place my hand on her lower back, to draw her close, to feel her warmth against me. It had been five months since any significant human contact and my body was craving it. Five months in a foreign country, I was growing lonelier each day. As a means to avoid eye contact with Anna, I glanced into the sink at my hands, appearing magnified under the water. Even after ten years, I still had the hands of a predator.

It was exactly ten years ago to the day, on a long MLK weekend away from school, that I was accused of sexual assault. The three-day holiday, despite the cold and snow, inspired a relatively spontaneous road trip to the Smokies with a friend, a friend who was having trouble with her boyfriend at the time. A friend who told me she was in love with me, wanted to be with me, a woman from Venezuela who had also been sexually abused as a kid.

The seven-hour drive was followed by a three-mile hike, setting up the tent, and downing a huge bottle of Kahlua. It was a cold, somewhat snowy mid-January winter in the mountains. We fixed some pasta, put out the campfire, and made our way into our sleeping bags.

In my small 1.5 person tent, we talked for a bit, mostly trivialities of our coursework, her boyfriend, friends at school. With a newly instilled confidence, brought on by the Kahlua perhaps, and the knowledge that she was interested in me, I decided to make my move. I tried to regulate my breathing to hers. I scooted closer to try to capture some of the warmth of her body stuffed in a downy black North Face cocoon. I pulled my hand out of my sleeping bag and slowly unzipped hers. There was no response. I continued.

My hands found their way inside her shirt. I pulled out of my sleeping bag and rolled slowly on top of her. Not a word was said. I straddled her, holding her arms down above her head, slathering my tongue across her upper torso. She didn’t say no. Her nipples were erect. She didn’t say yes. Her body, not unlike mine ten years before, was lying there lifeless, unsure of what to do. I didn’t ask if she was okay, if she wanted my hands on her body, in her body. I didn’t care. I interpreted her silence as consent; she interpreted my aggression as assault. She said nothing. I said little. Not even in the morning when I found her weeping by the stream, packing up the dishes. Silence continued for the rest of the day. The campsite was packed, three miles were hiked, and seven hours were driven without a word from her. Seven hours to retrace the movements of my hands, to replay the expressions on her face, all through the haze of a Kahlua soaked mind. After several of my attempts at conversation were rebuffed, I settled for silence.
Under the array of soccer trophies and science fair medals sat drawers stuffed with school papers and blood stained underwear. Remnants of the violence that I hoped to squirrel away, at least until trash night, when I would methodically go through each of my drawers to rid them of any incriminating evidence. To this day I still don’t know why I was trying to protect him.

In between the soccer games and the little league tournaments, my body became someone else’s playground. In my lemon-yellow carpeted and floral wallpapered bedroom, I was asked, told, forced to measure an erect 7.5-inch venous penis with a wooden ruler. I then cleaned and lubed the phallus with Soft Soap, as if cleanliness somehow made it all okay. After this cleansing ritual, the penis would make its violent way into my cunt, my mouth, my ass, claiming my body, a body that was just becoming my own, stolen before it was mine. A sex education that went way beyond “Are You There God, It’s Me Margaret?” As an overachieving parent-pleaser, I sucked it up, hoped the routine would end, and I didn’t say a word. How could such a horrific monthly, if not weekly, routine become so familiar, so methodical, so normal?

Physical evidence went unnoticed at my yearly doctor’s appointments; he didn’t see the bruises inside me. Only when I started to go to a gynecologist were questions raised, for when I splayed my legs into the stirrups, I would inevitably black out. My once straight A report cards became spotted with D’s in “Effort” due to missing or lost homeworks. I quickly became the prize on the playground, the girl that all the boys wanted to be with, I learned how to please at an early age. The word “No” had no meaning for me. It occurred to me that this shouldn’t be happening, but I was unclear what to do, it was easier to say nothing. When I tried to say something, no one listened. I detached myself from all emotion and went on with my Midwestern, upper-middle-class, all-American life. As I was entering middle school, the weekly routine became monthly, and as I entered high school it faded to never again. Leaving me both relieved after 5 years of systematic abuse, but also with a vast feeling of being discarded.

As the last dish was cleaned and placed on the drying rack, Anna reached around my waist and pulled me into her. At first I flinched, even after a five-year period of self-imposed abstinence, followed by a handful of sporadic relationships, and years of therapy, I was still uncomfortable being touched. She held me, I started to shake. I kissed her forehead and told her goodnight.
Paralysis comes when you hear the truth for the first time. It overruns your body and holds you, immutable. You are completely stolid except for the ability to release one word from your mouth—the one word that summarizes your reaction to the horrifying impetus of your corporal imprisonment.

And so it was for me as I sat across from my dear friend of countless years. The truth tumbled out of her lips, one horrible clause at a time.

“When I was a freshman in college, I was raped,” she said. “He took me home from a party, and was gentlemanly enough to walk me to my room. He helped me in the door because I had been drinking, and he even removed my heels. I remember saying, ‘Thank you,’ and placing my right foot on his lap as he sat down. He lifted it, kissed it gently, and I giggled. He then lurched forward–playfully, I thought–and then slowed, undoing the knot holding up my skirt. I thought he was being friendly, undressing me further so I could go to bed. I said, ‘No, I can do that,’ but he labored on.”

She paused. I waited for her to take a deep breath. She coughed instead, choking on the toxic truth that she had to get up and out of her system as fast as she could. In the silence, I wanted to move, but I was strangled by the image in my mind of her being coaxed into trust and then savagely deceived with that first violent thrust.

But she couldn’t hold the story down any longer.

“No, I’m okay,” I yelled, but he continued; and he didn’t stop until he came into my body, even though I kept telling him to stop, I kept telling him, ‘No. No. NO!'”

But only the rapist heard her screams; the murderer of her virginity; the thief of her innocence; the ravager of her womb. And when he was done, he rose, pulled up the zipper on his jeans, and pulled her forehead close to his lips.

“Goodnight,” he wheezed as he kissed her goodbye.

I sat locked into nothingness. I felt like I was in a prison cell, strapped down to my bed, tied up in a straightjacket. And in the cell across from me, just in my field of view, was my dear friend. The scene she’d just described was playing out before me. I lay helpless as I bore witness: I saw the rapist carry her into the room and push her toward the bed with his left hand, while his right hand–tucked behind his back–stealthily locked the door; I saw the rapist move toward her and slough off his coat and toss it onto the floor; and I saw the rapist lean down and pull off her shoes. And I saw him sit on the bed and pull her foot onto his lap, and I saw her smile as he raised it and touched it sweetly with his lips. And I saw him move toward her.

She startled me from my nightmare.

“I want to know what you’re thinking,” she pleaded.

My senses returned, but no words came. I pulled her in and kissed her hard, let go and sat back as teardrops flooded my eyes. My lids succumbed and the tears poured out, streaming down my face. She reached out and wiped off my cheeks, and told me she was all right—she’d been to a therapist; she’d told her parents; she was getting through this. She was fighting it, and she needed me to fight with her.

“This is how it’s always been for women,” she said. “But we can change that. This is a big step for me, telling you all this. There’s a lot more to it than what I’ve told you. A lot more. I’m sorry to do this to you—I know it’s hard to
“But it’s harder for you to live through. I want to hear what happened,” I said incredulously, pinned by the sad realization that this friend, this love, had been subjected to the most brutal and antiquated form of violence, and yet she was somehow relegated to consoling me. “This is something I can never truly understand,” I lamented, “But I want to try.”

“I don’t have to continue,” she offered. “It’s harder to hold in, I admit—but some things you don’t have to know. Some days it’s harder to talk about. Most days, actually. But today it’s harder to keep in. But I don’t mind stopping here.”

“No,” I said, pausing to think about taking this bite from the tree of knowledge. What responsibilities and terrors would it bring, knowing this had happened to someone so close? What would I do with that knowledge? I didn’t have any idea, except that I knew my initial answer was absolutely right. I couldn’t stop her from being raped—that had already happened. The nightmare in my head wasn’t real for me; but it had been for her. She had been raped. And she trusted me now with her story. I didn’t know what I would do with the knowledge, or what I could do with it; but the least I could do now was listen. “Tell me,” I said.

She choppily drew in her breath, cleared her throat and began to speak.
My friend told me that she was raped. She said that she was held down by a guy she knew. He was much larger than her 5’1” frame and forced himself inside of her. Naturally, I was horrified by what she told me. I felt sad, concerned, and sympathetic. I was conflicted by everything she told me. I understand that she did not want to tell anyone besides me. I knew that she was scared, embarrassed and humiliated. I wanted her to make the best decision for her own wellbeing and safety. At first, we talked about getting her the morning after pill and getting an STD test. But as the morning went on, she kept saying that she could not go through with contacting the police because he was in a frat. I pleaded with her to make a decision that she would not regret. But she and I both know the implications of her decision. We knew that speaking out against rape in the black community was going to garner resentment and anger.

I truly wanted my friend to recover from the violent act that was committed against her. Everything was happening in a vacuum. We needed to talk about her physical and mental wellbeing. And yet, there we were, still talking about the implications of saying that a member of a black frat raped a young woman. Somehow it is wrong in the black community to implicate a black man for a crime that he REALLY did do. Somehow black women are to remain silent about the wrongdoings of black men because of how racist US society is against black men. But what about black women? Why are black women to suffer in silence as some individuals choose to make the wrong decisions? I agree with everyone who says that racism continues to be a thorn in the side of US society. I also agree that people should be careful not to jump to conclusions and assume stereotypic notions. Still, I also think we should be civil enough to hold the guilty accountable. If we are going to fight for the innocent (and yes, innocent black men are put in jail everyday), then we must also punish the guilty. Remaining silent on the factual wrongdoings of black men is not any more acceptable than a white person being racist against a black person. Wrong is wrong, no matter who is doing it.
The Shadow of Your Smile used to fill the void I felt when you couldn’t be here...
All I had to do was think about the way your face lit up when you saw me and I’d do the same
Now that thought only brings hurt and pain
I think of the Shadow of Your Twisted Grin
And I wonder why you chose me to commit an unpardonable sin
It wasn’t my fault that I was near you at that time and place
It was your fault that I was terrified when I saw the look on your face
A twisted grin to hide the malice in what was to be done
A battle you knew you’d already won

The Shadow of Your Smile often haunts me during idle thought
I try to push it away, but my attention is always caught
I’m sure you’d be happy to know that I still remember your grin
But I only keep the memory so that this can’t happen again.
Why would anyone want to work on sexual assault prevention? Any impact that you have will rarely, if ever, be seen. The work is depressing. It is also isolating. People don’t usually want to hang around people who work on something as horrible as rape. Who wants to sit around and think about rape all the time? It’s a hard job, with little tangible reward.

So, why do we do it? What drives us to pursue what is a seemingly lose-lose function? But, this is not the question one must ask. The question is: WHO is it that drives us? Although the work is frustrating and lonely, it does not compare to the suffering that assault victims must live through. THEY are why we do the work. We do it to give voice to the voiceless, and to let them know that they are not alone.

Every day, I want to stop. Like I said, this work is not fun. In fact, it downright sucks. So, why do I do it? I do it for the women in my life who have expressed their anguish and deepest fears. I do it for those that struggle with these issues, but feel alone. I cannot be there to comfort them when they lie at night with only their thoughts and memories, but I’m doing what I can. I just wish it were enough.
Join Me

It started out like a regular instant messenger conversation that I had with her. “Hey” and “How are you doing?” We talked about the week, plans for the rest of the semester, and the upcoming basketball game. All of a sudden, the conversation changed. There was something different, but I could not pick up on it. I was getting confused and a little scared because it was so different from what we normally talked about. Why was she mentioning Take Back the Night and it being very important to her personally? Why were there long pauses? Why, even though it was on AIM, was I getting this sinking feeling? It was not making sense, but I could tell something was not right.

All of a sudden, I was able to put it together. My feelings ranged from surprise to compassion to anger. Questions raced through my head and my stomach was acting like it had been flipped upside down. How could anyone have done something like this to her? When did it happen? How could I have missed the signs and not known? But most of all the question that was tearing me apart was “why?” Why? Why? Why? I could not understand and it was scaring me. I was becoming a statistic. The ones you read about in the paper but do not think could ever happen to you. I was a guy who knew that one of his friends had been sexually assaulted. This feeling caused me to feel even worse. I know that I could never feel the pain and step in the shoes of my friend, but it ripped me up just to know that my friend had her innocence and pride stolen away from her by some selfish guy. I had just become a number and statistic, but it felt so degrading. Being a number felt horrible because numbers did not tell the story. A number did not share her heart out to me. A number did not have so much taken away from her. A number could not feel the pain and anguish I was feeling.

I continued to talk with my friend for a long, long time on instant messenger. She let me know more, and she told me how it keeps her from falling asleep at night. She told me how it scares her. Through her, I saw amazing courage and resiliency. She had no reason to tell me and let me know her worst memories and fears, but she trusted and believed in me. She was so much stronger than I was at that moment without even knowing it. I was lost and confused. Through her continuing to talk with me, she was becoming my support and foundation as I tried to make sense of an incomprehensible situation. She told me about how she wants to ensure that this does not happen to anyone else. She told me about Take Back the Night and convinced me to be a part of it. She inspired me to try and make a difference. She pushed me to act instead of just reading. Since I was now a statistic, I wanted to make sure that others never became a statistic and more importantly that people know that statistics are not just numbers, they are your sisters, mothers, and friends. They are people with some tough yet amazing stories dealing with sexual assault.

A few weeks later, I went to Take Back the Night and heard so many more stories from people. I saw that I knew even more people that had been affected by sexual assault. I was moved to stand up and share my experience so that people could hear a story. I was moved to be at least one guy that will stand up and proclaim my feelings and that I will make a difference. Other guys spoke and shared similar feelings, but we are just a few. It is time for all guys to stand up, and for all guys to commit to respecting women. We have the power to change the statistics. Will you join me?
Face the Dragons

Opening on the edge
of my pain
a sliver of light
shines hope on dark places
dripping with memories
and shattered dreams
old beliefs in
people
the world
myself
turned upside-down
i don’t know where to turn
the internal landscape
now dark and fierce
convoluted and unnavigable
the external space
now full of doubt and fear
and the exhaustion of a pretend smile
“What if you just sit with the pain?” she says
i think she’s crazy
how does she just sit there every week?
can’t she see i’m exploding
into a million pieces?
that i’m disappearing into the mist?
Breathe, she says
be kind to yourself
can’t she see i’m disgusting and dirty and worthless?
that i hate myself?
that i hate her?
and everyone?
but mostly myself?
but i come back each week
why?
desperately holding onto the small yellow
half deflated life raft she extends
every seven days
i can’t let go
and i can’t quite climb on
and she keeps extending

those invitations into the dark spaces
My dark spaces that i don’t want
to have inside me
that i want to run away from
ignore
what if i invite them in?
face the dragons?
they will burn me up
in their rage and fear
I’ll go with you, she says
everything you need is inside of you
we just have to find the window
into the room that is you
- that still is, and can be –
all that is light and dark inside of you
remembering into your own healing capacity
remembering that there is still
more right with you than wrong
i reluctantly feel my body relax
fill my lungs for the first time all day
feel the straightjacket ease a little
i’m not quite sure yet
how this happens
but i have moments like this
in here
and sometimes even out there
i leave smiling today – a real one –
almost trusting her
almost trusting myself
it scares me
but i breathe
and walk into the outside world
that today looks a little lighter,
a little less threatening
I’ll see you next week

32 Saturday Night

-2/12/06
Counseling is too sterile a word to describe that part of my healing and what I shared with you. Sitting with you, struggling through memories, anxieties and fears was how I became whole again. I learned to trust and then I learned to love myself and embrace the new person I had become. The years of weekly sessions and the cards that I still keep are more than my past; they have allowed me to claim my future, to smile, and be free. You were my unrelenting support and accepted me just as I was. I will be forever proud of my healing work and grateful for having known you.

Thank you
E.
Like many of the women involved in Sexual Assault Prevention Week, I was raped by someone I knew and someone I trusted. Unlike many of these women, it happened long before I arrived on campus. When I came to Duke as a freshman I was determined to leave behind the past that had colored my entire high school experience. For over three years, starting when I was fourteen, I was raped and abused by my basketball coach. Duke was to be a new start, a new life and an escape from the events I could not bring myself to face.

When I began seeing signs advertising Sexual Assault Prevention Week my freshman year, a chill went up my spine. I resented the reminder that I was a statistic. I was one out of four. I was a pinwheel on the quad.

Fortunately I had told a few of my friends at Duke about my past so I had their constant support as the week depleted my emotions. Despite my anger of being constantly reminded of sexual assault that week, I decided it might help me to go to Take Back the Night. I marched with my best friends by my side. We started at the Marketplace but I only made it to the GA bus stop before I called a friend to come pick me up. The cheers and chants had created a knot in my stomach. Before this week, I had been able to suppress these feelings. I resented their return.

My friends reported back to me after they listened to the men and women who bravely stood in front of the chapel and shared their stories. They said hearing the speeches had been very difficult and that it was better that I hadn't been there. But they also let me know that one of the speakers was a junior in the sorority I had just joined. After sitting down at my computer and writing, deleting, re-writing and finally sending an e-mail to her, we met for lunch. She was the first and (as far as I am aware) only survivor I have ever shared my story with. While it was an incredibly draining experience, I realized for the first time that I was not alone. She understood my thoughts and feelings in a way I think only a survivor could. Despite the differences in the details of our experiences, the emotions that those experiences evoked were very much the same. I have never talked to another survivor since that day. That initial conversation both broke and healed something in me for good. Somehow talking to her both extinguished what little innocence I still clung to, while at the same time, lifted an enormous weight off of me.

My sophomore year I began my first real relationship. I did not date this guy to help heal my wounds, to escape the Duke hook-up culture (which I found, and still find, terrifying), or to prove to myself that I could be in a relationship. I dated him because I liked him. And when I discovered that emotion was turning to love, I was surprised. I had always assumed I was too damaged to ever have such feelings. While he did not come into the relationship knowing exactly what to do or say about my past, he handled it with a grace and delicacy I had never expected from a man. He learned how to deal with the nightmares and flashbacks during which I could be staring straight at him and only see my abuser. He learned how to stick with me through the times when I would simply shut down emotionally.

Before my sophomore year, I had always leaned on women for support. These women are the greatest strength in my life. However, the unconditional support of a man, other than my father, was something I had yet to experience since being raped. It was a different kind of support that offered a new kind of healing.

As spring rolled around I felt my pulse quicken. It was that time of year again, and the posters and advertisements for the week dotted the campus. I was more upfront with my friends this time around. I told them why the week would be difficult for me, and asked for their support. I decided that this year I would try to listen to the women speak at Take Back the Night. I sat between my best friend and my boyfriend. They each held one of my clammy hands in theirs.
When a tear rolled down my cheek a hand would come from one side or the other to gently brush it away. They sat patiently, checked in with me when I started to tremble, and quietly led me away when I could no longer listen to the stories.

The next morning as I walked to class, I passed the pinwheel display. I remembered how angry that physical representation had made me feel the year before. However, this time as I passed it a new feeling of comfort swept over me. I was a pinwheel. And there were pinwheels all around me – other women who understood the fear, understood the shame, and understood the vulnerability. I felt the tears start to flow, but this time I just let them roll down my cheeks. I tried to allow myself to begin to heal.

My junior year, I found myself in a new relationship for a brief time. I was once again reminded of how well men can handle the difficult situation of dating a sexual assault victim. Not only was he willing and able to enter into conversations about rape or sexual assault, but he helped me work through some of the more difficult emotions that accompany my past - even when those emotions made moments in our relationship that much more difficult. He was able to find the balance between respecting my past and not letting it define me. However, after my past experiences I had assumed that any normal relationship would be completely positive. I realize now that I was being naïve: even normal relationships can involve pain. While a difficult lesson to learn, I was able to experience the difference between healthy and unhealthy hurt.

Now, in the midst of my junior year I am facing this week for the third time. I plan to do so, once again, with my best friends by my side. But I am hoping some things will be different this year. I am hoping that by writing this piece, and taking a more active role in the week, I will feel more connected to the week and to its purpose. I used to feel that the week and this publication were only for people who had been raped at Duke. However, events I experienced this academic year have taught me that regardless of where or when I was raped, it greatly affects my life here. It affects the way I interact with men, the way I view the social life at Duke, and what I value in friendships.

I know in some regards my past has made my life at Duke more difficult. I have badly damaged some relationships with men as I have tried to cope with what happened to me. I have dropped in and out of depression, continually switching between avoiding and confronting my past. But I also know that having been raped has forced me to create extremely trusting relationships with my peers. And for that I am incredibly thankful. I have been overwhelmed by how caring they can be when I have shared my story. Even without previous personal experience with the issues surrounding rape and sexual assault my friends have taken the events of my past in stride, learned how to care for me and helped teach me how to care for myself. So to the women and men who are in this story, thank you. You know who you are, and you know this piece could never do justice to the effect you all have had on my life. Just know that before you all entered my life, I would never have had the courage to write this. Now that I have you all by my side I am proud to be telling my story.
Dear God,

I have never understood why you allowed him to take advantage of me my freshman year. I never knew why you took me to Ghana that summer or gave me a 5 to 0 unanimous decision to remove him from Duke's campus. I do know that you had a reason for it all.

Before the rape, I remember that I prayed to you on my mission trip in Mexico to give me an opportunity to deepen my faith in you. I remember being so angry and feeling so betrayed by you when just a month after coming back from the mission trip he hurt me: my body, my mind, and my soul. You had just raised your son from the dead three days before that night he raped me. I found it so hard to continue to love you. I remember going to church on Sunday following that
Easter and I cried but not out loud; I cried silently in the pews for someone to make it all right for someone to take me out of this Hell that I was living in. At that time you gave me a friend, you gave me my saint who lead me to Father Joe. Late that Sunday night in the chapel, I remember recounting as much of the story that I could remember though my pain and tears. You gave Father Joe the strength to bless me with your Holy Oils in the sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. That night you blessed me in my brokenness.

A few weeks later, you sent me on a plane to Ghana, a foreign land without any Caucasian men so much as resembling my perpetrator. The only book that you allowed me to pack in my bags was your Holy Bible. I did not know that I would be allowed so much free time in Ghana. However, in that time you directed me to your holy words through scripture. You gave me that entire summer abroad to read your entire written word. Most importantly, you gave me a rosary to pray to the Blessed Virgin. I remember how I had felt so betrayed especially because he had taken my virginity from me that night. Nevertheless, praying decade after decade of the rosary and meditating on each of your holy mysteries, your mother revealed to me that my physical virginity was not the same as my spiritual virginity. It was only my physical virginity that was taken from me that night, not my spiritual. I was amazed by the power of prayer, a power, which is able to overcome any evil.

Coming back to campus after my summer abroad was so difficult, because he was still on campus enjoying himself with his friends. However, with my extreme depression caused by vivid flashbacks, I could not even enjoy my friends or any of the talents that you had given me. My grades began to slip, my social life began to not exist, and my body began to deteriorate. With using the power of prayer that you had taught me, I found that you were leading me to report this atrocity to the Undergraduate Judicial Board. Having never heard about a responsible finding in any sexual assault hearing from the UJB, I was extremely hesitant and did not understand why you would want me to go through more pain. However, I obediently listened and followed. On that cold November day of my hearing, you gave me friends and my brother to support me. After a week of waiting to hear the outcome, I knew that nothing good could have come out of it, but you were present at the deliberations of my case, and you touched the hearts of those board members. You gave them the strength to support me in the truth of my story with a 5 to 0 vote finding him responsible for what he had done. Through that, you helped to redeem my mind. You showed me that despite any wrong I had done that night that it was not I who was responsible for what had happened, but it was he; he was the one to blame.

With your redemption of my spirit and mind, you gave me a solid foundation upon which I could redeem my physical self. You placed individuals into my life at the end of my sophomore year to help me in my earthly path of healing. You took me sky diving with a friend that you had introduced me to only three weeks prior to celebrate all that you had done in my life a year after this evil had been committed. You gave me the strength to pray for him, the strength to forgive myself for what had happened, and the strength to continue to live on earth. Although I was tempted and tried to end my life, you found me, and you showed me how much you loved me, and that you loved me in my brokenness. Without you, Father, I would be a dead body, mind, and soul. Thank you God for holding me close in your arms and carrying me. I love you.

Amen.
He’s never even been to Duke, never set foot in my Gothic wonderland. But he’s haunted me here for years. Tonight, he is making me cry, and for the first time I am realizing the magnitude of what he did to me. But he’ll never know.

He can’t picture me sitting here on my bed, in this apartment that makes me feel so safe. I’m thinking back over the last four years at Duke and reflecting on the part he has played in those years. But I won’t let him be a part of my last three months here. These are mine.

I doubt he even remembers that night. But I do. It was actually a Saturday night, the summer after I graduated from high school. I was the life of the party, and I was the talk of the town. With a full scholarship to Duke, I had the world at my fingertips. And I felt that way as I was surrounded by my friends that night at the pool party. Caught up in the moment, I climbed up on a ledge and, basking in the warm Carolina moonlight, cannonballed into the pool. I was sexy in my red string bikini, and I felt sexy. I wanted to be seen, and I wanted him to see me. Most of the boys in my town were intimidated by me, they weren’t used to women who were independent and
ambitious. I thought he was different, a college boy who had been pursuing me for years. He'll never know the way I dreamed about him kissing me goodnight at my doorstep.

Instead, he took me back to a friend’s apartment, and I’m still not sure how we ended up alone in that room. I said no, but I couldn’t scream. I was terrified of someone walking in and seeing my downfall. Everyone would think I had failed, that I was a slut. That’s the way gossip works in a small southern town. And I was too drunk to understand that it wasn’t my fault that this was happening to me. So I lay there, pinned underneath him. I held on because it hurt. It was my first time. He’ll never know how much it disgusted me to touch him. The most ironic thing is, he told me he loved me.

I kept seeing him that summer, and I still don’t know why. I slept with him again after that night. I thought that was what I was supposed to do. I think, at my core, I stayed with him because I didn’t want to admit that what had happened was wrong. I had fantasized about my first time for years. Now I understand the truth. But he’ll never know that it took me three years to call it rape.

He wasn’t there when I went to Take Back the Night during my sophomore year. He doesn’t know that my best friend spoke that night, thanked me for supporting her in her healing process. He doesn’t know how I shook when it finally dawned on me that I was a victim too. He doesn’t know the boy who held me close that night and let me cry.

He used to laugh at me because my thighs were bigger than his. He doesn’t know that I spent a year hiding in a bathroom stall, purging out my insides because I felt inadequate and unlovable and dirty. So dirty. I’m sure he never had nightmares like I did.

He wasn’t there when I overdosed on pain pills just because I wanted to stop hurting, just for one night. He doesn’t know that I spent a week in the psychiatric facility at Duke hospital to deal with severe depression. I’m sure he never has anxiety attacks. I thought I was crazy, and my craziness drove away the boy who had been my entire support system through everything. I guess he couldn’t understand how hard a place like Duke would be for a girl whose self-confidence and self-worth were taken away from her. I bet he thinks he still has his dignity.

I saw him last week for the first time in three years. It was funny going back there, where I feel like no one even knows me anymore. No one knows about this journey of self-discovery I’ve gone on for the past few years. It took me from New England to South America to Europe, and back to the American South. No one could even begin to understand the blissful sense of self-love I have found. Once I realized that what I am has nothing to do with him, I began to get back to me. I re-learned how to eat, how to have friends, how to have sex. But rape was still a scary concept to me. Being a rape victim was even scarier. So when I saw him, I reveled in the fact that I could close this chapter of my healing process, completely unbeknownst to him. He doesn’t get the privilege of having any sense of me, and I can move on. But he still has no idea.

What I’ve realized after picking up the pieces of me that I scattered around during my first two years at Duke, is that he never took anything away from me. There is no part of my life that will be less fulfilling because of him. But he’ll never know that. To him, I’m just another notch on his bedpost. Whatever, I will never again blame myself. It’s really too bad that he’ll never know me, because I’m pretty fucking amazing. But tonight....this is the last tear I cry for him. I’m letting go.
When I was young, a girl, my mother told me about “gra sin,” a Gaelic term for a moment of pure love. Gra sin happens to nuns when they go into ecstasy, it’s what happens when lovers kiss on their wedding day, it’s all light and joy and hope and excitement. It’s basically bullshit. I remember shrugging it off.

It certainly was never going to happen to me.

When I got a little older, at this point between a teenager and a girl, my sister taught me about defense, about how you should fight if a man tries anything you don’t want. My parents were too squeamish about sex to teach me, so my sister, herself a once victim, was my tutor. She showed me how to brace myself if a man tried to do to me what happened to her. I remember shrugging this off, too.

It was certainly never going to happen to me.

When I was 12, at summer camp, I was asked to dance at the end-of-summer dance. I was, at 12, a social nothing, a strange aggressive girl who nobody liked. So when Anthony, an older camper, 16 or 17, asked me to dance I was intrigued. I thought perhaps he was teasing me. It was the kind of bump-n-grind dance that I hated, but I was excited to try. We “danced” for a while, his hands looking for the curves that had yet to come, and he slowly edged me to the door of the hall. I didn’t really notice. I was caught up in music and fear, I suppose. Eventually, he took my hand and led me out behind the dance hall- a rec room, really. He pulled me close to him, kissed me. So far, not bad. I was still intrigued. He smelled un-showered and angry, and his kiss got harder and harder. His hand slipped down, grappling with my pants zipper, reached into my pants and started to scratch. I shrunk against the wall, completely shocked. He looked at me, right into my eyes and said “trust me.”

Trust me.

I couldn’t move, I was scared and amazed. He took my lack of response as go-ahead, I think, because he reached further and rubbed my vagina, rubbed hard against it, and, quickly becoming bored, tried to enter it with his fingers. At this I shrank away, far enough away to break off the contact. Anthony seemed hurt, and looked at my face again. “What’s wrong?” he asked.

I was TWELVE, Anthony. I was twelve. I don’t care if I did like you – and I didn’t really know you, so how did you come to that conclusion? – I was too young, too scared, too angry to be enjoying that.

I walked away. He didn’t seem to mind. I walked down to the lake, along a path only a few people knew. I sat by the lake, with the space between my legs throbbing in pain, angry that I hadn’t done anything.

He had followed me. He started a conversation, at first it was mostly just him talking. I thought, perhaps he’s come to apologize. Maybe he wants to get to know the girl he just tried to... I talked a little, just to close up the silence. He smiled a lot. Nice smile, Anthony had.

He tried to kiss me again. I let him, I was still what I’ve come to know now as shell-shocked. His hands stay put. He lay me down on the moss by the side of the lake and kissed me. I may have kissed him back, I was still unsure of what had happened. He told me to be still, unbuttoned me, pulled me out of my jeans. “This is going to feel great,” he said, “Trust me.”

Trust me.
I was still as ice, tight and tense. I was terrified. He began to kiss my legs, bite my thighs, then angrily (perhaps not, perhaps this is my memory that is angry) kiss my vagina. He bit the lips and roughed up the insides with his tongue and his teeth until they bled. I lay there, motionless, once again shocked and angry. He noticed my tenseness and looked up. “What’s wrong with you? This is for you!” He growled.

I was TWELVE, Anthony. I was twelve and bleeding by the riverside.

I grabbed a branch and hauled myself up, shaking. I grabbed my jeans, put them on, and ran down the path.

I told the camp head, in sobs and whispers. She said that because he hadn’t tried to put anything in me – basically, because he didn’t get anything out of it, sexually – that she couldn’t do anything to punish him. But, she said, she would take care of it. “It’ll be okay, honey, trust me.”

Trust me.

Nothing happened to Anthony, and when I saw him years later I asked him if he remembered me. He didn’t. He didn’t remember the night. He was sorry, so many years later, but no one had ever said anything to him.

Trust is a difficult word now.

When I was 21, nine years later, I fell deeply, rapidly, scarily in love. I had, until that point, managed to have a relatively satisfying sexual life out of sheer determination and reliance on “the stark act of love,” as Humbert Humbert once put it. But, with him, things felt different. He wanted to make me happy, to please me, to know me through and through. He actually wanted to know me as me, not as the rough and gruff show I put on like an overcoat. He wanted to see me and raise me twenty.

And suddenly, I wanted to tell him. Because I love him. Simple as that. In a slow, emotionless monotone, in short, subjectless sentences, I recounted to him that night. Couldn’t look at him. Told him why I couldn’t let him touch me. Why I was terrified at the idea of someone looking at my vagina. Scared they’d see the (long since faded) cuts. Why I hated that awful, angry word: trust.

He listened with his enormously open heart. I realized, when I had finished, that I hadn’t looked at him once during my tale; I was too afraid to see the disgust or shame on his face. I looked up, into those cosmically blue eyes, and saw anguish, hopefulness, and intense love. Such an intense love. My heart rose into my head and both sang out with grace.

I trust him.

I still don’t like that word.

I love him.

I still feel scared to let him touch me, even gently. It has been slow, it has been painful. It’s been worth it, every time.

I watch out for other girls now, teach them self-defense and teach them about the purity, the intensity of what love does. I watch them shrug.

But it happened to me.
Art Imitates Life

Art imitates life. I never believed the statement until I saw part of my life on screen. A part that I thought I had forgotten and pushed out of my mind.

I saw Ria, this fictional character whose every emotion—the frustration, the anger, the guilt—I could feel. I felt her disgust as she saw the man who had abused her body at such a young age.

I remembered the touch of his hands and lips on my skin. Except this was not a romance novel. I was just an eleven year old girl who thought she could trust this older man who called himself her “uncle.” My dreams of the perfect Christmas were ruined as he touched me, one floor above the living room where my entire family sat, talking and laughing.

The silence Ria had known to keep was the same silence I forced upon myself for ten more years. My mother and sister became aware very soon afterward, but I never shared the secret with my other sister and my father. And I never confronted this relative. Even at eleven years of age, I knew that silence was more important in Indian families than any sort of vindication. Nothing could or should break them up, not even this disgusting act, not even the shame of one person.

Ria knew the same thing too. And for over a decade, she stayed silent, like myself. Until the day the same thing happened to her younger cousin by the same man. And she was finally able to tell her story and get him out of her life. That was where the similarities ended. Unlike her, I could not tell my story and expect the same reaction: kicking him out of the family, me being accepted for this truth. Real life does not usually afford the same happy ending. This man was my aunt’s brother, an aunt who I considered a second mother. An aunt who had lost a sister to cancer just a few months before my interaction with her brother. Her heart was already broken, and he was her support system, her shoulder to lean on.

To this day, the few times that I have seen him, I have tried to ignore him, to look past him in the hallway. Not offering a hug or even a smile. These actions have isolated me a little from other members of my family, especially my aunt, who I would give anything to be able to confide in again. I am seen as a little cold or a little unfriendly. Part of me wishes I could tell all of them and make them see him for the disgusting person that he is. But I also know this would create breaks that could never be repaired.

I did not write this for sympathy or pity. I wrote it because I want others of my background who have experienced this pain to know they are not alone. Perhaps that has been the most crippling thing of all, feeling like no one can understand you. But eventually you realize it is not true. Someone out there does, and he or she will listen. And you will not have to be silent anymore.
IT IS OUR RIGHT TO

FIND THE SPACE TO GROW
These are the definitions in use on Duke University’s campus, in prevention education programs, publications and in our sexual misconduct policy. These definitions are based on NC law, but conveyed in non-legal language that is easier for students to understand.

**Sexual Assault:** Any sex act against your will, without your consent, or when you are unable to freely give consent.

**Rape:** Any sex act involving penetration of any body opening by any object, that is against your will, without your consent, or when you are unable to freely give consent.

When discussing these definitions it is helpful to examine each part of the definition in more detail.

“**Against Your Will**” implies that one partner said “no” to a sexual act, or gave another verbal or nonverbal indication such as pushing away or looking away, indicating such sexual contact was unwanted.

“**Without Your Consent**” implies that one partner did not agree—in other words, did not say “yes”—to a sexual act.

When we think of sexual assault and rape, what often comes to mind is an image of “clear” force, that is, the use of a weapon or physical assertion. What we know is that consent and force more accurately exist along a continuum and that much assault happens when neither consent
nor force may be “obvious.” Weapons and extreme physical force are not terribly common, especially considering that most assaults happen between two people who know each other. This requires a broadening of our examination of what constitutes “force” to include such things as the use of verbal, physical or emotional pressure or manipulation, substances, threats and coercion.

Consent should be INFORMED—meaning that the person being acted upon knows what is happening—and MUTUAL—meaning that both parties have equal input/say-so and they both want to participate in a given sexual act. It is important to remember that being quiet is often NOT an indication of consent, but rather is a way of expressing discomfort, shock or disinterest. “The use of drugs or alcohol to increase the likelihood that someone will have sex or ‘fool around’ is a form of coercion. Overlooking or ignoring the fact that someone is drunk is a form of manipulation.” (from Columbia University’s sexual misconduct panelist training manual.)

The most effective way to ensure consent is to clearly communicate with your partner, even in a casual encounter. If there is any doubt about consent, it is best to STOP and ASK. If you can’t get a clear answer, wait until later.

“When You Are Unable To Freely Give Consent” implies that a given individual has had either the right or the ability to freely consent taken away by another person or by circumstances. This includes, but is not limited to, being intoxicated, scared, forced, bound/gagged, underage, passed out, intimidated, coerced, mentally impaired, beaten, high, threatened, isolated, physically impaired or the use of a weapon.
Rape and sexual assault are extraordinarily stressful life events. To be an effective support person, it can be helpful to know something about some of the common responses to sexual violations. The following stages of recovery are only generalizations; not all victims will follow the same patterns or the same time frame. Each individual reacts differently; some may never experience certain symptoms, some may fluctuate between stages, and some may become “stuck” in a particular stage. Therefore, this information should only be used as a guideline, to attain a general understanding of how the individual may be feeling, and what they might be experiencing, in the present. Do not attempt to use this information to predict future stages. Each survivor’s experience of the healing process is unique, and is influenced by a number of life factors.

STAGE I: THE INITIAL SHOCK OR ACUTE STAGE
- Victim experiences a sense of crisis, loss of control, confusion, and a sense of unreality. The victim may feel a great deal of confusion and have a hard time making decisions.
- Different response styles are possible: An individual may be very expressive (crying, easily startled, “hyperalert”, “hysterical”) or withdrawn (numb, disconnected, quiet, no obvious emotion) or some combination.

STAGE II: THE DENIAL OR PSEUDO-ADJUSTMENT STAGE
- Attempts to go on with life “as usual.” Victims want to forget the assault.
- Victims do not usually seek help during this stage.
- You cannot force anyone out of the denial stage, nor should you try. This is an effective way of dealing with trauma temporarily. You might let the victim know that sooner or later the event will resurface. Communicate that this is a normal reaction and that there are resources ready to help, when he/she wants/needs them.
STAGE III: REACTIVATION OR DECOMPENSATION STAGE (“LIFE FALLS APART”)

- This phase is usually triggered by some event that stirs up memories associated with the assault.
- In this stage, the real problems start to surface, and the victim is likely to seek help from friends, family, and advocates. This can be confusing for family and friends who were under the impression that he/she was “over” the sexual assault.
- Survivors may experience depression, suicidal ideation, feelings of guilt, shame, helplessness, or confusion. They may experience academic and relationship difficulties, physical symptoms (headaches, gastric problems), nightmares, flashbacks, and changes in eating and sleeping patterns.

STAGE IV: THE ANGER STAGE

- When the victim begins to acknowledge the fact that they had no control over what happened and they let go of some of their self-blame, they may begin to experience intense feelings of fear, anger, and rage. The victim may be angry at everyone but the perpetrator because he is the “least safe target” for the victim’s anger.
- This stage also usually involves a grieving process: victims may begin to identify their personal losses and start to face the pain around those issues.

STAGE V: THE INTEGRATION STAGE

- The assault and the events surrounding it are viewed as significant life experiences integrated among other experiences. The event becomes part of the past and is gradually acknowledged as an event that continues to impact who the survivor is.

Remember that rape and sexual assault happen in all communities. Male survivors, survivors of color, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered survivors all experience similar reactions to those described above. However, they are also likely struggling with the additional burdens of stereotypes, racism, homophobia and other oppressions, often leaving them feeling even more isolated, confused, ashamed, frightened, and less likely to seek support.
Sexual assault and relationship violence is more common than we like to think. Studies show that 1 in 4 women and 3% of men will be survivors of sexual assault in their lifetimes. Furthermore, sexual violence affects individuals of all ethnicities, sexual orientations and socio-economic statuses. Thus, without realizing it, we all likely know someone who has been abused, assaulted or violated at some point in their lives. While we may want to help, many of us may not know how. Here are a few suggestions for seeking help for yourself, or for responding to someone you suspect may be a survivor of sexual assault, rape, or dating violence.

**IF YOU WERE RECENTLY ASSAULTED – HELPFUL TIPS FOR SELF-CARE/ACTION:**

- Go to a safe place.
- Tell someone—a friend, family member, rape crisis advocate, or professional.
- Seek ongoing support—the resources on the following page are available to you.
- Medical follow-up is recommended to ensure your physical well-being. This can be done at the local emergency department, student health, or your physician.
- You have the option of reporting. Evidence collection can be done at the Emergency Department within five days of an assault. To pursue this option, it is best not to shower, bathe, change clothes or douche in order to preserve physical evidence. Having evidence collected does not obligate you to proceed with legal or judicial action and anonymous reporting is an option.
IF YOU WERE ASSAULTED IN THE PAST – HELPFUL TIPS FOR SELF-CARE/ACTION:

- Sexual assault and relationship violence can have a lasting impact on an individual’s well-being. Survivors may experience feelings of depression, guilt, anger, fear, grief and loss, and may find their relationships, academic performance, and day-to-day functioning affected. If you are experiencing distress of any kind, please know that it is possible to heal.
- Tell someone—a friend, family member, rape crisis advocate, or professional—even if you didn’t tell anyone at the time it happened.
- Seek ongoing support—the resources on the following page are available to you.
- You have the option of reporting—to the police or the Office of Judicial Affairs, either formally or anonymously.

HOW TO HELP A FRIEND - SUGGESTIONS FOR BEING SUPPORTIVE:

- Be a good listener. Respond to feelings as well as words.
- Believe her/him. People rarely make up stories of sexual assault, rape or abuse.
- Don’t blame the person. No victim asks to be assaulted; no one deserves to be assaulted.
- Provide support without taking over. Encourage the individual to explore their options and let the individual make her/his own decisions.
- Respect the individual’s privacy. Let the individual decide whom she/he will tell.
- Be there during the long healing process and provide ongoing support.
- Take care of yourself. The resources on the following page are available to you too.

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE HURT SOMEONE:

- If you are experiencing distress because you think you have assaulted someone, seek support. The resources on the following pages are also available to you.
Risk Reduction: Guidelines to Minimize the Risk of Sexual Assault

Awareness:
- Know your individual rights.
- Know which behaviors constitute rape and sexual assault.
- Know how alcohol and drug consumption impacts your own and others behavior and how altered judgment affects your intimate relationships.
- Know basic personal safety information and victim prevention techniques. Pay attention to what is happening around you, and avoid, when possible, vulnerable and potentially dangerous situations.

Personally:
- Think about what you really want in a relationship.
- Be aware of stereotypes that prevent you from acting as you would like.
- You have the right to feel good about yourself and to get help if you choose.
- If you have been the victim of sexual abuse, seek the support that you need.
- Act on your needs and wants while not exploiting others.

In Relationships:
- Develop personal intimacy communication skills and communicate what you really want and what you are really thinking. Passivity may be misinterpreted as permission. Be direct and firm with someone who is pressuring you sexually. Assert yourself.
- Know your sexual desires and limits. Believe in your right to set those limits. Communicate your limits clearly.
- Listen and pay attention to the verbal and non-verbal cues you or your partner may be sending. If you are not sure, STOP and talk about it.
- Trust your intuitions. If you feel you are being pressured into unwanted sex by your partner or peers, you probably are.
- Be aware that you also have the right to say no to sexual activity regardless of whether or not you have had sex before. You have the right to stop sexual activity at any time.
While beneficial in all cases, the following actions are particularly powerful agents of change when done by men.

- Understand how your own attitudes and actions perpetuate sexism and violence, and work toward changing them.
- Confront sexist, racist, homophobic and all other bigoted remarks and jokes.
- Use positive peer pressure to help stop abusive behaviors that may lead to acquaintance sexual assault. For example, when over-hearing someone talk about taking advantage of a partner sexually, let them know you think this is wrong. Silence can be mistaken for approval.
- Don’t fund sexism. Don’t purchase magazines or music, or rent videos or video games, that portray women in a sexually degrading or violent manner. Protest sexism in the media.
- Read articles, essays, books about masculinity, gender inequality, and the root causes of sexual violence. Educate yourself and others about the connections between larger social forces and the conflicts between individual women and men.
- Support candidates for political office who are committed to the full social, economic and political equality of women. Actively oppose candidates who are not.
- Organize or join a group of men to work against sexism and violence (like Men Acting for Change here at Duke).
- Support individuals and agencies who are on the forefront in working to end all forms of violence against children, women and men. Commit yourself to ending oppression in all its forms.

**Adapted from: Real Men, P.O. Box 1769, Brookline, MA 02146**
Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS) at the Duke Women’s Center
Offers advocacy (provides assistance with legal, judicial, medical, academic & residential questions), crisis intervention, individual and group counseling. Provides prevention education with the Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention (SHARP) peer educators and self defense workshops for women.
(wc.studentaffairs.duke.edu/sass)
684-3897

SASS after hours (after 5pm) information line
Provides recorded contact information for campus & community resources for sexual assault survivors.
681-6882

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
Offers crisis intervention and ongoing individual and group counseling
660-1000

Duke Student Health
Provides medical care, emergency contraception and sexually transmitted disease prevention.
681-WELL

Duke Hospital Emergency Department
Provides medical care, emergency contraception, sexually transmitted disease prevention, & rape kit collection.
684-2413

Duke Police (emergency)
Provides transportation to the ED, takes reports of an assault, investigates and participates in appropriate legal or judicial action. Anonymous reports are an option.
911 (from on campus)
684-2444 (from cell)

Safe Rides
Provides safe transportation to cars parked on campus.
684-SAFE

Center for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Life
Provides support to members of the LGBT community who are survivors. Staff at SASS, CAPS & DCRC also trained to work with LGBT survivors.
684-6607

Duke Office of Judicial Affairs
See the sexual misconduct policy for reporting options.
http://deanofstudents.studentaffairs.duke.edu/sxmscondt.html
668-3853
Durham Crisis Response Center (24-hour, 7 day/week crisis line)
Provides 24-hour crisis response services, including crisis intervention, advocacy, accompaniment to the Emergency Department, & referrals.
403-6562

Durham Police Department
Takes reports of an assault, investigates and participates in appropriate legal or judicial action. Anonymous reports are an option.
560-4427
560-4609

Durham Regional Hospital (ED)
Provides medical care, emergency contraception, sexually transmitted disease prevention, and rape kit collection.
470-4000
470-5345

KIRAN
Provides domestic violence & crisis services to South Asians.
www.kiraninc.org
1-866-547-2646

North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault
www.nccasa.org
431-0995

NATIONALLY

Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)
National crisis line provides 24-hour crisis information and referrals.
www.rainn.org
1-800-656-HOPE

Men Can Stop Rape
Provides information about working with men to end violence against women.
www.mencanstoprape.org
1-202-265-6530

I’ll Rise (web blog)
Created by 2 Duke graduates, this site offers a safe & anonymous forum for survivors and allies to share their stories.
http://illrise.blogspot.com
• **Sexual Assault Support Services (SASS)** – provides educational outreach programs on sexual assault and healthy relationships, sponsors Sexual Assault Prevention Week and Dating Violence Awareness Week, and offers self-defense workshops for women. Request a program or volunteer. Contact the SASS Assistant Coordinator at the Women’s Center at 684-3897 for more information.

• **Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention (SHARP) Peer Educators** – Contact the SASS Assistant Coordinator at 684-3897 or see the Healthy Devil website, http://healthydevil.studentaffairs.duke.edu, for more information about how to join.

• **Men Acting for Change (MAC)** – join a group of male students and administrators dedicated to addressing men’s roles at Duke and working to create a safer and healthier community, especially by opposing gender-related violence including sexual harassment and sexual assault. Projects include events like the White Ribbon Campaign, educational workshops and informal discussions. For more information, see www.duke.edu/web/mac.

• **Durham Crisis Response Center** – This is our local rape crisis and domestic violence agency. Become a trained victim advocate to provide crisis support and advocacy to survivors at the hospital and on the crisis line. Call 403-9425 for more information.

• **Saturday Night** – Help produce the next edition of this student publication about sexual assault and rape at Duke. Find out more at www.duke.edu/web/saturdaynight.

Check out a book on sexual assault, relationship violence or other related topics from the violence section of the **Women’s Center Book Exchange** (located at 126 Few Fed Bldg.) Here is a sampling of what we have available:
