DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

Where Do We Draw the Line?

By Anissia Jenkins

Every 15 seconds a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend.

Domestic violence was the "Around the Circle" discussion topic Jan. 20, 1999, in the Sonja Haynes Stone Black Cultural Center. The Theta Nu Xi Sorority sponsored this forum. Some of the subtopics discussed were confronting the abused, how to define abuse, and where to draw the line.

To help make these distinctions and find answers to these questions we saw the movie, "Rain Dance," starring Carolina graduate April Turner. The movie gave the discussion life and made domestic violence vivid.

From the movie and further discussion we found many explanations, more so than answers to questions such as, "What is abuse, and where do we draw the line". These explanations led to additional questions such as, "Is being made fun of a type of abuse." Some of the members of the forum replied no, but others felt this should be considered a form of abuse because it is affecting the person emotionally, hence emotional abuse.

After discussing these two opposing views, it brought most of us to the question of "Where do you draw the line?" Everyone knows that it is hard to draw the line because the situations are so arbitrary. This is a question that still lingers and there very well may be different answers for different situations.

The last topic that was discussed involved confronting the abused. To help abused friends and relatives, it is best to 1) LISTEN. Don't try to force her to leave or confront the abuser. 2) BELIEVE HER. There are many occasions where women do not come forward to report an abuse situation because she thinks people will not believe her.

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This is a very important issue, especially here on a college campus. A thought to remember... "One out of every four college women is attacked by a rapist before she graduates; one in seven will be raped."