

'Sometimes you feel all the blame put on you'

Rape After the fact

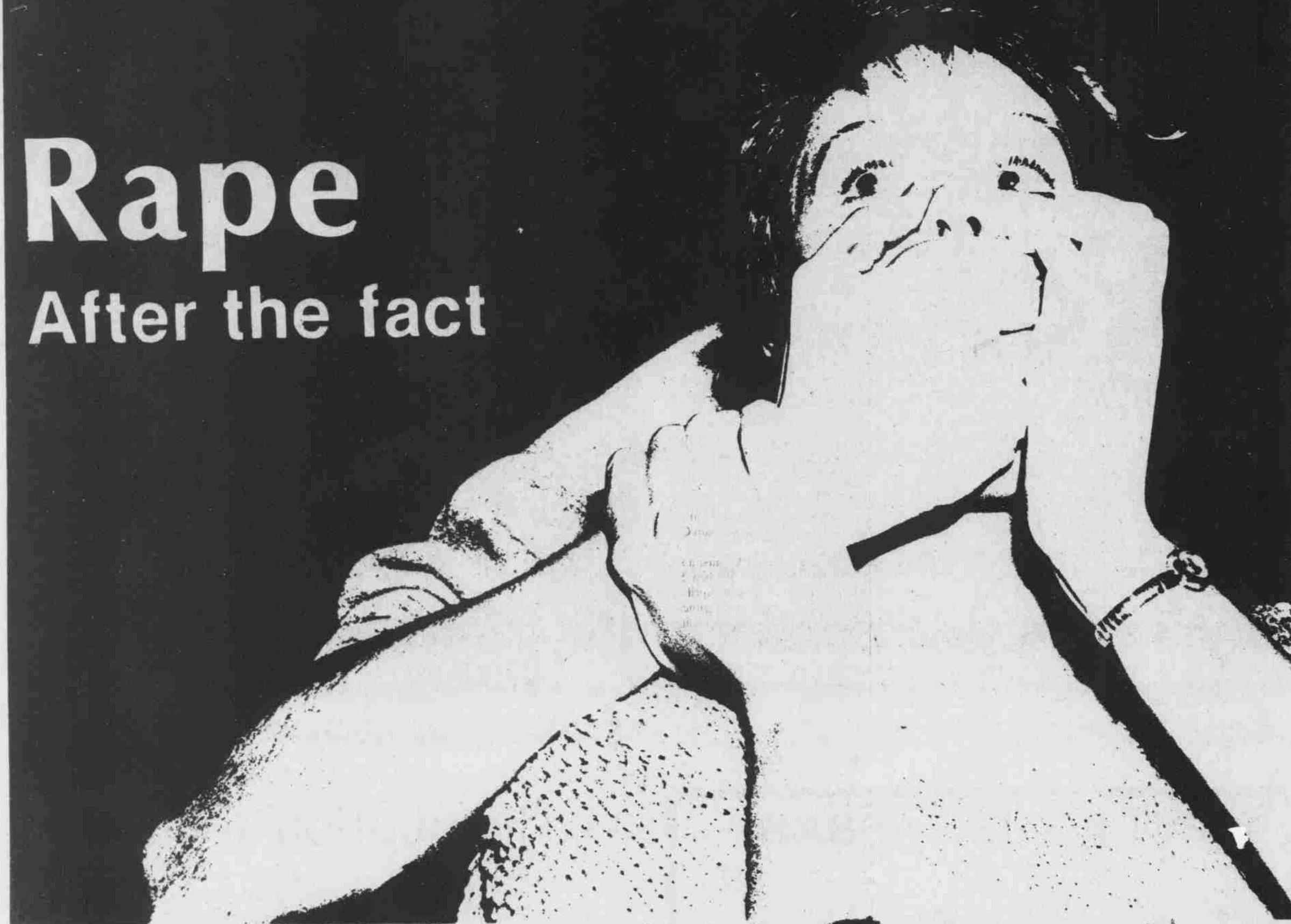


Photo illustration by Charles Lefford and Jeff Neuvile

Center exists to help sexually assaulted women

By KATHY HOPPER
Assistant Features Editor

According to the Orange County Rape Crisis Center, one out of 12 women will be raped in her lifetime. Between 6 and 13 percent of the women in Orange County have been raped, according to the center.

"Rape does go on around us and everyone should be aware of it," Lt. Ralph Pendergraph of the Chapel Hill Police Department said.

Pendergraph said he was one of 20 officers working on the recent rape cases.

"I've put in 12 hours this and last week not paid."

Pendergraph said more than 50 percent of those charged with sexual assaults are convicted in Chapel Hill.

Chapel Hill Police Department social worker Jane Cousins works with rape victims throughout the legal process, Pendergraph said.

"We're the only police department in North Carolina with a social worker in the department. It's having a luxury most departments don't have."

Mary Ann Chap, director of the rape crisis center, said that in Chapel Hill about half the rapes go unreported. In 1983 the center received 53 reports of rapes and sex-

ual assaults. The Chapel Hill Police Department received 17.

"We hear more because of our effective system," Chap said. The figure also includes women who were raped before 1983 but reported it in 1983. Women are under no obligation to take legal action when they call the center, and their names are kept confidential, Chap said.

There are several things a woman can do to prevent being raped, Chap said.

"First she must realize that she's worth defending. Secondly she should be aware that rape exists. The Girl Scout motto 'Be prepared' is also important. Know what you would do in that situation. Women should be strong and assertive. Sometimes women forget how strong they are. Be creative and use all your capabilities to deal with the situation."

Chap said the "don't fight it" idea is not accurate.

"Research says if you fight, three-fourths of the time you'll avoid it. We encourage you to assess the situation; you should make a decision and be committed to that decision," Chap added.

Pendergraph also said women should think about self-defense.

"Don't feel foolish if you're suspicious. If you sense that someone is following you then make them commit to following you. Be conspicuous or walk in a different direction. Go to a place where there's light and people," Pendergraph said.

The center reports that out of 1,006 rapes reported in North Carolina in 1978, 31 percent took place in the woman's home. Seventy-four percent involved people of the same race, 48 percent involved a rapist previously known to the woman such as a friend or relative. Twenty-five percent involved the use of a weapon and 27 percent involved injury to the woman. Sixty-three percent resulted in the arrest of the rapist.

Chap said since not all rapes occur when women walk alone at night the RAPE escort service cannot fully protect them. It doesn't deal with the most common form of rape on the campus, date rape.

Chap emphasized the importance of reporting a rape.

"When a woman reports a rape, she's taking control," she said. "She's giving the man some notoriety and is saying 'You can't get away with this.' She should also say 'If I report this, I did not let him get away with this and this could help someone down the road.' The more women report, the more control they will have."

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Keith-Brown, a senior psychology and zoology major, has seen the trauma and frustration first-hand in both women and men. He is a male companion at the Rape Crisis Center.

"I talk with rape victims and their husbands and boyfriends. We try to relieve the tension between them."

Keith-Brown said he became a companion this semester through the course Woman's Studies 90 and is receiving credit for his work at the center.

"It was strange at first. Sometimes you feel all the blame put on you. I really wanted to be informed on the guy's perspective on rape."

Keith-Brown said he tries to make men understand what the victim is going through.

"Be empathetic. Believe them and let them know you believe. Be there for them and don't question them."

Keith-Brown said it was also important for men to understand the problem of

date rape.

"Guys are likely to say 'she led me on,' especially if the girl has a bad reputation. Some may say 'if a girl has gone this far, then she'll go all the way.' When she objects some might say 'she's just frigid.'

The Orange County Rape Crisis Center's pamphlet *Rape is Everybody's Problem* lists four things men can do.

"First work on reforming your attitudes and feelings by recognizing rape as a violent attack against women. Then

work for reform in the community's attitude by speaking up when you hear rape treated as a joke. Be a model to your friends and let them know how you feel about rape. Remember that until society rejects the myths and misconceptions about rape and begins treating rape as a serious problem, there will never be a real solution to the crime of rape."

Keith-Brown said, "The girls don't want it. They don't enjoy it. Men need to realize these are myths and work to break the barriers."

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