

Why do men rape?

By Melinda Manning
Guest Columnist

"Men rape because women turn them on. Women who dress provocatively are asking for it. Black men want to rape white women. Most rapist are strangers who attack women in darkened alleys. Men can't be raped. Only young and attractive women get raped. Men cannot rape their wives or their girlfriends."

These are only a handful of the many myths surrounding the crime of rape. These shape the way we look at sexual violence and its victims. As with racism and sexism, until we can get past all the myths, we will be unable to find the solutions.

We probably all know someone who has been sexually assaulted. They may be a friend, a colleague, a sister, a classmate, an acquaintance, or even a male companion. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, African-American women are twice as likely to be raped as white women, and are less likely to report it. Even if you didn't believe Tawanna Brawley or supported Mike Tyson, rape is still a serious problem in our society as well as on UNC's campus.

Why do we have this problem? We live in an extremely violent society. Reports of sexual violence are not as common unless the crime was particularly violent, interracial, or if the assailant was someone famous (i.e. William Kennedy Smith). However, sexual assaults are often casually depicted in our television shows, novels, music, magazines (mainstreams and pornographic) and movies. As a result, we slowly become desensitized to this horrible crime. We become less sympathetic to rape victims and more critical of their stories. Others may even engage in some of the same aggressive sexual behaviors.

We cannot place all the blame on the images found in popular culture. After all, rapes have occurred throughout history. One of the main roots of this problem is the simple fact that men and women have a difficult time communicating about sex. Our society sees sex as something dirty and slightly unnatural

and as a direct result, most of us are unable to talk about it openly, without innuendos. Women may feel that if they are open about their sexual desires they will be labeled a "slut." We rarely ever ask for or receive verbal consent before jumping in the sack. The fact is, in the age of AIDS, it is imperative that we discuss topics such as protection before we do anything. Ideally, sex should always be based on mutual consent and respect.

Another factor in the rape equation is the use of alcohol. This "social lubricant" can make us more aggressive, less inhibited and act downright crazy. Often both parties are intoxicated, and it can be extremely difficult to prove whether or not there was consent. In order to prevent these situations, we need to realize how alcohol affects our actions, words and perceptions. In any case, it is important to remember that whenever someone has too many drinks, they do not necessarily want to have sex or be sexually assaulted. Rape should never be the punishment for what might seem as poor judgment.

No matter what the color of the assailant, rape is an act of oppression. It affects how most women (and some men) live and breathe. We do not feel safe walking home alone at night. Some of us may carry mace or take self-defense classes. We're often suspicious of any men who we don't know well. We shouldn't have to live this way.

Unfortunately, the grim reality is that one out of four women at UNC will be sexually assaulted before she graduates. Many of these women will not report their victimization and never receive any type of help or support. As a result, they suffer in silence.

We can no longer shove this issue aside. We all need to educate ourselves and take precautions in order to protect ourselves and those we care about. UNC has many resources dealing with sexual assault, including Sibby Anderson-Thompkins, the Sexual Harassment and Assault Officer; Honor Court; Student Health Service; Student Psychological Services; and the Rape Action Project. We don't have to keep silent.

Campus Voice: Kill The Negative

Editor's note: Campus Voice features writers from campuses around the nation. This week's issue was written by Eric Short, a senior at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical University.

As young, energetic, African-American students we are truly blessed to be living in these times. Some of us have become so accustomed to having material objects that we forget to count our blessings. This western society promotes self-preservation at all costs. From this competitive mentality comes the emotions of jealousy, envy and insincerity.

We are always looking for ways we can outdo our own people. This way of functioning is destructive to our quest for unity within our own people. This way of functioning is destructive to our quest for unity within our young nation. As the future teachers, builders and leaders of the

African resurrection we must start now to tear down the walls of negative thoughts and actions.

Residing in all of us is the knowledge of right from wrong. Looking at the status of the African-American community, we must all comprehend that now is the time for serious work and dedication for our future and those coming after us. Therefore, we have no time for slackness. We must become intense about developing our character because we have wasted enough time. It's time to cut away the obstructions that stand in the way of developing to our fullest potential.

Brothers, we are no longer tolerating the disrespectful actions toward our sisters. If you cannot be honest and take full responsibility for your actions then you are not a man. Any male that runs from the challenges life brings is still a boy. Sisters, it's time to kill the backbiting, gossiping and materialism.

There is no place for these things in a righteous nation. It's time for all brothers and sisters to bury the laziness, the egos, the excuses, the carelessness and the slackness.

How do we kill the negative and uplift the posture? We first must make the decision to live a better life. Then we must constantly listen to the quiet voice within. We all know right from wrong and we are all guided by the voice. It's very quiet, so we have to stop and relax in order to hear it. Figure out what it is that you are doing incorrectly, then listen to your inner-self to learn how to improve. We owe our ancestors our best effort everyday. We owe our brothers and sisters our energy and creativity. We owe our children our faith and dedication to the completion of our righteous goal.

HETE-PU! (Peace and Harmony)

Are you a part of the CNN?

By Karen Greene
Ink Columnist

What's the 411? Forget ABC, forget CBS and NBC. None of them

students tune in daily, so your information can cross the campus faster than you can.

Sounds like a bunch of bull? Well that's exactly what it is, in the

about as much relevance as people's responses to my articles.

People, we are in college. I said, WE ARE IN COLLEGE. That means that most of us passed the

Don't Sweat the Technique

are quicker, more in-depth or as invasive as CNN—no, not the Cable News Network, I'm talking about the 24-hour, round-the-clock, hear-say hotline known as the Carolina Nigga Network.

That's right, up-to-the-minute coverage of every black person's private life on this campus. It's so thorough, it knows who you're sleeping with before you do. No private life? That's okay, it can make one up for you.

Here's the best part: You can be a part of it all! All you have to do is repeat to someone else what you've heard, and there you go—you're in! The best thing is, hundreds of stu-

triest sense of the word.

People talk. Okay, I can accept that. But DAMN!! Don't you people have work to do? I swear, if people paid half as much attention to their academics as they do to other people's business, there would be a black valedictorian, two black Rhodes Scholars and three black Phi Beta Kappas in every class.

Oh but no, not on this campus. The only way that could happen is if you could get a BS in Getting in People's Business and on Their Nerves.

Nevermind that CNN is about as reliable as "I'll call you tomorrow," and that the stuff that is true has

seventh grade—so act like it.

Before you run your mouth, ask yourself these questions:

- (1) Am I jealous of this person?
- (2) Is my life so empty that I must take vested interest in this person's dealings?
- (3) Do I need to get a life?
- (4) Am I just so dappless that I need to repeat stuff or just make shit up to make myself look good?

If the answer to any or all of these questions is "yes" then not only are you perfect for CNN, but you have a serious social maladjustment problem. Get over it—and stay black. Peace.