

Rape awareness on rise with new statistics, info

ALISHA GORE

STAFF WRITER

In recent years, rape has become a major issue. As more attention is given to this crime, former myths and stereotypes about rape and sexual assault are being debunked.

Today, it is recognized that rape is not a crime of passion, but a crime of violence, centered on the rapist's lust for power and control over someone.

Freshman Sarah Cunningham agrees with this statement. "It's a misconception that rape is about sexual pleasure," Cunningham said.

It also has been found that contrary to what some people previously thought, certain "types" of females, such as those who wear revealing clothing, are not the only possible targets of rape. Anyone of any age, gender or background can be raped.

According to Captain David Donaldson of the UNCW police department, in 2001 one sexual assault was reported at UNCW. The previous year, three were reported.

"Nationally, the statistics regarding sexual assaults indicate that one out of 10 rapes are reported to law enforcement," Donaldson said.

Rape is the least reported crime in the United States. Less than 20 percent of rapes are reported to the police.

Donaldson also said that acquaintance date rape or assault is the most common type of these crimes.

"It has been a number of years since we have had a sexual assault committed by a stranger, as is often portrayed in movies and television," Donaldson said. It has been estimated that almost 90 percent of rapes that occur on college campuses are this kind.

There are three types of rape. Stranger rape occurs when the victim does not know the rapist. This happens the least, but is

most often reported to the authorities. Acquaintance rape is the most common but least reported. Gang rape occurs when two or more rapists are involved.

The presence of "date rape" drugs such as rohypnol, also known as roofies, and GHB, have posed a threat to young people since these drugs can be put into drinks. People, especially women, are warned to keep their eyes on their drinks at all times.

Alcohol and/or illegal drug use can also increase the risk of rape. More than 75 percent of college students who were raped were intoxicated or high at the time of the incident.

Only one out of 10 rapes are reported to law enforcement.

It is important to know the course of action to take if someone you know is raped. It is imperative to get the person to a place of safety and get immediate medical attention. To avoid destroying any physical evidence, a victim should not bathe or perform any other personal hygiene activities until after receiving medical attention.

The most important thing to remember after a rape has happened is that it is not the victim's fault. The UNCW Counseling Center can be reached at 962-3746 for confidential help.

The following Web sites were used for statistics and information: www.geocities.com/john1234567891311; www.rainn.org; www.ksu.edu/ucs/daterape.



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