

# COLLEGE SCENE

## Violent Acts Increasing on Campuses

(CPS)

While the murders of five college students within three days in Gainesville, Fla., the last week of August were unusual, crime watchers say murder is a more common crime on campuses nationwide than most people think.

Hard statistics are hard to find, but crime observers say they've been surprised by the results of several recent studies of the problem.

"The rate of victimization is higher than anyone had known," says Jan Sherrill of the Campus Violence Prevention Center, based at Maryland's Towson State University.

Though people have not been studying the phenomenon for long, some statistics seem to "show an increase" in murders and other violent crimes at colleges across the country, added Clarinda Raymond, Sherrill's colleague at Towson.

Moreover, Raymond said, the murderers are often other students.

"I guess we cannot rule out that the Florida murders were committed by a student," Raymond said.

On September 1, police arrested

Edward Lewis Humphrey, 18, a University of Florida (UF) freshman, for questioning in the case. Police added they might have other suspects in the off-campus murders of three UF and two Santa Fe Community College students.

Police found the bodies of 17-year-old Christina Powell and her roommate, 18-year-old Sonja Larson, in their apartment Aug. 26. Both were UF freshmen. Both were partially nude, and had been stabbed.

Eight hours later police found the stabbed, decapitated body of Christa Leigh Hoyt, a Santa Fe student, at her apartment.

The next day, Aug. 28, Santa Fe student Tracey Inez Paules, 23, and her roommate, UF senior Manuel Ricardo Toboada, 23, were found stabbed to death.

The brutality and timing of the killings prompted widespread student panic on the UF campus. Many apparently left for home just as classes were starting. Some who stayed held large slumber parties for protection. Still others bought weapons.

They could find weapons readily

advertised in the Independent Florida Alligator, the campus paper, which suddenly found itself with an influx of ads for mace, tear gas and stun guns, said an Alligator advertising representative, who didn't want her name used.

Some campus leaders nevertheless said UF is a relatively safe place.

"I think security on campus is incredible," said Michael Browne, UF's student body president. "Campus crime has been down."

Multiple slayings are in fact rare at rare at colleges. The most notable instance occurred in December, 1989, when a gunman killed 14 female students and wounded another 13 people at the University of Montreal.

Some 1,990 violent crimes were committed on campuses in 1988, the most recent FBI census of crime in America found. While the FBI report is notoriously misleading, the number probably did not represent all the violent crimes because colleges were not required to report them.

In January, 1990, Raymond's

group released a survey showing that 36 percent of the nation's students had been victims of violent crimes.

Yet students typically don't think of their campuses as dangerous.

"They naturally want to believe it's a safe place," noted Jeanne Morrow, housing director

at Champaign-Urbana, where a student was murdered in her off-campus apartment in mid-August.

Montana State, Ball State, St. John's, Louisiana State, Northeastern, Wesleyan and Oklahoma State universities, the University of California at Berkeley, and Ithaca, Stephens, Hunter and Carroll colleges, among others, have been the scenes of violent crimes recently.

Another reason students may be shocked to hear of violent crimes on their campuses is that schools themselves mislead them, Morrow added.

"It is constantly reinforced (to students) what a friendly, warm environment the campus is," she said.

Students, moreover, may not know about campus crimes because their campus newspapers don't report them.

Campuses, worried about the school's image and protecting victims' privacy, often refuse to reveal campus crimes to reporters.

Editors at Southwest Missouri State, West Virginia, Oakland and Southern Arkansas universities have sued during the past year to force administrators to give them information about crime in their communities.

Whatever the reasons for the false sense of security, students often inadvertently contribute to the campus crime rate by leaving doors unlocked or taking ill-advised nighttime walks around campus alone.

"It's important to make students realize that propping open a door could endanger other students," Raymond said, adding that administrators also are often lax about preventing crime. "Schools must realize that more important than hiring Dr. Wonderful is to provide as safe a campus as possible."

### OVERHEARD ON CAMPUS

#### The Graffiti Watch

I don't know if I'm going to heaven or hell. I just hope God grades on a curve.

Andrew Hay  
University of Texas-Austin

#### Great Moments In Soviet Humor

Allegedly heard on a collective farm in the Soviet Union, where the latest fad is poking fun at the work ethic under Communist rule:

Q: Which is better? Individual sex or group sex?

A: Group sex. It gives you more time to goof off.  
Jack Jolly  
New York University

#### Great Moments In American Humor

Q: What do you call someone who knows three languages?

A: Trilingual.

Q: What do you call someone who knows two languages?

A: Bilingual.

Q: What do you call someone who knows one language?

A: An American

Eric Van Bezoolijian  
University of California-Berkeley

## Students and Parents Don't Know Financial Aid

(CPS)

Students and parents don't know enough about financial aid, the federal General Accounting Office (GAO) says in a new report.

The misinformation, the report says, may be effectively shutting the door to college for some.

Most families also have serious misconceptions about the cost of a college education, the office said in an August 29 report reviewing several studies on student aid and college costs.

"Many students and parents misunderstood aid requirements and thus believed incorrectly that they were ineligible for aid," GAO said in "Higher Education: Gaps in Parents' and Students' Knowledge of School Costs and Federal Aid."

For example, the GAO cited a 1980 study that found only 12 percent of all high school sophomores knew Pell Grants were available to students in their school. Only 8 percent knew student loans were available.

Later studies turned up similar

results. A 1988 Gallup Poll conducted for the Council of Advancement and Support of Education found that almost half the high school students surveyed thought they were ineligible for Pell Grants to attend a high-priced private college if their parents could afford to send them to a state college.

Pell grants, the largest aid program, are available to all who qualify.

College financial aid directors generally agree.

"Most of our parents are very unaware of what's available or how to prepare," observed David Perkins, aid director at the College of Southern Idaho, a state-run two-year school. Even more confused, Perkins said, are older students who didn't even have a high school counselor. "Those people are really in the dark."

"Very few parents are familiar with the specifics of financial aid, although they all know there's financial aid out there," added Richard Toomey, financial aid director at Santa Clara (Calif.) University.

## Student Excused From Dissecting Cat

(CPS)

In a compromise with her school, Community College of Rhode Island nursing student Rosann Charron won an 18-month-old fight to avoid having to dissect a cat in a class she needed to get her degree.

On Aug. 29, the college agreed to let Charron, who contended raising cats for the purpose of being dissected is immoral, take an alternative human anatomy class at the University of Rhode Island instead.

## Anti-War Student Protest

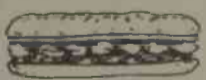
(CPS)

About 50 University of Colorado at Boulder and about 300 University of California at Berkeley students separately protested the U.S. military buildup in the Middle East Aug. 30, among the first such campus demonstrations since Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Students on both campuses spoke against "dying for oil profits" and called on Americans to solve the crisis by decreasing their energy consumption.

In Philadelphia, the American Friends Service Committee, a pacifist Quaker group, reported it has been "flooded" with 500 calls from soldiers asking how to become an official "conscientious objector" who would be excused from combat duty.

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