

Problem solving: Aggression in the country

Bullying increasing in many middle, high schools

In the past two years, the U.S. Department of Justice reports that school bullying has increased, though actual physical fights have decreased.

By Ricky Leung
Staff Writer

Whether looking for it or not, many students have found themselves witnesses to some very interesting hair-raising fights on school property.

In light of Columbine and other incidents in the past decade, many books, articles, and TV shows have been published and aired on the subject, making students, teachers, and parents throughout the country aware of violence on school property and bullying, especially in recent years. Even Grimsley is not immune to an occasional physical confrontation between students.

As early as elementary school, bullies take advantage of the less fortunate. Looking back, students like junior LaTasha Wright see bullies as products of immaturity.

"Students in elementary school are young and are just starting out on their experience, defining

[themselves]. By the time they reach fourth grade, it's all been played out; bullying is gone," Wright said.

Another junior, Angelica Milton, agrees.

"Bullying just doesn't occur as often anymore, not as often as in middle school. People grow up and stop bullying when they reach 15 or 16, and by the time they become juniors and seniors, they fight less too," Milton said.

But not everyone believes that people mature and stop the inanity of juvenile intimidation. Freshman Emme Zheng and junior Brandon Maynard both think that bullying continues into high school.

"While there may be an age when people stop fighting [at school]," said Maynard, "there isn't one for bullying; it all depends on the person."

"Kids are most bully-like when they are in their freshmen and sophomore years. It probably still happens once every three weeks," said Zheng, who believes that bullying and fights at school have increased over the years.

The U.S. Department of Justice National Center for Educational Statistics publishes the "Indicators

of School Crime and Safety" each year, with statistics on issues such as bullying and physical fights on school property gathered from surveys. For the 2002 edition, it indicated that from 1999 to 2001, while remaining under ten percent, the number of teenagers bullied increased in total from five to eight percent. Meanwhile, physical fights in schools have been on a steady decline.

Still, nearly a fifth of all male students have been involved in physical fights at school in 2001. The causes, according to Wright and Milton, are jealousy and talk.

"Usually [fights happen] when people are talking trash or just because of hubris," another junior, Rob McKinney, said, "and the crowds [are] entertained by this mindless drivel."

To see a huge mass of people circumscribing the scene of a physical confrontation is not uncommon, an indicator that many do not find such occurrences unsafe.

"It's not like they have guns," Wright said, "if they did, then it would be unsafe."

Still others feel that they are safe as long as they remain spectators to this source of entertainment.

"People like watching; it's the bloodlust. Sometimes the fights can be funny and entertaining," said Maynard, "but spectators don't feel unsafe because most of the time the administrators interfere quickly."

Though active violence has been given much notice by the media in the past decade or so, statistics show that it has actually declined and students like Maynard and Wright do not find the instances that occur unsafe. Meanwhile the more passive form of oppression slowly rises, despite what some students like Milton think.

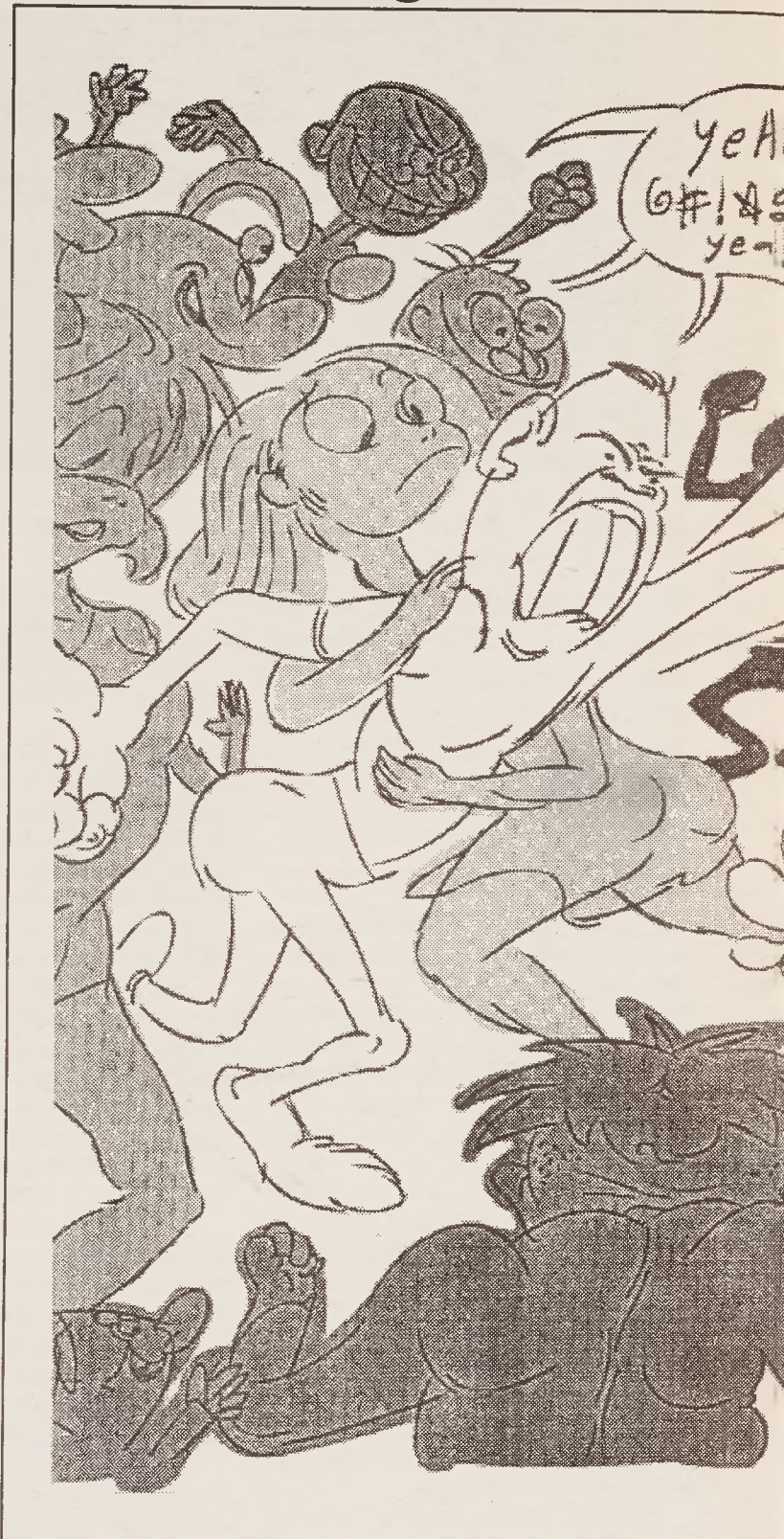
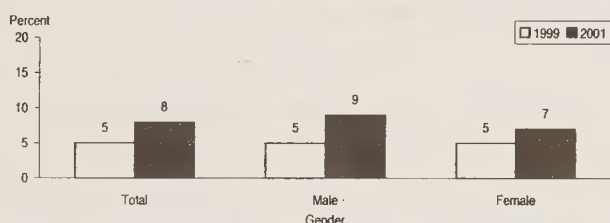


Figure 6.1.—Percentage of students ages 12 through 18 who reported being bullied at school during the previous 6 months, by gender: 1999 and 2001



NOTE: "At school" means in the school building, on school property, on a school bus, or going to and from school.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, School Crime Supplement to the National Crime Victimization Survey, January-June 1999 and 2001.

National Center for Educational Statistics

Studies released by the Justice Department and other independent organizations show increases in student bullying. Conversely, actual fighting has seen a decrease from past years.

RAD self-defense workshop proves rad for potent

Bringing a revolution in women's defense, Rape Aggression and Defense Systems is helping to make campuses safe again by providing some vital information for safety enforcement.

By Natalie Kaplan
Staff Writer

Movies, television, and many novels often depict situations about rape and assault that stike people as surreal and untangeable. In fact though, these situations are quite realistic, and a large number of women go through one or more situations in their lifetime related to being attacked and raped. Many Grimsley students even have family members or friends who have been attacked and possibly raped.

"My mom was mugged in New

York City a couple years back. She was miserable for a while and became a lot more paranoid. She told me she felt totally violated, and didn't know what to do without her hotel keys, I.D., or money. I think that women should have self-defense, or at least mace for protection," said senior Colin Jones.

Jones' mother wasn't attacked at night in a secluded area, stereotypically thought of as a mugging. She was in broad daylight, on the sidewalk, in a densely populated area.

While the initial shock of being assaulted can be devastating, there are many other problems coinciding with the legalities of the attack. For instance, in Jones' mother's case, the attacker was never found.

Since many women are becoming more concerned about the threat of being raped or assaulted, programs are being created to help

women defend themselves against potential attackers, rapists, and murderers. RAD (Rape Aggression Defense) is one such program that is famous for helping women learn how to handle themselves in hard-to-manage situations.

According to the RAD Systems website: "RAD is the largest network of its kind with over 5000 Instructors receiving training in our systems to date. These Instructors teach at various colleges, universities, and municipal law enforcement agencies as well as various other community organizations internationally. RAD has trained over 250,000 women since the program began in 1989."

RAD has been part of the University of North Carolina Greensboro's Police Department for 6 years now. The program, taught by Officer Sue Stroud, teaches women the basics of self-defense and attack preparation.

The RAD System, which can be learned more about at www.UNCG.edu/psp, is a program for women of all ages, taught by certified RAD instructors, starts with personal development, focusing on awareness, prevention, risk reduction, and avoidance while in uncomfortable situations. Later the course progressing on to a basic training in hands-on defense tactics. The course doesn't end with just the training, but also methods to be used to help other potential victims, as well as ways to recognize dangerous or risky situations.

The RAD program recently came to Grimsley for the Women's Studies Club workshop on self-defense. The workshop drew in a wide variety of female students who in just an hour, learned many defense techniques, and basic information about what to do in uncomfortable situations. Officer

Stroud spoke with the girls about handling themselves in potentially dangerous instances and taught them specific punches and kicks to exert when defending themselves from prospective attackers.

Assistant to Officer Stroud when performing RAD workshops and classes is Sergeant D.W. Perdue. Sergeant Perdue and his wife are firm believers in the program's effectiveness. His wife, a campus security guard, too received training in basic self-defense through the RAD program.

"She feels she can now do her job better, and handle situations with more confidence," said Perdue, who has been a strong advocate of the program.

Perdue believes that students involved in the RAD program not only enjoyed it, but become more confident, and feel safer when they are on their own.

"Since the program has started,