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À CONSULTER SUR PLACE SEULEMENT

The Rape Relief Files

1985

VANCOUVER



ACROSS CANADA & QUEBEC

1 WOMAN IS RAPED EVERY 17 MINUTES
*** Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, 1981

1 WOMAN IN 4 WILL BE RAPED SOMETIME IN HER LIFE, MOST OFTEN BY SOMEONE SHE KNOWS
*** Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, 1981

1 IN 10 WOMEN WHO ARE MARRIED OR IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH A LIVE-IN LOVER ARE BATTERED
*** Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1978

90% OF WOMEN ARE SEXUALLY HARASSED ON THE JOB AT SOME TIME IN THEIR WORKLIFE
*** Canadian Union of Public Employees, 1980

1 IN 4 GIRLS, AND 1 IN 10 BOYS, ARE SEXUALLY ASSAULTED BEFORE THE AGE OF 18
*** United Way Study, Flora McLeod, Feb, 1984

778 WOMEN REPORTED SEXUAL ATTACKS TO RAPE R

558 OF THESE SEXUAL ATTACKS HAPPENED IN 1981

100 OF THOSE WOMEN REPORTED TO POLICE

319 WOMEN REPORTED THEIR SEXUAL ATTACKS TO POLICE WITHOUT CALLING RAPE RELIEF

51 WOMEN REPORTED SEXUAL ATTACKS TO SHAUGHNESSY HOSPITAL AND NO ONE ELSE

35 number of times a Rape Relief volunteer accompanied women to welfare in 1985

18 court accompaniments

12 trips to emergency ward

6 visits to immigration

2,600 pieces of mail received, considered and often responded to

35 number of times we spoke out in the media, mostly about violence against women--but also about pornography, prostitution, Expo, abortion, welfare, midwifery and apartheid

Every Time the Phone Rings It's Not a Crisis Call

At Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter the phone rings an average of 30 times in 24 hours. About 3 calls are what we call crisis calls (reporting an attack, or a woman in some emotional distress due to at least the fear of attack). So what else do we talk about all day on that phone. We monitored some sample weeks and came up with some interesting projections for what a year's worth of ringing telephones is all about:

11,000 calls answered, 24 hrs. a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks a year

3,900 of these are follow-up (ongoing contact with women who originally called in crisis

550 calls for referral to another agency, service or feminist group that someone couldn't find on their own

400 calls offering donations of money, food, or cheap housing for R.R. or for women living in our transition house

350 calls from other feminist groups about their work, our work or joint actions

330 calls about public speaking engagements to schools, clubs, community groups or professionals on violence against women

110 calls from the media asking us to comment, mostly about violence against women issues

3,500 calls where collective women, and other volunteers, were talking to each other in order to organise all of the above

100 plus calls from cranks, masturbators, and angry young men out to save civilisation from us



88 women and children stayed in our shelter in 1985

17.5 days -- average length of stay

10,000 meals served to ^{by} women residents, their children, women on shift (sometimes our children) and the occasional visitor in our house in 1985

468 hours of organised childcare offered to residents of the house -- twice a week, every week throughout the year

HOW YOU CAN USE US

- * Call us anytime. We take emergency calls through the night. We take turns being available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- * If you don't have safe shelter, free from attack or the fear of attack, we operate a shelter for women and their children.
- * Make sure you have the information you need when dealing with MHR, the police, hospitals and the courts. If not, phone for an appointment to come and find out what we know.
- * We are interested in sharing resources with other groups and we have articles, films and speakers on violence against women.
- * Try not to be isolated from other women who could understand your situation. We organise Support/Education/Action groups which meet once a week. They are places to share emotional support, knowledge and to join together to create action for change.
- * Please call even if you're just curious or want to 'blow off some steam'. You don't need to be in an emergency to call us.

Violence Against Women:

The Rape Relief Files

The Truth As We Know It

Continued ...

In a 1984 Vancouver divorce case, Joanne describes being hit by her husband, having her car sabotaged by him so that she couldn't escape, and having her clothes burned in a fire that would have burned down the house if the police hadn't intervened. The judge commented that it was understandable that she was hit because she hadn't made her husband dinner. He didn't comment on the other acts.

Diana came to Canada sponsored by her husband of 6 months. She arrived to find out that he was violent and expected her to stay home alone, be there when he returned, and to be sexually available to him at all times. He raped her many times in the first few months. She spoke little English, but found a way out with the help of a neighbour. But, when she visited a social worker to get money, she was lectured about it not being Canada's responsibility to support her. The worker wanted to know if Diana had spoken to her husband about his behaviour. The bottom line was she could have a cheque if she went to marriage counselling with him. He had set up a few appointments and had seen a psychologist already. The psychologist only wanted to talk about her behaviour when they were together. The husband translated for her in these sessions. The psychologist was to make a report to the financial worker.

Marianna was sexually abused by her father from age five to thirteen, and by her 18 year old brother at age nine. When she went for counselling years later, she was told that she had an unusually intense need for love that her father and brother had discovered and responded to in an unhealthy way. She was told to change how needy she was for affection.

Pornography, other media misrepresentation of women, insulting comments and jokes made to us, or about us, also contribute to this social set-up in which society fails to disapprove of violence against women.

* * * * *

Men can stop violence against women if they want to. They choose who to attack -- a male clerk does not choose the women who is his executive director to sexually abuse on the job; he chooses his coworker. They choose how to attack -- men are often careful to bruise their wives only on clothed parts of the body. They choose when -- when women are isolated or in some other way vulnerable. Men can stop and they must be encouraged, taught, pressured or ultimately forced, to stop.

The reasons they give for violent behaviour are many. "I was jealous. She is an attractive woman and I'm not the only man who thinks so. I was afraid she'd leave me and I wanted to force her to stay. I wanted to teach her that she could not fool around. I was sure that she was, although I don't think so now, and I didn't want to be duped".

"I was insecure. I wasn't doing as well as I wanted to at work, or with my friends, and I just wanted to put her down, humiliate her and make her not as good as me. I could be better than someone if I did that. In hockey and other sports with men, that was how we solved things. The guy who won the fight was right -- you know!"

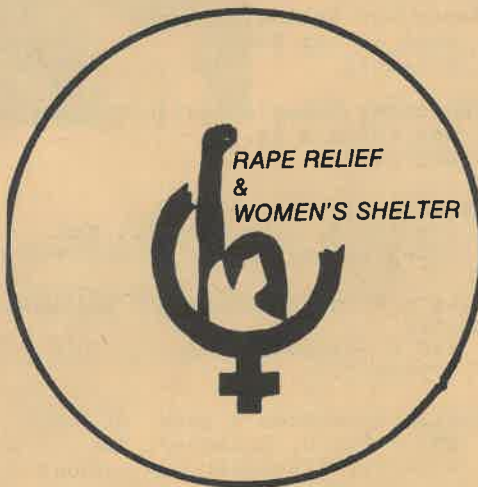
It didn't matter which woman I picked, just the one that was close at hand when I decided to rape. Just the one I could get away with it with -- alone, nobody around to stop me. And she would be afraid, -- afraid of me".

"To get the kind of sex I wanted. I'd go drinking with the boys -- they'd say their wives and girlfriends did those things. I feared that I was being 'pussywhipped', that if I was man enough she'd want to, so I made her do it."

"So I didn't have to do what she wanted me to".

"In war -- ransack the village, rape the women for fun as reward, emotional outlet, adrenalin rush; get at the men through the women."

"To shut her up."



"Because I didn't want to be a father, 'cause she paid more attention to the unborn kid than me."

"She's a lesbian. All she needs is a good fuck."

"I didn't believe I had any control over it."

"I wanted to be the first to 'have her', teacher about sex."

"She wanted it -- children are sexual beings and they have rights."

You have probably heard versions of these excuses and many others besides. One possibility has commanded little attention to date -- and that is child pornography for profit in Canada. Robert Willoughby, originally charged with 75 counts of sexual abuse of children, was convicted this past year in Terrace, B.C. of 25 sexual offences. One of the eight children reported having been photographed over 200 times, mostly with another child. While child pornography rings and networks are known about in the U.S. and other parts of the world, we do not know of anything on that scale in Canada.

* * * * *

Where are many things that men can do to help put an end to violence against women. Do not rage, harass, threaten or insult women. Challenge the men you know if you see or hear of them doing any of these things. Make sure that they know that it is not okay with you. Don't buy or use pornography or condone your friends' use of it. Sex with children is rape, and adults sexualising children is promotion of rape.

Get and give emotional support to and from male friends. Talk seriously about your own sexuality. Woman-hating jokes are not okay; neither are racist remarks or comments made at the expense of poor people, gays, lesbians or disabled people. Listen carefully to what women have to say about their lives. Take them seriously as experts on sexism. Analyse your power position relative to woman friends. You almost always have more. Find ways to equalise this as much as possible.

Your sexual partners have the right to stop sexual activity at any point. So do you. Support your local rape crisis line and women's centres with donations of money.

Women can't afford to expect men to stop violence against women, take on their share of social responsibility and give over their excess share of power quietly. Sometimes we work long and hard to convince a man to do just that and it is worth it. But that tactic only works when he wants to and he moves fast enough to make it worth our while. Therefore, to add to our repertoire, women are:

- * exposing men and making them publicly accountable for their actions, sometimes through the court system, professional associations, rape crisis centres, postering or confronting him;
- * getting together to support each other in dreaming up ways to take him on and get what she needs;
- * developing safety networks in their homes and places of work;
- * refusing sex with men as long as they read pornography;
- * withdrawing emotional support and labour when he isn't keeping his share of the responsibility;
- * forming on-going groups or joining existing groups to fight for control over our reproduction, adequate childcare, enough money to live on, an end to violence against women and for free choice in our sexual partners.

Lyn

The Rape Relief Files

Other Anti Rape Groups

RAPE CRISIS CENTRES AND TRANSITION HOUSES IN THE LOWER MAINLAND - groups of women to call if you've been attacked and/or you need a safe place to stay while you decide what to do next. These groups either organize against violence against women themselves, or they will help you get in touch with groups that do. Most of the groups have a 24 hour crisis line and you won't be refused shelter because you have no money. You can call the houses listed here in order to make an arrangement to stay.

Rape Relief and Women's Shelter
872-8212

Women Against Violence Against Women/Rape Crisis Centre
875-6011

closed - City promised to re-open
~~Vancouver Transition House~~
681-4563 *hasn't kept word yet.*

Emily Murphy Transition House
987-3374 (North Van)

Marguerite Dixon House
525-3223 (Burnaby)

Coquitlam Women's Transition House
464-2020 (days) 939-2422 (eves.)

Nova Transition House
270-4911/273-8701 (Richmond)

Ishtar Transition House
530-9442 (days) 588-0188 (eves)

Mission Transition House
853-5355

Ann Davis Transition House
792-3116 (days) 792-0725 pager 7325,
(eves) (Chilliwack)

Cythera Transition House
467-9966 (Maple Ridge)

Women In Crisis
892-5723/898-3384/892-5824 (Squamish)

Sunshine Coast Transition House
885-2944 (Sechelt)

LIST OF WOMEN'S GROUPS WHERE YOU CAN PHONE OR DROP IN, AND IF THEY DO NOT OFFER WHAT YOU ARE LOOKING FOR, THEY WILL STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOU WHILE YOU FIND THE GROUP OR SERVICE YOU WANT.

Vancouver Status of Women
400A W. 5th Ave.,
873-1427

Vancouver Women's Health Collective
888 Burrard St.,
682-1633

Aboriginal Women of B.C.
c/o 440 W. Hastings St., Van.
732-3726 (Sylvia)

Native Women's Family and Cultural Centre
640 E. Broadway, Van.
879-0417

Indian Homemaker's Assn. of B.C.
201 - 640 W. Broadway, Van
876-0944/876-1468

Congress of Black Women
291-6782

India Mahilla Association
325-3327 (Van.)

Lesbian Information Line
876-1427 (Van.)

Vancouver Lesbian Connection
254-8458

Downtown Eastside Women's Centre
681-8480

North Shore Women's Centre
8B - 117 E. 15th. Ave.,
984-6009

Richmond Women's Centre
315 - 3631 #3 Rd.
270-6182

South Surrey/White Rock Women's Place
1425 George St., White Rock
536-9611

Port Coquitlam Women's Centre
Corner of Chester & Coquitlam Ave.,
941-6311

University of B.C. Women's Centre
Rm. 130 Student Union Building
228-2163

Simon Fraser University Women's Centre
Rm. 2C-2003 Student Building
291-3670

Howe Sound Women's Centre
P.O. Box 2052, Squamish
892-5748

POWER - Prostitutes & Other Women for Equal Rights
P.O. Box 2288, Van, V6B 3W5
875-1050 (Marie)



WHAT YOU CAN DO ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- * Speak out. Expose men who attack. Silence is their protection.
- * Talk with your neighbours, friends and work mates. Plan to make your surroundings as safe as you can.
- * Talk frankly with your children about sexual assault. Let them know they can talk to you.
- * Keep emergency numbers handy. Plan what to do if you are attacked. If you know of a woman in danger, help her -- at least by giving her the number of a crisis line or safe shelter.
- * **WOMEN:** It is easier to protect ourselves and fight back if we are not alone. A Rape Relief Support/Education/Action group is a good place to start. Join the women's liberation movement. We can put you in touch with groups of women organising in your area.
- * Join our work! We always need new volunteers.
- * **MEN:** Men who refuse to be violent with the women and children in their lives can do many things to support our struggle. Call us to find out how.

If you wish to donate, write:

Rape Relief House Funding
P.O. Box 65342,
Station F, Vancouver.
V5N 5P3



872-8212

Rape, battering, the sexual assault of children and sexual harassment are all abuses of power where men force us into performing sexual acts against our will. The violence of men against women is an attempt to control us, and deny us the right to control our own bodies. Rape and battering are acts of aggression, anger and contempt for women.

Men already have an unfair advantage over women -- just as white people have over people of colour, and rich people have over poor people. Men who attack us use whatever power they might have. They use brute physical force, even weapons. They fire or harass us out of jobs. They betray the trust of wives, daughters, friends. They invade our homes. They use the government to threaten us with the loss of our children, with deportation or institutionalisation.

By joining together to fight for an end to violence against women, we are working towards a more democratic world of equals.

RAPE RELIEF - WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Rape Relief was opened in 1973 by two women. Over the decade we have grown into a feminist collective fighting violence against women. We receive no salary and charge no fees.

We think it is important for women to share their stories in order to break the silence about the violence against us. We celebrate all the ways individual women and groups of women resist and survive. Making our experience public corrects the myths and distortions about our lives.

We respect every woman's right to confidentiality, and to decide for herself who she wants to know about her life. Because we're not dependent on government funding or referrals, we don't have to report to the government.

In the Fall of 1981, we opened a safe shelter because we wanted a place to offer more of what women might actually need to resist -- more safety, more time to organise their lives, a place to dream and scheme together.