

## DATE-RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT: BE INFORMED

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Reporter

## UPEI's Shinerama Kicks @\$\$

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There seems to be a view on the campus that because we are fortunate enough to attend UPEI and live in Charlottetown, we as a student body are pretty much free from any concerns about date-rape drugs and sexual harassment and assaults. Despite the popular misconceptions that our small university is free from these problems, there is mounting sentiment that this is not the case. Due to confidentiality concerns related to the fact that UPEI is a very tight community (and we all know that rumours DO fly fast around here), it wasn't possible to obtain any actual numbers for the purposes of this article. So in that case, what is there to work with? How is the matter debated without sounding like a complete fear-monger? The answer is education and information to prevent incidents from occurring in the first place.

Although its well known that statistics are sketchy at times, there are some rather unsettling ones out there regarding the issues of sexual assault and date-rape. Perhaps the most disturbing is that according to a survey taken by Dr. W. S. DeKeseredy of Carlton University in Ottawa, 4 out of 5 female undergraduates surveyed in 1993 said they had been victims of sexual or physical abuse. Granted, there is now more than ten years difference, and to see an updated version of the survey would be helpful, but it remains an unsettling statistic just the same. If only 6% of women report sexual abuse, what about the other 94%? If one does the math, it looks to be much more hidden and prevalent problem. According to the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, 31% of sexual assaults occur in acquaintance and dating relationships. These statistics seem to definitely ruin the image of the always evil rapist hiding in the bushes, as opposed to a date, boyfriend, acquaintance, etc.

And now, a little info about date-rape drugs. The most common are Rohypnol (Roofies, Robe, Roach), which is a sedative and can cause memory loss. Ketamine (Special K, K, CVR) is used by vets during animal surgery and makes it hard to tell what's real as well as cause confusion and dizziness. GHB (Liquid E, Greivous Bodily Harm, Scoop, G) is used before surgery to put patients to sleep and causes sleepiness, memory loss, and impairs thinking. Mixed with alcohol, its effects are increased. Its only indication is its salty taste. Most of the time, these drugs do not have any taste and smell, and therefore are difficult to detect by your senses. However, there are kits that can be bought, in particular at UPEI in the bookstore. Some tips for being safe from drugs are to get/mix your own drinks, never leave your drink alone, only accept drinks from a bar tender or server, go to a club with friends and watch out for each other, and never leave with someone you do not know well.

Speaking of drinks, an interesting little tidbit is the fact that to have sex with someone who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs is legally committing rape because

he/she can't give informed consent. The Criminal Code of Canada states that Level 1 Sexual Assault is "any form of sexual activity ( eg. kissing, fondling, intercourse, etc.) forced upon another without that person's consent (with no physical injury) (246.1). Taking advantage of someone who is physically or mentally incapable of giving informed consent (this is where the alcohol and drugs come in) counts under this. Basically, any sexual contact without mutual consent counts as sexual assault. "No" really does mean "No, and "stop" really does mean "stop" (and let's be frank folks; this is a lesson we've all gotten since the third Grade, so it can't be THAT hard to understand).

Even in established relationships, assault still occurs. It can come from simply not asking and assuming that it's the "manly" role of a partner, as well as coercion with threats of ending the relationship. It can come from the belief in the absurd myth that is the man's right to "score", or that "no" means "yes" or that silence means consent. Drugs and alcohol have been excuses as well.

So after a long list of disturbing facts and information, what can be done? Again, education is very important, not only of the broader kind about human relationships and what makes them work, but also the specific facts. The UPEI Women's Centre, located in the Student Services area of the W.A. Murphy (telephone: 628-4332) can provide multiple, informative pamphlets on the topics discussed in this article, and with much more detail than the hacked up version presented here. The centre also acts as a confidential safe house for victims, and can provide information on getting in touch with the PEI Rape and Sexual Assault Centre, whose local 24 hour emergency number is 566-8999 and otherwise is 1-800-289-5656 (toll free, and doesn't appear on any phone bill).

The topic isn't bright and happy, but neither are the traumatic and dangerous situations. But being paranoid and terrified of every person doesn't help either of course. A little information and a lot less apathy go a long way. Though I considered myself quite informed in aspects of date-rape and assault, turns out I learned a helluva lot more. The information isn't hard to access, and nor is it hard to grasp. Take some time out of your busy academic schedule and do a little research. You'll be amazed at what you learn and can take with you.

Violence Against Women (Health Canada)  
[http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/women/facts\\_issues/facts\\_violence.htm](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/english/women/facts_issues/facts_violence.htm)

**\*ALL INFORMATION USED IN THIS ARTICLE AND MORE CAN BE OBTAINED FROM PAMPHLETS FOUND AT THE UPEI WOMEN'S CENTRE.**

The almost final total is in for this year's Shinerama campaign and the grand amount is.....\$14,862.65!!!!!!

And you guessed it, that is a new record for our Great Small University. Last year UPEI had set a new record of \$8,797.18 but this year's NSO Students and Leaders put on a huge push and totally crushed last year's feat.

Over the summer Ryan McDermott, who was NSO coordinator and Shinerama Director, and his leaders held a car wash, went all the way up to Souris for the world famous Regatta, and set up a putting challenge at the Panther Classic Golf Tournament.

On Tuesday September 7th our NSOers held their Shine Day where the kick off featured guest speakers Wade MacLauchlan and Premier Pat Binns. Premier Binns even declared it "Shinerama Day on Prince Edward Island."

The NSOers then hit the streets shinning shoes, washing cars, singing songs, washing windshields, and most of all raising money for Cystic Fibrosis research.

The counting of the money turned into a sweaty, smelly affair when over \$11,000 in coin was brought in combined with bills and the money raised earlier in the campaign, UPEI's grand total was almost \$15,000.

But that's not the end folks, the Shinerama team is determined to raise as much money as possible and to surpass the 15K mark, so watch out for them on campus over the next couple of weeks. To learn more about Cystic Fibrosis and Shinerama head to [www.cysticfibrosis.ca](http://www.cysticfibrosis.ca). If you feel the need to make a donation get in touch with me at 566-0648 and hopefully we'll push our record breaking mark up even higher...and maybe earn some national recognition in the process.