

Blood & Thunder

Letters to the Editor must be signed and contain a phone number where the author can be reached. The Brunswickan reserves the right to edit for clarity, grammar and length. Maximum length is 300 words. Deadline: Monday at 5:00pm

YAQZAN 1

Dear Editor:

We are writing in response to the opinion of Matin Yaqzan in last weeks Bruns. We are very concerned that there is an employee of UNB with such a narrow-minded view on the topic of rape.

Although everyone has a right to express their (sic) opinion, we believe that it was inappropriate for Mr. Yaqzan to state his faculty affiliation.

Rape is an act of violence that is manifested in the form of a sexual act. It has nothing to do with sexual intimacy.

Stating that the rape victim should be paid for her inconvenience im-

plies that she is nothing more than a prostitute and that it is a justifiable act, given that the male compensates his victim.

The trauma inflicted on victims of rape is not dependent on their sexual promiscuity. Suggesting that there is only one class of females that are victims of his definition of rape is wrong. Rape victims come in all shapes and sizes, male and female, virgins and non-virgins. To discuss the sexually promiscuous and the virgin females does nothing to discuss the issue. Where do women with one or a few sexual partners fit it? What about the increasing number of men?

We sincerely hope, Mr. Yaqzan, that you never find yourself in the position of a victim of any sort and that you never have to discuss the problem with someone as unsympathetic as you seem to be.

A COED group of students

YAQZAN 2

Dear Editor:

Date rape is not the fabrication of women out of regret or dissatisfaction. To say one has been date raped or raped is not easy. The response from friends, family, police and other officials is often one of disbelief or blame for the victim. Having spoken to dozens of survivors of rape over the past 10 years, it has been my experience that identifying oneself as a rape victim is one of the last things a woman would want to do because of this response. Women who have been raped by a date, a friend, or an acquaintance are profoundly affected

by what has happened. Women do not expect that they will be raped because they drink, go to a guy's room or apartment, or engage in hugging and kissing. The problem lies with the male who expects and demands and takes from the unwilling. Mr Yaqzan implies that male's aggressiveness is inherent and he shouldn't "be expected to be a master of his sexual impulses". Rape happens not because a man "can't control himself", it happens because he chooses not to control himself. Women who have been raped, especially by someone they know experience fear, humiliation, shame and self-blame (because society blames them), a sense of betrayal, and a loss of trust. These are not the emotions of regret, except perhaps the regret that she trusted someone who said he as (sic) her friend. All women have the potential to be the victim of sexual violence. It has nothing to do with her

lifestyle.

Denying the magnitude of date rape, proposing that "promiscuous" women are not affected by date rape and suggesting that a "sexually active" woman who is raped should prostitute herself rather than speaking out is frighteningly misogynist and an encouragement for society to further bury its head in the sand over problems of sexual violence against women, an is ultimately, and incitement for continued violence and hatred against all women.

Earlier I mentioned my emotions as I read Mr. Yaqzan's comments. I personally would boycott classes taught by this type of professor. I would also encourage all women and men who are also outraged by the beliefs of Mr. Yaqzan, and others to speak out. Mr. Yaqzan owes an apology to all victims and survivors of sexual violence, in its many forms, and to women, in general.

Lorraine Whalley, Director
Fredericton Rape Crisis Centre

YAQZAN 3

Dear Editor:

In the Brunswickan on November 5, there was an article by Professor Matin Yaqzan on rape. Since the article was published the Brunswickan has been receiving a lot of flack from the media about it, not about the information but the fact that it was published. If anyone should understand the right to freedom of speech, the media should. The decision to publish this article was not taken lightly, it passed through a vote of the editorial board. What I personally find so shocking is the fact that the media is questioning why it was printed and not the article itself.

No students have complained formally that the article was published, in fact most of the students that I have talked to were extremely glad that his view was made public so they would avoid him totally. There were so many things that disgusted me in this article, it is difficult to choose the most revolting points. The fact that this person thinks that a woman who has had more than one sexual partner would be far less traumatized, because she is not in the mood or she was less than satisfied, by rape is shocking. Rape is the most traumatizing event that could happen to a person, female or male, whether they are a virgin or not. Also that a woman who is promiscuous should demand monetary compensation for her "inconvenience or discomfort" instead of expressing moral outrage, is sick.

The complete article was horrifying and I hope that people will really think about it before they arrange their schedule next term and avoid him completely if they can.

Heidi Hawkins

OPINION: "DATE RAPE" COUNTERPOINT BY ANGELA DAY, UNB STUDENT, BSC I

It's amazing that to the extent that things seem to change over the years, they really stay very much the same. While it is true that the evolution of the English language is an ongoing process, there are some words that are just so basic and simple to define that their meanings will not change. "Rape" is one of these words.

Here are some definitions essential to the discussion of the issue of date rape:

Rape: n. a) illicit sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent (by force, deception, while she is asleep, etc.) b) the doing of violence

The New Lexicon Webster's Encyclopedic Dictionary of the English Language, Canadian Edition, 1988.

Sexual Assault: any form of unwanted or forced sexual contact ranging from touching, fondling and/or kissing to sexual intercourse

Date and Acquaintance Rape: sexual assault committed against a woman by someone she knows

"Some Important things for Men to Know About Sex and Dating," (pamphlet) developed by L. Haskell and M. Randall, 1992.

While the second definition is the more accurate (i.e. not differentiating between female and male victims), I included the first one to show that rape is Not an act of sexual conquest or satisfaction; it is an act of violence and dominance. The definition of this act does not change whether the victim is promiscuous or chaste. It stays the same. Time cannot change it's meaning, as the author of last week's "Opinion" attempted to state. Rape is Rape.

It was proposed in last week's "Opinion" that those of us under 30 years of age don't understand the trauma of rape. Pardon? With 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 10 boys being victims of sexual assault before the age of 18, I ask last week's author to rethink that statement. Does the author really believe that the same act which has been going on for centuries actually hurts today's generation any less than it did back then? We are still human; that hasn't changed with time either.

There was also a comment made last week that the occurrence of rape is more common, even "routine." Does the fact that the author feels rape is common make rape all right. The answer is NO —rape is against the law and is punishable by actions outlined in Canada's Criminal Code. The number of occurrences of rape, whether on the increase or not, has nothing to do with the fact that rape is wrong.

One topic at the forefront of last week's "Opinion" was the alleged difference in male and female sexuality. The author tells us that the male sex drive has not changed in the last few thousand years. What a coincidence! Neither has the female sex drive! (It's funny how some things don't change with time...) The author also makes comments as to the "distinct difference of men's and women's role in procreation — that boys "could not be expected to be a master of (their) sexual impulses," and the custom of women covering themselves so as not to attract males.

What all of this boils down to is society's ongoing oppression of the females. Throughout history, women have been strongly discouraged

from admitting that they have sexual needs and desires.

It was not considered "feminine"; "good girls" didn't have those kinds of feelings but they are encouraged to dress in a manner pleasing to men. (This smells of a double standard.) And I ask, if males cannot be held responsible for their (sexual) actions, who can? The author seems to think it is the female's responsibility: again, a form of oppression by putting the blame on the female. If men can't want what they cannot see (i.e. a covered female), I propose the use of blindfolds on all men who have sexual impulses that they cannot control. This way, the men are taking responsibility and solving their own problem.

The author says that marriage is "bondage of the male to the female" used only to gain sexual satisfaction and help raise children seeing as the female is incompetent. I'd like the author to know that there is no "sanctity" or "enshrinement" in bondage. My question is: which situation would children be better off in, a single parent home in which the mother is the parent, or a two-parent home in which the father uses the mother only to satisfy his sexual needs? Yes, marital rape is possible.

The author posed the "obvious" statement that the rape of a girl who has had sex before is not nearly as traumatic, important or cause for concern as the rape of the proverbial good virgin. The author believes that date rape is merely an unsatisfying sexual experience on the part of the female. I think that the true purpose of intercourse has been forgotten. The physical act of love is not to have an orgasm; it is the mutual display of deep shared affections between two people who love each other as equals. When this act is taken and twisted into rape, it will hurt anyone who is human. Whether promiscuous or chaste, drunk or sober, the absolute violation that rape is will hurt us all equally. The notion of "monetary compensation" makes a mockery of the pain a woman feels when she is raped. Money cannot buy someone self respect, a feeling of security or emotional strength — just some of the countless things that someone loses when they are raped.

I bet that if you talked to Dr. Henry Morgentaler, he would tell you that abortion is not a security mechanism. Abortion is the termination of a human life in utero. Can last week's author really believe that the decision to abort a fetus is a casual, "no stigma attached" decision of the part of the woman? How inhuman does the author think today's woman is? On behalf of women everywhere, I'd like to say that each and every female has a conscience; abortion is not a black and white, yes or no decision.

So what is to be done about those who promote oppression of women and the myths about what rape really is? While we may wish that people with these opinions did not exist, we are all entitled to our opinions, no matter how detrimental they are to society as a whole. So I'd like to leave everyone with this fact:

Your body is your own. what you want to happen to it is your decision. Anyone who dares to break your rules for your body is committing a criminal offence and can be convicted. The right you have to protect your body is a human right. It's funny how some things never change with time...

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED ABOVE ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE BRUNSWICKAN, ITS EDITORIAL STAFF, OR ITS PUBLISHERS. THIS COLUMN IS A FORUM FOR THE OPINIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE BRUNSWICKAN'S READERSHIP. WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO EDIT FOR LENGTH OR CLARITY, AND TO REFUSE ANY SUBMISSIONS DEEMED UNFIT FOR PUBLICATION BY THE BRUNSWICKAN'S EDITORIAL STAFF.