

Doonesbury

BY GARRY TRUDEAU

Violence

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need you to say, 'Hey that isn't funny.' When you see things around campus that advocate violence against women, I need you to go to the Deans and say something," she said. "When you hear that so-and-so was drunk and he hit his girlfriend, I need you to realize that drunkenness is no excuse." Monteferrario said.

She observed the tenth anniversary of the Vermont Abuse Prevention Act, which provides legal protection to victims of domestic violence, and "is designed to help women take back the night in their own homes." She said that the law has been amended and strengthened every year since it's inception except for one. The amendment that is currently before the state senate entails more severe penalties if a man violates the "relief from abuse" order, which is comparable to a restraining order. This amendment would also order the batterer into counseling.

"We are thankful to have this law, but even this is not enough: we need to continue working, to continue educating adults and children that violence does not solve problems, that violence does not prove one's strength or manliness. We need to tell people that the abuse of women will not be tolerated any longer," she said.

Jessica Lindert '90 concluded the program by addressing the issue from the point of view that the causes and affects of violence against women go beyond the individuals involved. She said that she feels the message from society is that women are secondary and women are treating as "objects, there for men's use and abuse."

"What a lot of men think is the solution is to edit their behavior around women. This is part of the problem," Lindert said. "When you make sexist jokes and use sexist language, you're accepting and advocating society's message that women are objects, the extreme expression of this message being rape and violence against women."

Lindert stressed Monteferrario's statement that people must become more involved in the fight to stop violence against women, and that before women will feel comfortable reporting instances of violence, they must not be afraid of the reaction that will follow.

"Students on campus do have to be vocal about it. And this campus has got to become more open and accepting of women so they can come forward with these instances. There is on this campus violence."

Lindert says that while she personally takes a more "hard-line" approach to the issue, the "polite" manner in which Take Back the Night was presented was appropriate and that "for this campus, that is what was needed, but it's important that this be looked at as a first step."

One Chi Psi brother who attended the march felt that the march had positive effects with regard to bringing the issue to light.

"Within such a highly sheltered environment, the whole concept of violence against women is easily tucked away; something like this forces you to open your eyes and take a closer look," he said.

"As a guy, so many of these things don't naturally occur to you." He continued, "They're not ignored out of insensitivity, they just exist outside of your realm of experience, something like this gives you a different perspective and in doing so, helps you to understand."

Another marcher added, "For me this was a definite first step towards a heightened awareness of the problem that exists."

