

## Tears for the night

I love the night; a walk in moonlight, solitude under a starry sky, catching my breath as a shooting star carves an arc across the blackness, being touched by the mystical.

“Take Back the Night!”

“Better lighting for a safer community!” I do not think that better lighting would necessarily make a safer community. At best, it is a Band-Aid cure for a deeper problem.

But the deeper problem was what “Take Back the Night” was all about. I cried as I listened to the stories of the women and men who spoke in Proctor Lounge last Thursday night. Tears of anger, of frustration, of bitterness and of a deep sadness traced salty tracks down my cheeks.

I cried for the ignorance of the men who look at me, or at my woman, and see an assembly of body parts and not the mind or spirit they contain. I cried for the women who be-

lieve, as they have been taught all their lives, that they are the inferior gender, that they cannot accomplish as much as men and should be content with less.

I cried for the women who, in their inferiority, believe that their

only worth lies in making the men in their lives happy without ever finding their own happiness.

I cried for the double standards and gender segregation that make it possible for some people to never realize that their actions are unacceptable, derogatory, abusive, damaging, dangerous and illegal.

I cried for the women who do not yet know that there is more to life than striving to make their reflection in the minor match the elusive contrived ideal of society.

I cried for the misconceptions that are reflected in our culture's values and in its expectations for men and for women. I cried for all those who have been

assaulted, abused, harassed or raped, and for the society that allows it to happen. I admire those who spoke on Thursday night and I thank them and applaud them.

Only through action and with support and compassion will changes be brought about. The group on Thursday showed that the support and compassion are there; now we need to put our feelings into action. Attitudes that have been formed unconsciously throughout a person's life, and that are continually reinforced through the bombardment of messages from society are hard to change. But once an awareness of them has been developed, they can be changed. So do not give up hope.

Kristin Daly '94