



SANTA BARBARA RAPE CRISIS CENTER
CENTRO CONTRA LA VIOLACION SEXUAL

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

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A TIME LIMIT ON RAPE

*By Jeninne Lee-St. John
Thursday, Feb. 01, 2007*

If a woman consents to having sex with a man but then during intercourse says no, and the man continues, is it rape?

The answer depends on where you live. The highest courts of seven states, including Connecticut and Kansas, have ruled that a woman may withdraw her consent at any time, and if the man doesn't stop, he is committing rape. Illinois has become the first state to pass legislation giving a woman that right to change her mind. But in Maryland--as well as in North Carolina--when a woman says yes, she can't take it back once sex has begun--or, at least, she can't call the act rape.

That was the recent ruling by Maryland's Court of Special Appeals in a case that may soon make its way to the state's highest court and that has captured the attention of feminists and legal experts across the country. Advocates for victims' rights insist it's not just a matter of allowing a woman to have a change of heart. If the law doesn't recognize a woman's right to say no during sex, they say, there is no recourse for a woman who begins to feel pain or who learns her partner isn't wearing a condom or has HIV. Those who are wary of these measures say they're not arguing against having a man stop immediately when a woman no longer wants to have sex, but with how to define immediately.

When the California Supreme Court handed down a ruling in 2003 that codified the withdrawal of consent during sex, Justice Janice Rogers Brown, the lone dissenter, raised that very question. "The majority relies heavily on [the defendant's] failure to desist immediately," she wrote in her minority opinion. "But it does not tell us how soon would have been soon enough. Ten seconds? Thirty? A minute?" Mel Feit, executive director of the National Center for Men, a male-advocacy group based in Old Bethpage, N.Y., says biology is a factor. "At a certain point during arousal, we don't have complete control over our ability to stop," he says. "To equate that with brutal, violent rape weakens the whole concept of rape." His group has created a "consensual sex contract" to be signed before intercourse.

Victims' rights activists don't buy the loss-of-control argument. "It's insulting to men to say they can't stop," says Lisae C. Jordan, legislative counsel for the Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault. "Any one of us who's had a toddler walk in on them knows that that's not true. Or a teenager who's had a parent walk in--they stop pretty quickly." Still, even advocates concede it's hard to set a time frame in which sex must cease after consent is taken back. "I don't know where that bright line is," says Scott Berkowitz of the Rape Abuse and Incest National Network. "We'll leave that to juries to decide what's reasonable in each case."

The murkiness surrounding what's reasonable has deepened further with the Maryland case, which was tried in 2004. The accuser and the defendant agree that after he began to penetrate her and she wanted him

to stop, he did so within a matter of seconds and did not climax. Even so, during deliberations, the jury sent a note to the judge asking if it was rape if a female changed her mind during the sex to which she consented and the man continued until climax. The judge said it was for them to decide. They convicted the defendant of first-degree rape, among other sex offenses.

But the appellate court, citing a 1980 rape ruling based on the English common-law idea of "the initial deflowering of the woman as the real harm," unanimously ordered a new trial, essentially stating that how fast was not the issue, nor was whether the accuser had said no during intercourse. In Maryland, rape is determined at the beginning of the sex act, and therefore consent is officially given at that point. The court wrote, "It was the act of penetration that was the essence of the crime of rape; after this initial infringement upon the responsible male's interest in a woman's sexual and reproductive functions, any further injury was considered to be less consequential. The damage was done."

This logic has inflamed feminists and editorial-page writers. "The decision is philosophically from another century, from a time when our rape laws were based on the concept of women being property of men," says Berkowitz, whose organization will push for a legislative remedy if Maryland's highest court doesn't reverse the ruling. In the meantime, the defendant is serving a five-year sentence, and the legal world continues to debate how quickly--if at all--a man must go when a woman says no.

Find this article at: <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1584786,00.html>

VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER: **ELITANIA RODRIGUEZ**

SBRCC is proud to honor Elitania Rodríguez as our Volunteer of the Quarter. Elitania has been an administrative volunteer with the center for a year and a half. Her contribution to SBRCC is in providing administrative support such as organizing files, making copies, shredding and much more. When she first came to SBRCC she did not have much of an understanding of sexual assault. However, throughout her time here she has increased her knowledge and awareness to the fact that sexual assault is not only a community issue but a worldwide problem. For example, she feels that war also impacts everyone at every level and that both should be eradicated.

She strongly believes that everyone should have the same rights and that gender should especially not be used as a weapon. For instance, as a child she witnessed domestic violence and it was at that point that she realized that men need to value women. Elitania wants to continue to inform others of their rights and options. She hope to become more involved with SBRCC, however, she is very limited in the time she contributes to SBRCC. She currently volunteers two-four hours a week.

Elitania enjoys listening to music, dancing, and taking walks on the beach. She prides herself with being able to support her parents not only economically but by physically being present for them when they are in need. She plans to continue being a volunteer for many more years and might one day have the time to go through the advocate training.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

MONTHLY ADVOCATE MEETING:

MONDAY, APRIL 9, 2007, 6:00-8:00 P.M.

The monthly advocate meeting will focus on *Somatic Experiencing Therapy* by Mary Renaud, MFT Intern. Please remember that you need to complete 12 hours of in service a year in order to make sure your certification is current. It is critical that you contact me by e-mail at yesenia@sbrcc.net or phone at ext. 17 in order to inquire about alternatives for missed advocate meetings. I appreciate everyone that attends the meetings and participates. Please remember that the monthly advocate meetings are very important for acquiring more education and skills in working with our clients and it is also essential to in order for you to receive information about current clients or trends on the hotline.

~Yesenia Curiel, Crisis Intervention Coordinator

BLOODLINES PLAY TO BENEFIT SBRCC

THURSDAY MARCH 22, 7:00PM

Move Over Vagina Monologues-Here Comes BLOODLINES!

Magdalene Women Productions Present Bloodlines

With a Special Benefit Night for Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center:

Thursday March 22, 2007

Center Stage Theater

751 Paseo Nuevo Santa Barbara, CA 93101 (805) 963-0408.

The theater is located on the Second Floor Arts Complex of Paseo Nuevo.

Reception at 7:00 pm includes drinks, appetizers, music and a raffle.

Curtain is at 8:00 pm.

20% of the proceeds benefit SBRCC

Tickets are \$25 or \$20 students/seniors

The play is Written & Directed by: Lisa Citore with all original music and

features Cornelia Corbett, Sam Bonavia, Megwyn White, Olivia Gutkin Holly Freyja, Heather Shea, and Joanne Terry.

Please join us for 13 stories from women of different cultures and generations about their menstrual cycles, ranging from poetically profound to wickedly outrageous, interwoven with dance and musical instruments from around the world. This is a unique spoken word and dance collaborative in the tradition of The Vagina Monologues.

For More information, please go to www.bloodlinestheplay.com

OPEN WINDOWS FILM PREMIER AND SBRCC BENEFIT

THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2007. 7:30PM AT THE METRO 4 THEATERS

SBRCC Volunteers can complete training hours by attending the Santa Barbara Premiere of “OPEN WINDOW” on Thursday March 29th at 7:30pm!

Starring Robin Tunney, Cybill Shepherd, Elliott Gould, Shirley Knight, and Scott Wilson, this film was an official selection of Sundance 2006 amongst other film festivals and was winner of Best Director award at the LA Femme Festival in Los Angeles. The film will be followed by a panel discussion and Q&A with writer/director Mia Goldman. This is Mia Goldman’s writing and directing debut. She is a highly respected film editor whose work includes *My Big Fat Greek Wedding*, *The Big Easy* and *Choose Me*.

This film is being sponsored by SB CAN and Co-sponsored by The Fund for Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center (SBRCC). Ticket prices are \$10 in advance and \$15 at the door. To make reservations, call 563-0463 or mail@sbcn.org Partial proceeds will go to SBRCC.

SBRCC advocates will be present to provide crisis intervention counseling.

Advocates seeking training hours must sign in with SBRCC staff at the theater.

Open Window Synopsis:

Izzy (Robin Tunney) is a struggling young photographer. Peter (Joel Edgerton) is an assistant professor at a university in Los Angeles. Newly engaged and madly in love, they find their cozy world shattered by a random act of violence. Their respective parents, the idiosyncratic Arlene (Cybill Shepherd) and sportswriter John (Elliot Gould), and Peter’s mercurial father, Eddie (Scott Wilson), weave their way through their children’s lives and it soon becomes clear that irrevocable losses have touched not only Izzy and Peter, but their entire circle of relationships. Long-hidden emotions rise to the surface as the trauma turns into a complex test of Izzy and Peter’s relationship.

Please see www.openwindowmovie.com for more information.

TOOLS FOR CHANGE CAMPAIGN WORK PARTY!
SATURDAY, MARCH 31ST, 1:00-6:00PM

All SBRCC volunteers are invited to help create Youth Toolkits and other materials from the ***Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM) 2007 Campaign: Tools for Change: Building Lives Free from Sexual Violence***. Please stop by anytime between 1:00-6:00pm on Saturday, March 31st to help put together the pieces of the campaign. Please bring friends and family—lots of energy and many willing hands are needed! Snacks will be provided!

If you can help with the Tools for Change Campaign Work Party, please call 963-6832, ext. 12 or send me a message at alena@sbrcc.net. Thank you!

~Alena Donovan, Community Education Coordinator

CHECK OFF LINE 61:
CALIFORNIA SEXUAL VIOLENCE VICTIM SERVICES FUND

Please urge your friends and family members to support the movement to end sexual assault by donating to the ***California Sexual Violence Victim Services Fund***, Line 61 on the California state income tax forms. Many of you contributed to the fund last year, and we are thankful for your support. As tax season is underway, we are busily trying to get the word out about this unique way to support the California

Coalition against Sexual Assault's (CALCASA) ongoing coalition efforts in prevention, training/technical assistance, and legislative advocacy.

Supporters can donate any amount they wish to the fund and in doing so they contribute either a portion of their tax-return, or simply add that amount to what they already owe. In either event, donors are able to deduct the donation from their next year's tax liability.

This is a great way to make use of an unexpected refund or to strategically plan for next tax-season! To donate, simply write in the amount to be contributed in line 61, "CA Sexual Violence Victim Services Fund" on the California state income tax form. Spread the word about this easy way to make a difference!

ANNUAL SHINING STAR BENEFIT LUNCHEON
MAY 30TH, 2007

The Shining Star Benefit Luncheon will be Wednesday May 30th, 2007 11:30am – 2:00 pm at the Four Seasons Biltmore. SBRCC's signature event honors individuals and businesses for their work and making a significant impact on the lives of survivors. The event includes a reception, auction, luncheon and awards program. Tickets are \$100. There are also sponsorship and volunteer opportunities for those who would like to attend.

HAVE FUN WHILE RAISING FUNDS

Volunteers are needed to help plan, organize and work at fundraising events. Your input and energy is vital to creating successful events where we can raise friends and funds. There are jobs of all sizes and time commitments –we can work with your schedule. Opportunities include but are not limited to: preparing mailings, publicity, soliciting auction items, selling raffle tickets, selecting entertainment, decorating the event location – all within a fun team. Volunteers are not required to go through training to be a part of this fun committee – so you can start immediately! This may be perfect for people you know that just don't have the time to do the crisis intervention training at this point. Please pass on the information to friends and family. Please contact Hilary Kleger at 963-6932 x 13 or hilary@sbrcc.net for more information.

DONATE OLD CELL PHONES

Did you know you can support SBRCC by donating your used cell phones? The agency receives a financial contribution for each phone we collect, so please tell your friends and family to drop off their old and tired cell phones at our office.