



SANTA BARBARA RAPE CRISIS CENTER  
CENTRO CONTRA LA VIOLACION SEXUAL  
**VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER**  
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**SEXUAL ASSAULT IN THE NEWS**

*In response to recent media attention given to the Kobe Bryant and Andrew Luster sexual assault cases, Melissa Johnson drafted an educational article that will be submitted to local newspapers. We are hopeful that this article will be printed in the Santa Barbara News Press or the Santa Barbara Independent. We wanted to share our thoughts with all of you.*

Wealthy, good-looking, well-liked, clean-cut nice guy: this is not how most people would describe a rapist. A *rapist* is someone whose shady appearance and social inadequacies give him away immediately, right? In reality, both of these profiles are stereotypes, and are therefore practically useless in determining who around you is likely to commit sexual assault.

Two recent high-profile cases involving sexual assault – that of convicted rapist millionaire Andrew Luster and allegations against Kobe Bryant — have permeated national and local media. Despite obvious differences, we can learn a lot from the attention these cases have received.

Like hundreds of cases before them, high-profile or not, Luster's and Bryant's clean-cut images have been used as evidence of their innocence. Conversely, any history of ill repute on behalf of the alleged victims is used as evidence that their allegations are faulty. Either way, it's time for the public to realize that image and reputation have *very little* to do with whether or not an assault has occurred. Though it happens time and time again, justice should not be determined or swayed by marketing someone's image of guilt or innocence.

Recent news has given hype to Bryant's experience as a result of the allegations against him. His career, his endorsements, his wife and family, and his untarnished image as a "good guy" all hang in the balance of this case. Yet, I've read little about how the life of the alleged survivor is forever to be changed. Does she risk losing the respect of friends and family members? What about her reputation, or her career? Whether Bryant is found innocent or guilty, it is assured that the alleged survivor's life and career will suffer greatly as well. If the allegations are true, this woman will have lost something tremendous and, like other survivors, may suffer from Rape Trauma Syndrome.

Many of us seem to focus our attention on high-profile cases because it creates the illusion that we are completely aware of what is happening in that criminal world called "rape." However, rape and sexual violence - including harassment, incest, and molestation - are an unfortunate reality in our town, in our families, and in our society right now, and are receiving little or no media attention.

Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center has advocated for survivors of sexual abuse for almost thirty years. Each year, the center provides services to over 500 survivors and their loved ones in our community. According to a study by the National Victim Center, more than 1,800 people are sexually assaulted in our country *every day*, yet only 16% of them will ever report to law enforcement. There are numerous reasons why the remaining 84% choose not to go public, and after what the public eye has done to the alleged survivor, one need not wonder why.

Shaking our heads at the disturbing facts in the case of Andrew Luster, or examining the allegations against Kobe Bryant, will not help any of us educate ourselves about a very real issue. Nor will it achieve

an ounce of the prevention work that so desperately needs our attention. Before we allow subjective public opinion to become our only system of education about sexual assault, it is important to learn real facts about the issue. For example, less than 2% of allegations brought forth by rape survivors are false. In 97% of rape cases, the survivor and the assailant are of the same race.

Only prevention and education will ultimately reduce the incidence of sexual violence in our communities. At the request of schools, employers, and other groups, Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center can provide, either in English or Spanish, rape prevention education and self-defense workshops for women.

In our personal lives, we can begin rape prevention by eliminating any myths we believe about rape, and replace them with facts. Why do we tend to point fingers at the victim for what a perpetrator has done? If the rate of violent crime in America is going down, why is the rate of rape still rising? Jackson Katz, one of the country's leading male anti-sexist educators, points out, "If over 99% of rape is perpetrated by men – whether the victims are female or male – why is rape considered a "women's issue?"

Furthermore, prevention is pro-active. Those at risk can educate themselves about personal protection, including assertiveness and self-defense techniques. More importantly, we can prevent sexual violence by valuing human rights and boundaries, and not tolerating sexist, racist, homophobic, or other oppressive behavior. We can end the silence surrounding sexual abuse by having an appropriate conversation with our friends, our co-workers, and especially our *children*. Warning: for this you may have to turn off the TV.

### **SPEAKING POINTS**

As we all know, the Kobe Bryant case is generating enormous amounts of media coverage, and will likely continue to do so for many months. We find ourselves answering questions on the subject of rape/assault, consent, victim privacy, and many other key issues. It is important that we have a sense of unity and consistency of approach when addressing the issues in this case. As a result, Jackson Katz and the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA) have compiled the following points to address this case. They are intended to give anti-rape advocates ideas about how to think about and respond to various aspects of the current case. We hope you find them helpful.

1. Because of its high-profile nature, the Kobe Bryant rape trial presents a rare teachable moment. Media coverage in these sorts of cases emphasizes the contentious legal issues. However, we should broaden the conversation to talk about the societal context within which rape is common. Why is the rape rate so high in the U.S.? Why do so many men rape women? If over 99% of rape is perpetrated by men – whether the victims are female or male – why is rape considered a "women's issue?" What is going on with American men – whether star athletes or average guys – that causes them to assault women?
2. It is important to emphasize that this case is "The People of Colorado vs. Kobe Bryant." It is not a "he said, she said" case. It is simply not true that this case pits one person's word against another's. Kobe Bryant deserves a fair trial on the charge against him and no one would deny him his right to defend himself to the best of his ability in a court of law. But let's be clear: calling the case a "he said-she said" is an attempt to discredit the alleged victim before a jury has even seen or heard the evidence. It also fits a larger pattern where some men – and women – seek to reduce the serious felony charge of sexual assault to a matter of poor communication or an unhappy sexual encounter. This fundamentally misstates the gravity of what is alleged to have happened.
3. Media commentators and others have been referring to the 19-year-old alleged victim as Kobe Bryant's "accuser." This is an inappropriate usage because the term "accuser" subtly, but powerfully, undermines the credibility of the alleged victim, and furthers the mistaken impression that this is a "he said, she said" case. Imagine if every time people said Bryant's name, they referred to him as "the accused," or "the accused rapist." As Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women Director Patti Giggans and others have maintained, referring to her as the "alleged victim" and him as "Kobe Bryant" or "the defendant" is a much more even-handed way to describe the principals in this case.

4. Kobe Bryant is a wondrous athlete and a phenomenal basketball player. His skills on the court and his public image off the court have won him millions of fans, many of whom want to believe he is not guilty of anything beyond adultery and incredibly poor judgment. People who know a lot about rape – from the perspective of victims as well as the perspective of the criminal justice system – know that false reports of rape are rare. Rarer still is the situation where a victim falsely reports a rape, then sticks to her/his story long enough for a district attorney to file charges and commence the prosecution of a case. It is understandable that Kobe Bryant fans are hoping their hero will be exonerated. But if they have any sense of fairness, these fans have to support a fair trial, and withhold judgment until all of the evidence is presented in a court of law.
5. There has been a lot of talk in the past few weeks about women who use false allegations of rape to extort money from professional athletes. Those who make this claim often do so with the self-inflated air of someone who wants you to think they are privy to valuable insider information. Some people who travel in elite sports circles claim to know that it's a common practice. But how do they know? In the rare instances when there is an out-of-court cash settlement between an athlete and a woman who alleges that he raped her, one condition of the settlement is a public gag order. Therefore, we don't know if he actually raped her and then bought her silence, or if they had consensual sex as part of her scheme. One way to respond to people who claim that "false rape accusations for the purpose of extortion are common" is to ask: Can you cite statistics on how prevalent this is? Can you provide the names of women who have done it, or the athletes who've been extorted? If not, then what is the basis for your belief that there is a widespread problem of women falsely accusing men?
6. Rape shield laws apply to the type of information that is admissible as evidence in a court of law. Among other things, they prevent defense attorneys from turning a case away from a debate about the merits of the evidence of an alleged crime by the defendant and into a referendum on the alleged victim's prior sexual history. But there are no rape shield laws on the streets, around the water cooler at work, or in the lounge in a college dormitory. Media commentators are not bound by rape shield laws. In other words, outside of the courtroom, people can say what they want about the alleged victim – and some people have been saying some nasty things about the 19-year-old Colorado woman at the center of this storm.

It is important to remember that one group of people who will be watching this case closely is rape victims. Most never report the crime, in part because they fear the type of vilification (albeit on a much smaller scale) that Bryant's alleged victim is encountering. Many victims never disclose their stories to people around them. We can support these silent victims – in some cases they are our family members and friends – by speaking up whenever possible. Suggested retorts: "Do you know her?" "How would you feel if it was someone close to you who reported a rape?" "It takes a lot of guts for a victim to come forward." But every time one does, it makes it that much harder for the culture of rape to continue.

## **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MARY RENAUD**

We are happy to acknowledge Mary Renaud for her valuable work as a Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center (SBRCC) volunteer. Mary has volunteered as a hotline advocate and a long-term counselor for SBRCC since completing both the Crisis Intervention and the Long Term Counselor Trainings in September 2001.

Mary grew up in North Hollywood and came to Santa Barbara in 1966. She has been married for 33 years and has “four wonderful children, as well as a great son-in-law and daughter-in-law.” In June 2001, Mary received an M.A. in Clinical Psychology and an M.A. in Career Counseling and Development from Antioch University. Before coming to SBRCC, she had completed an internship at Sanctuary House providing individual and group counseling to clients with mental health issues.

When asked how her SBRCC volunteer experience had impacted her life, Mary commented: “I love this work. I love empowering women. I get excited about experiencing the growth in women’s lives.” She really feels like volunteering with SBRCC was her first feminist or social justice experience. Although she gained important information from her Feminist Theory class at Antioch, “that was book learning. Coming here, I have been able to really see things in action.”

Mary values the people and the atmosphere created at SBRCC. “It’s so open here. I feel comfortable working with everyone.” She especially admires the sense of appreciation and gratitude that is developed at the Center. It is a place where staff and volunteers work hard and others recognize their efforts. “Elsa and Marilyn, in particular, have always taken time to thank and appreciate me – and other volunteers – for the work that we do.” Mary has fond memories of the effort staff took recently to coordinate a baby shower for one of SBRCC’s hotline assistants. When Mary asked about the gathering, she was told: “This is just what we do. We do this for everyone.” Mary is impressed by the Center’s sense of community and staff’s willingness to share in everyone’s joys and celebrations.

Mary stays motivated and inspired to continue this challenging work due to Marilyn’s wonderful supervision meetings, seeing the women she works with grow and develop, as well as the warm and inviting atmosphere created at the Center. When talking about Santa Barbara Rape Crisis Center to people in the community, she lets people know that “our couches are always available and you can just sit down and enjoy good reading materials and no one will bother you.”

Her vision for SBRCC over the next five years is that we continue to recruit more volunteers and educate women about the services that are available here at the Center. “Education changes lives forever,” Mary commented. She also hopes that SBRCC can educate more men. She hopes that SBRCC will schedule more events like the Jackson Katz presentation we coordinated in April 2003. “Men need to know that they have a role in ending sexual assault.”

Mary says she is honored that she was chosen as the “Volunteer of the Quarter.” In reality, it is SBRCC that is honored to have **YOU** as part of our team. Thanks for all your hard work and dedication, Mary. We appreciate and value it.

# STATISTICS UPDATE

At the August advocate meeting, Melissa provided lots of great information about tracking statistics, filling out call report forms, and documenting all of the data that we gather during our crisis calls and in-person meetings. We wanted to provide you with a short summary of key points:

- **Call Report Forms** are a space for you to communicate information about the clients with whom you are working. These forms are only used internally by SBRCC staff members. Please provide as much information as you possibly can, but we understand that you may not have complete information. For example, it is OK to write “client looks about 40-50 years old” in the age category. You do not have to have exact details. Call report forms are your chance to share as many “clues” with SBRCC staff as possible.
- **Demographic Information:** Although it can be awkward at times, it is essential to gather as much demographic information about our callers as possible. At the very least, always mark the client’s gender and ask if you can record her or his zip code. It is important for clients to know that this information is kept confidential and is only collected to enable SBRCC to receive funding.

## DEFINITIONS

- **Initial Contact** means that this is the first time SBRCC has had contact with this client
- **Follow-up** means that you are contacting the client after her/his initial contact with SBRCC. This could include making a follow-up phone call or scheduling an in-person follow-up crisis session and talking directly with the client. *The following efforts do NOT qualify as follow-up:*
  - Attempts to provide follow-up when the client is not reached
  - Mailing a letter to the client
  - Leaving a message for the client with another person or on an answering machine
- **Advocacy** means that you make an effort to impact a process or a system in accordance with the wishes of the client when she or he is unable to do so. This could include calling a therapist to request additional services, talking with law enforcement to learn more about the status of a client’s case, or contacting a residential program to discuss housing options for a homeless client.
- **Accompaniment** means physically being with a client in order to provide support. This means meeting the client somewhere other than SBRCC to access services other than crisis counseling. This could include meeting a client for a court appointment, escorting a client to law enforcement, or meeting a client at Planned Parenthood for an appointment. *The following efforts do NOT qualify as accompaniment:*
  - Meeting a client at a public location off-site for crisis counseling
  - If law enforcement responds to SBRCC to meet with a client, being present does not constitute an accompaniment even if you are on a different floor or in a different area of the agency.
- **In-person Counseling** means one-on-one, face-to-face counseling with a client. Please record the number of minutes that you and the client are engaged in crisis counseling using active listening.
- **Documentation Only** means that you complete one of the following two actions:
  - *Leave a message* for a client with another person or on an answering machine
  - *Provide Information and Referral* services, which means that you give a member of the general public information about sexual assault or referrals to another agency. (This does not include existing clients). Examples include providing information about the myths and facts of sexual assault, providing information about SBRCC services, or giving the phone number for another agency to a member of the public.

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## NEXT MONTHLY ADVOCATE MEETING: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9<sup>TH</sup> FROM 6 PM - 8 PM

Join us for a guest presentation with staff from *The Phoenix House* to learn more about mental health and substance abuse issues. Advocate meetings are great opportunities to learn new information, get to know other advocates, and take time to process calls and any client work.

## END OF QUARTER REMINDER

The current quarter ends on September 30<sup>th</sup>. Please remember to submit in-service report forms to Melissa if you have attended any in-service trainings in the past three months.

- **Advocates:** Please make sure to submit all call report forms and shift logs to Vilma.
- **Long-term Counselors:** Please submit your timesheets to Melissa.

## UPCOMING SELF-DEFENSE WORKSHOPS

- Saturday, September 27<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm
- Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup> 10am – 2pm
- Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 10am – 2pm

Classes are \$30 per person. Please call SBRCC for more information.

A self-defense class can be a great present for someone you love. Gift certificates available.

## SBRCC NEEDS MORE ADVOCATES – HELP SPREAD THE WORD!

The next English Crisis Intervention Training is scheduled for **September 29<sup>th</sup> - November 12<sup>th</sup>**.

Classes meet at SBRCC on Mondays and Wednesdays (6:00 p.m. - 10:00 pm) and one Saturday (Nov. 1<sup>st</sup>) from 10am – 2 pm for a self-defense class. Please **call Laura at 963-6832 or email at [laura@sbrcc.net](mailto:laura@sbrcc.net)** for information. We especially need volunteers who are Spanish/English bilingual!

## LONG-TERM COUNSELING PROGRAM

If you have completed SBRCC's 60-hour Crisis Intervention Training and are interested in becoming a Long-Term Counselor, please contact Marilyn Goldman, our Counseling Supervisor. The next Long-Term Counseling Training will be offered in **October 2003**.

## Positions Available at SBRCC

- **Development Director (Part-time position):** Responsible for donor development and solicitation. Responsible for grant writing and special event planning. Requires strong verbal and written communication skills.
- **Executive Assistant (Part-time position)**  
PT Executive Assistant. Executive projects, filing systems, assist w/coordination of grant reports & fund development activities. Computer literate, project management experience preferred. Strong verbal and written communication skills.
- **Community Education Coordinator (Full-time position):** Coordinate education, prevention and self-defense programs. Supervise volunteers. Bilingual English/Spanish required. Requires strong written communication skills and public speaking.

**If interested in a position, please submit resume and three references to SBRCC, 111 N. Milpas Street, SB, CA 93103, or to [sbrcc@silcom.com](mailto:sbrcc@silcom.com).**

### **PARKING AT BLOCKBUSTER NOT PERMITTED**

Blockbuster Management has recently informed us that SBRCC will no longer have permission to park in their lot. Your car **will be towed** if you are parked at Blockbuster. Parking is available on Mason Street, on Milpas Street (for 90 minutes), and at McDonald's in the back (except during lunch from 11:30am – 1:30pm). We do not want any of our cars towed, so please observe the new rule strictly! Thank you.

### **UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENT: THE GREAT AMERICAN WRITE-IN:**

The Santa Barbara Pro-Choice Coalition invites you to save the date for its first *Great American Write-in* on September 13, 2003 at the Unitarian Society (1535 Santa Barbara Street) from 1 - 3 p.m. This exciting day will provide a unique opportunity for coalition members to come together in support of reproductive choice. This will be an organized and extensive state and federal lobbying effort. Since the November 2002 mid-term elections, the anti-choice majorities, now in control of both houses of Congress and the White House, are waging an assault on women like nothing we have ever seen before. Anti-choice laws are being passed and “abstinence-only” funding is being increased. Stacking the federal courts with anti-choice judges in one of this administration's top priorities. As anti-choice forces set their sites on controlling the Supreme Court, we must be vigilant in our defense of reproductive freedom. For more information, please contact Julie Mickelberry at 963-2445 ext. 51.

### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO...**

- Alma Villagomez, September 5<sup>th</sup>
- Nicole Gonzales, September 19<sup>th</sup>
- Kelly Butler, September 21<sup>st</sup>
- Michelle Fink, September 30<sup>th</sup>