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The Prevalence of Rape on College Campuses

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**Introduction**

Rape on college campuses across the country have become more common, however many college administrators are not giving adequate punishment to rapist. Faculty of universities are using excuses like there is not enough evidence for the rapist to be charged or witnesses, and some are even willing to go as far as to say that the victim was asking for it, depending on what they were wearing when the rape occurred. Rape occurs when a man or a woman are forced to preform sexual intercourse, unwillingly. When rape occurs on college campuses, often alcohol is involved. At parties, rapist can easily make sure that their victim is drunk enough, and if not, the rapist might drug their victim. The issue of rape on college campuses needs to be discussed because there is a major problem with victims not reporting their rapes due to them fearing being blamed for their rape, or because they are scared that others may not believe their story.

**Literature Review**

One of the most common forms of rapist on college campuses are acquaintance rapist. These rapists get their names from the fact that they are known to their victims (Romeo F. F. 2004). An acquaintance rapist could be any individual in your life such as; a lab partner, boyfriend, neighbor, or even a class mate (Romeo F. F. 2004). An individual is not able to identify an acquaintance rapist by appearance, but acquaintance rapist behaves differently (Romeo F. F. 2004). These types of rapist have very high manipulative personalities and are often known to make promises to their potential victims such as engagement or love (Romeo F. F. 2004). This allows the rapist to make their victim more vulnerable because if the victim trust the rapist, it is more likely that they will be willing to go to a room alone with them.

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Acquaintance rapist also use other forms of manipulation like alcohol and drugs. The use of alcohol on a victim will make them become unconscious, and then the victim will not be able to resist the sexual attack (Romeo F. F. 2004). The rapist could also slip drugs into the victim’s alcohol, these drugs are often referred to as “Roofies,” and they are easy to sneak into a victim’s drink because they are colorless, tasteless, and odorless (Romeo F. F. 2004). Another form of drugs that an acquaintance rapist is known for using on their victim is a “date, rape drug,” these drugs cause amnesia. This causes the victim to have no memory of what happened to them after they awake, making it almost impossible for them to provide valuable information when reporting their rape (Romeo F. F. 2004). They are several precautions that students on college campuses can take that will lower the chances of them being raped. These include never walking to and from a party alone, always keep your drinking with you at a party and never accepting a drink from someone that has already been opened (Romeo F. F. 2004).

A study was done that examined risk factors that often lead to sexual male aggression on college campuses. These factors were both theoretically and empirically based, and included drug and alcohol abuse, experiences of child abuse, negative-gender based attitudes, and how often one watches pornography (Carr L. J, VanDeusen M. K. 2004). The results of the study showed that alcohol abuse, watching too much pornography, and negative gender attitudes were all major factors that may perpetrate rape (Carr L. J, VanDeusen M. K. 2004).

Four faculty members from Texas Tech University drew a case study for feminist faculty responses to civil rights within college campuses (Kelly R. C, Lavigne E. D, Sharp A. E, Weiser A. D. 2017). They decided to do the case study because of an incident that happened on their college campus. Two pictures were released by a fraternity at Texas Tech from a party that they

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had hosted. The first picture featured a slogan that said, “no means yes, yes means anal” (Kelly R. C, Lavigne E. D, Sharp A. E, Weiser A. D. 2017). The second picture involved a card board cutout of a women and a sprinkler (Kelly R. C, Lavigne E. D, Sharp A. E, Weiser A. D. 2017). The women faculty members were outraged by these pictures and the fact that they had been spread around campus and even national news (Kelly R. C, Lavigne E. D, Sharp A. E, Weiser A. D. 2017). Their movement showed the importance of the need for strong feminist faculty activism on all college campuses across the country.

Another study done at the University of Oklahoma examined the students views of sexual assault on campus, how they feel about reporting sexual assault to campus officials, and how they feel about the education of sexual assault on their campus (Wallace A. S, Worthen G. F. M. 2017). Their studies found privileged groups are less informed about sexual assault than marginalized groups (Wallace A. S, Worthen G. F. M. 2017). The study also concluded that marginalized groups saw sexual assault to be a more serious issue than any other groups on campus (Wallace A. S, Worthen G. F. M. 2017).

Besides research of rape on college campuses, much research has been done on ways to prevent it from happening. One study looked at a prevention technique called the by stander approach. Although, this approach needs further development, the technique holds a future promise as a prevention tool for sexual violence (Koenick A. R, McMahon S, Postmus L. J. 2011). The education of this approach is critical for prevention of rape on college campuses, but also, must be taught to students in a way that students can intervene effectively and without causing a threat to themselves (Koenick A. R, McMahon S, Postmus L. J. 2011). They examined the results of their study through a bystander attitude revised scale, which included situations if

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they were in the sexual intercourse situation themselves. Most students reported that they would be willing to stop if ask to do, even after it had started consensually (Koenick A. R, McMahon S, Postmus L. J. 2011). It can be concluded that this study has flaws however because if alcohol or other substances were to be involved in the situation that they were about to begin intercourse; they may not stop if ask to do so.

Another study discussed three types of preventions to campus violence: tertiary prevention, secondary prevention, and primary prevention (Roark L. M. 1987). Tertiary prevention consists of services given to students who have already been victimized in hopes of limiting the damage of violence that has already occurred (Roark L. M. 1987). Secondary prevention considers problems that already exist and immediate solutions for them to prevent more violence from happening (Roark L. M. 1987). Finally, primary prevention seeks to prevent further violence on campuses locating the actions and values that students have that often foster violence (Roark L. M. 1987). Together these make an army of ways to prevent violence because each type either focuses on past violence’s, current, or future ones that may occur.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, no student should endure rape while in college. When someone is raped it can cause emotional damage and take years to get over the assault. It is important that students always feel safe around their peers while on campus at any location. The research of rape on college campuses is important because people often have misconceptions of how often it happens on college campuses. Research on sexual violence also helps understand the reasons for the under reporting of rapes within campuses because most will find students do not come

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forward about their assault due to fear of retaliation from their rapist, not being believed, or self-blame. Future research on sexual violence should be on ways to better educate faculty, and students on how to handle sexual violence. Some research has been done on prevention techniques, but this research needs to be better integrated within campuses to prevent more assaults from occurring in the future.

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