

***** RAPE ALERT *****

IT CAN HAPPEN TO YOU!
YOUR MOTHER!
YOUR SISTER!
YOUR WIFE!

Every 5 minutes a woman is RAPED in the U.S., 12 RAPES occur each hour, 300 women are RAPED EVERYDAY!

MYTH vs TRUTH

Myth: The primary motive for RAPE is sexual

TRUTH: The major motive for RAPE is power - to control and dominate another person.

Myth: RAPE is provoked by the victim

TRUTH: 71% of RAPES are planned in advance, making irrelevant the survivor's behavior or appearance

Myth: RAPE occurs only among strangers

TRUTH: 60% of RAPES involve acquaintances or friends. In 14% of the cases reported, the rapist is a close personal friend, a member of the family or friend of the family.

Myth: RAPE can't happen to me

TRUTH: RAPE can happen to anyone, but there are some safety precautions you can practice to lower your chances.....

PROTECT YOURSELF

BE ALERT - Learn to recognize potentially dangerous situations before they develop. Trust your intuition. If you feel uncomfortable or uneasy, remove yourself from the situation at once. Try to stay away from poorly lit, isolated, or deserted areas, especially if you are alone.

STAY CALM - Think! Is there anyone near you that can help? Are there any open, populated buildings to which you can run? What are your options? Your first priority is your safety!

RESIST - Often, there is not time or the ability to run away and you must decide whether or not to resist. Resistance might include the following: physically fighting, screaming, talking assertively and rationally, and playing sick. The decision to resist and the type of resistance to use is a personal choice that each person must make.

If You Are RAPED

Immediately after the assault

- Get to a safe place
- Contact someone you can trust (family, friend, teacher, Rape Crisis Counselor)
- Discuss options (call police, seek medical attention)
- Remember, physical evidence is usually only collected up to 72 hours after the assault

Long term recovery

- Find someone with whom you can talk
- Call the Rape Crisis Hotline for additional support (528-RAPE)
- Cut yourself some slack... it was a traumatic event and it takes time to deal with it
- Remember, you are not alone

Real Men Can Help Stop RAPE

NEVER voice, believe or support the idea that a woman "wanted it".
If you heard that a buddy was thrown in jail for one night and was **RAPED**, would you believe that he "wanted it"?!
NEVER think a woman "OWES" a man sex under any circumstances.
Sexual intercourse is not a payback for a meal or a night on the town.

When a woman says "NO", believe her.

Don't touch, ogle, whistle at or talk to women in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable. If you aren't sure what makes a woman feel uncomfortable, ask her.

NEVER think a woman "OWES" a man sex under any circumstances.
Sexual intercourse is not a payback for a meal or a night on the town.

Help Stop RAPE In Your Community

Attend the Positive Interaction Program (PIP) meetings organized by the police in your area. Call your local substation or the main headquarters for the date, time, and place.

October 15, 1992

CONTACT: Meg Crady
(713) 661-4171
or: Shannon Austin-Wilkes
day: (713) 522-6363
evening: (713) 526-8722

For Training Use Only

MEDIA ALERT

- WHAT:** Press Conference
- WHO:** Women's Action Coalition
- WHERE:** HISD Board of Education meeting chambers
HISD Administration Building
3830 Richmond
- WHEN:** Approx. 4:45 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, following the public comment session of the HISD school board meeting.
- WHY:** To discuss WAC's demand that HISD accept responsibility for sexual violence against female students by instituting immediate policy changes and educational programs.

Sexual Misconduct is a Four-Letter Word

WAC will challenge HISD's position toward sexual violence against female students and propose creative solutions at the school board's public comment session Thursday.

We are outraged by HISD's inappropriate response to the recent gang rape at E.O. Smith Middle School. We believe that dismissing this incident as merely "sexual misconduct" sends an unacceptable message to the community. Sexual misconduct is a four-letter word, and that word is rape.

We demand that HISD accept immediate responsibility for educating students, faculty and administrators to recognize and deal with sexual violence issues. We also insist that HISD institute policies to ensure that such incidents are handled more sensitively in the future.

WAC is an open alliance of women committed to direct action on issues affecting the rights of all women. We are witness to the current economic, cultural and political pressures that limit women's lives and to the horrifying effect of these limitations. We exercise our full creative power to launch a visible and remarkable resistance. WAC IS WATCHING. WE WILL TAKE ACTION.

October 23, 1992

CONTACT: Shannon Austin-Wilkie
AM: (713) 522-6363
PM: (713) 526-8722
OR: Teri Boyer
(713) 896-8301

MEDIA ALERT

WHO: Women's Action Coalition and the WAC Drum Corps.

WHAT: Appearance at five "Super Saturday" early-voting rallies.

WHEN: Saturday, October 24, 1992.

WHY: To encourage Hispanic and African-American women to vote.

WHERE: Garnet Coleman's Headquarters, 1902 Blodgett; 10 a.m.
K-Mart, 8230 Kirby; 11:15 a.m.
Kashmere Multi-Service Center, 4802 Lockwood Drive; 3 p.m.
Fiesta Mart, 2300 N. Shepherd; 4:15 p.m.
Acres Homes Houston Public Library, 6209 West
Montgomery; 5:30 p.m.

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October 23, 1992

For Immediate Release

WAC Drums Up Minority Vote at Super Saturday Rallies

[HOUSTON] -- Women's Action Coalition and the WAC Drum Corps will encourage Hispanic and African-American citizens to vote at five rallies in minority neighborhoods Saturday.

The group will caravan from rally to rally, drumming and chanting the message that every vote is important. WAC members will wear white in honor of the suffragettes who fought to win the right for women to vote, said WAC spokesperson Shannon Austin-Wilkie.

The rallies, along with two others, are sponsored by the Harris County Democratic Party to encourage people to cast early ballots on 'Super Saturday', a nationwide get-out-the-vote effort of the party's Unity 92 campaign. However, WAC is a non-partisan alliance of women and has declined to endorse a particular candidate, Austin-Wilkie said.

WAC will appear at the following rally locations: Garnet Coleman's Headquarters, 1902 Blodgett; 10 a.m.; K-Mart, 8230 Kirby, 11:15 a.m.; Kashmere Multi-Service Center, 4802 Lockwood Dr., 3 p.m.; Fiesta Mart, 2300 N. Shepherd, 4:15 p.m.; and Acres Homes Houston Public Library, 6209 West Montgomery, 5:30 p.m..

"WAC believes that it is especially important for women of color to use their vote to make their voices heard in this election," Austin-Wilkie said. "The people hit hardest by the social, economic and political pressures of our times are those who were already in the most precarious position -- minority women."

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For instance, Austin-Wilkie noted, two in every five black women and 79 % of black children in female-headed households live below the poverty level, according a study by the Women's Research & Education Institute. And while health care costs are skyrocketing, 27 percent of Hispanics and more than 19 percent of Afro-Americans lack health insurance.

"Our vote can make a difference," Austin-Wilkie said. "The fastest-growing group in American electoral politics is African-American women, and the number of Hispanic women voters has increased significantly. WAC believes that it's time to use this voting power to influence the way government affects our lives."

Recent "no excuse" legislation broadened absentee voting rules to allow every registered voter to cast an early ballot. Early voting ends in Texas October 30.

"One of the reasons we're supporting these early-voting rallies is that this legislation has made it easier for minorities to cast their ballots at convenient times and more accessible locations," Austin-Wilkie said. "This makes it possible to win greater minority representation than ever."

WAC is an open alliance of women committed to direct action on issues affecting the rights of all women. WAC supports immediate enactment of an Equal Rights Amendment initiative and an end to homophobia, racism, religious prejudice and violence against women. WAC is a proponent of every woman's right to quality health care, child care and reproductive freedom.

For more information on WAC, call (713) 867-9581. For information on polling locations, call the county clerk's office at 755-6411.

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For Susan

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For Immediate Release
October 30, 1992

CONTACT: Susan Murray
(713) 523-6529
(713) 621-8714
OR: Teri Boyer
(713) 896-8301

WAC Plans Pro-Choice Rally Saturday

[HOUSTON] -- Women's Action Coalition is sponsoring a pro-choice rally open to all people on Saturday, October 31, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Market Square.

Several well-known elected officials and political candidates are scheduled to speak, including State Rep. Debra Danburg (D - dist. 137), 80th District Court candidate Terry O'Rourke (D), 178th District Court candidate Frances "Poppy" Northcutt (D), and State Senate Dist. 17 candidate Ronnie Harrison (D).

"Every child deserves to be a loved and wanted child," said WAC spokesperson Susan Murray. "All too often, the consequences of forcing unprepared women or girls into motherhood are child abuse, neglect, and poverty. WAC believes that women must have the right to chose to avoid this cycle of violence."

In this election year, the future of safe, legal, accessible abortions will be determined, Murray said. "Only when women have full control over our lives and our bodies can we begin to achieve equal status in society. WAC urges everyone to examine the positions of each candidate and to vote for those who support reproductive freedom."

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FDR: The Women's Action Coalition
RE: Meeting with a representative of
The Clark Read Foundation

As decided by the group on October 13th, I called Ben Russell of the Clark Read Foundation on Thursday morning at 9:30. At that time, he stated that he would consult with a lawyer and get back with me with some legal advice concerning our "Yo, Rapist" Action, mainly naming names of rapists on flyers. I promised to call him later in the day. At 3:30, I met Ben at Barnaby's. Almost from the moment I walked in the door, he (and Carol, our female lawyer consultant) were quite excited that WAC was beginning "some type of action on this issue." However, Ben relayed some concerns of Carol's about our action:

1. That we have no defense fund of about \$2500 already in place before we begin such actions and \$25,000 in pledges "in case we really get in trouble."
(Apparently, this is somewhat a part of ACT UP's civil disobedience fund- at least the initial money.)
2. That we understand that if we begin this action and name names of men who have not been charged and convicted of this crime we are "talking direct liability" for everyone in the group, not just those who participate.
3. We "would be hard pressed to win" if he hasn't been found guilty. We would not stand a chance if he hasn't even been brought up on formal charges.
[He did cite a case of a number of years ago that somewhat addresses our concern. It was--
Constantine vs. Wisconsin - a case where the police department posted pictures in stores and neighborhoods of convicted shoplifters. A trial took place and the court found in favor of the police department.
Unfortunately, it cost the department \$125,000 in legal fees to win.]
4. Finally, even if a group of women decided to do a "stealth action" and do the flyering without the endorsement of WAC, it apparently could still be a problem if more than two women were caught and found to be WAC members. Also, we must remember that HPD is well aware that we are compiling statistics on violent crimes against women. We would probably be the first women they talk to.

The legal advice I received was to back off from naming names and think in terms of "a long haul" program. He suggested that we talk to and work with other groups, so we are not the only ones known to be doing this work. Secondly, we need to remember that the more specific we get, "the more liability we entertain." Perhaps, Ben noted, we could print on the flyers our logo and "A Rape Occurred in this area- committed by a neighborhood resident- on this day at so and so time." This way our message would still be getting across; we would be taking credit for the action, and we would entertain less liability. Their other concerns were the possibility that we would be perceived as a "type of vigilante group" and then we would "lose our sympathetic audience." He did invite us to continue to call CRF when we want or need advice.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Palmer