

TRIGGER WARNING

This issue contains feature and opinion pieces examining the social, cultural, and political aspects of sexual misconduct, including abuse, assault, and harassment.



The New York Times Magazine is a quarterly publication in which noteworthy topics are explored.

Sexual misconduct not just a problem on college campuses

by Claudia Levens

Note Most of the identities of the people involved in this article have been kept anonymous. This is something that the New Trier News tries to avoid, since we are aware that it complicates the perception of credibility. However we hope to bring light to a deeper aspect of our community that deserves thoughtful dialogue by lifting the voices of individuals who are personally affected by it. The people's names are anonymous as are the names of everyone involved in their stories simply to protect them.

"I remember most that I started to get sweaty, and I remember my hands shaking so much that my ring started to move along my finger. I remember thinking that there was no way this situation ended well."

The anonymous student had planned on stopping at home before hanging out with some friends. She took the bus to where it stopped closest to her home, and when she got off, a guy she knew from school was there. They started talking and walking in the same direction, until they passed a park.

"I sat on one of the benches for a moment to do something, and he sat down next to me and started making physical advances. I told him to stop. I think I specifically remember saying 'no thanks I'm good.' But he kept trying to kiss me, touching me all over, and I was panicking. I didn't know what to do. I remember getting up with some excuse, walking towards my house hurriedly but checking and going around the block twice so that he'd not see where I live. I got home, took a shower and cried," she said.

"I see him in school sometimes, and each time, I get this panicky feeling in my chest."

Earlier this year, senior boys and girls advisories paired up to discuss the movie "The Hunting Ground," which every group watched the prior week. This marks the second year the film which portrays the realities of sexual assault on college campuses, has been shown to all senior advisories as they prepare for their eventual NT departure.

During the extended period, AP Psychology students gave presentations on various psychological elements pertaining to sexual assault, including the bystander effect, mob mentality, and altruism.

Assistant Superintendent Timothy Hayes said, "The purpose of 'The Hunting Ground' is to help educate students about sexual assault on college campuses before they go off to college. Our goal is for students to walk out of here after health class, after the movie, after the conversation, understanding what positive, compassionate relationships look like.

A second anonymous student said she truly appreciated that discussions surrounding sexual assault and harassment were being conducted within NT and felt proud that our school was providing the opportunity for that in the first place.

"But I also felt throughout the film and discussion this nagging feeling that something really important was missing. It was all focused on this idea that it's something we'll have to experience once we leave this area," she said.

"It was all focused on the hypotheticals of college and slightly relevant issues, but I just kept thinking about what I'd been through two years ago, and all the girls in our school I know who've had similar experiences."

The second anonymous student had been repeatedly subject to unwanted touching and emotionally manipulative comments over the course of multiple months.

"When he wanted me to move

'It stuck out to a lot of us that this really feels like an issue that isn't so distanced from our own community or that it's only relevant when talking about college and in health class.'

he wouldn't say it, he'd just hit me on the [butt]. I told him to use his words. He kept doing it and I turned around and told him that if he wanted me to move, he'd need to tell me. He threatened me saying that if I told people no one would believe me because everyone loved him."

While discussing with her friends during a class after "The Hunting Ground," it became clear to her that she wasn't the only one who felt that way.

"It stuck out to a lot of us that this really feels like an issue that isn't so distanced from our own community or that it's only relevant when talking about college and in health class."

The second anonymous student said she feels guilty that she never pushed harder to report the harassment to the point where he would be held accountable.

"I know he has done things to other girls. I didn't realize at the time that the unwanted touching consisted of harassment. Most people picture this violent circumstance, but there's a lot more that needs to be fixed."

Hayes said that providing support and education is something the administration cares deeply about prioritizing.

"There are multiple avenues that are available. First of all, sexual assault is a crime, so there is an avenue through the police department that allows for investigation and seeking justice. There are reporting policies in place that include investigations and support. There are also resources here for the individual students through social work which is always available to anyone. Our health curriculum covers consent and an entire section focused on sexual assault, consent, and healthy relationships to educate students," he said.

Reporting policies and processes are outlined in the student guidebook.

Specific details pertaining to the reporting process can be found on page 2 in the section headlined "How to report sexual misconduct at NT."

The second anonymous student said "the policies are important, but there's a discrepancy between the amount of people who experience things and the amount who report it and seek help. If everything were perfect here, then there wouldn't still be this discrepancy."

According to the second anonymous student, this is a result of residual fear and stigma regarding reporting but also a lack of awareness, specifically among our student body about the processes in place to help them. She also believed there was a general feeling among other girls she knew that nothing would even be

done if they do report it.

After the first anonymous student had been assaulted at the park by her house, she initially didn't report it due to the fact that she didn't have a lot of faith that anything would be done to help her situation or punish the person who'd assaulted her.

"I knew I could report it, but I also thought, what's the point of saying anything to anyone if I don't believe they're going to do anything about it. I felt that way because I'd heard stories of people telling an adult in the school and nothing happening or very little resulted and nothing changed."

A third anonymous student who'd been verbally harassed over the course of multiple weeks in one of her classes said that she was frustrated with the fact that the teacher of the class didn't do anything to help her even though it was clearly audible and the anonymous student had gone to her for help.

Aside from these inconsistencies, it's also a reality that students at our school don't always know about the policies and resources in place that can support them.

A fourth anonymous student said that both times she experienced sexual harassment, she had no idea that reporting was a viable option for her.

One of the boys she sat with at lunch started making advances—smaller ones at first such as locking his arms around her shoulder and chest area. She told him to stop and that she was not okay with that.

'How many girls experience things like that and continue to tell themselves that it doesn't matter? It's not the actual violent assault or harassment that's much clearer that people can clearly be punished for, but these small things matter.'

"I tried to brush off the situation and ignore it and move on. I just thought he's a stupid guy, it doesn't matter."

He'd remove his arms at first, but as the days went on, he continued to touch her in uncomfortable ways that she told him she didn't want.

"I was mad, so I stopped talking to him. I stopped sitting with him and those friends. It sounds minor and it's not the worst thing that can happen, but I had repeatedly told him that I didn't want that, and it didn't

matter, he kept doing it. I don't think he thought he was doing anything wrong. And I wish I would have had the skills to be able to say in that moment 'hey you're creeping me out, leave me alone' and explain what he was doing and that he was making my really uncomfortable. But I'm also conflicted, because I felt like that wasn't something for me to say and that it wasn't my job. I had told him to stop multiple times, too. Shouldn't that have been enough?"

He was in her math class throughout the rest of the year, and every time she saw him, it'd make her uncomfortable.

The sexual assault she experienced the summer before

but these small things matter."

She acknowledged it as this "greyer area" of the sexual conduct conversation.

"I think it's [the grey area] is a cultural symptom of the same problem. It's still behavior that doesn't feel right. I think we should address it and try to show people how weird this is. It's such an interesting thing, specifically for this area. There's this expectation that New Trier is so perfect because the grades are good, the sports teams are good, the building is beautiful. But there are so many shady cultural issues that aren't only at New Trier, to be fair, but that don't really get addressed fully and thoughtfully," she said.

1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men will be raped at some point in their lives

1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men will experience contact sexual violence at some point in their lives

20-25% of college women and 15% of college men are victims of forced sex during their time in college

National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2017

her sophomore year involved the same guy who'd assaulted the first anonymous student at the park.

"I'd never really thought that they were situations I could bring to the school. I really just had no idea," she said. "I definitely think there's some work the school can do to make sure people know from the beginning of high school what the reporting process is, who they can go to, those types of things."

What concerns her most, however, are the socially acceptable aspects of our culture that culminate in sexual misconduct that she believes are present in our community as they are throughout the world.

"I think the problem is a lot more complicated than it's portrayed to be. My friend told me about how someone had grabbed her [butt] on the bus one time. That's happened to me while walking up the stairwell."

She explained that both her friend and she had tried to tell themselves that 'it wasn't a big deal.' But the more people, girls especially, she'd hear tell talk about like that, the more frustrated she got.

"How many girls experience things like that and continue to tell themselves that it doesn't matter? It's not the actual violent assault or harassment that's much clearer that people can clearly be punished for,

After "The Hunting Ground" was shown, a group of students, including senior Izzy Cox, sent a letter to advisories and administrators hoping to change the way sexual assault is discussed in our school.

Since then, they've participated in meetings with administrators, the KW Chair, and Adviser Chairs to discuss the concerns and extend the conversation.

They've also worked on clarifying and updating the resources posted online, editing some of the questions on the YRBS survey to collect the best data. They hope to institute a conversation or handout outlining the reporting process in advisories at the beginning of the year.

"There are juniors who have promised to continue encouraging the school to have these conversations and to have them productively," senior Izzy Cox said.

"There are tangible actions our community could take to change those factors that enable and encourage sexual misconduct. At the very least, prevent these experiences from happening."

Where to find help:

In case of an emergency, call 9-1-1

National sexual assault hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

Text-A-Tip: Text NSHELP912 to 844-823-5323

NT Social Work offices:

Winnetka--Room 225

Northfield--Room B230

Visit online.RAINN.org for 24/7 one-on-one online support
Resources for Counseling on the NT Social Work Website: provides information regarding local counseling services



"Hunting Ground" opens up discussions on assault

by Hannah Sussman

In late January, senior advisers watched "The Hunting Ground," a documentary focusing on the sexual assault epidemic within college campuses.

After watching the film many male students were shocked at the scope of sexual assault on campuses, while many female students were sadly unsurprised by the film.

"The Hunting Ground," a film created in 2015, details disturbing statistics and chronicles several stories of assault swept under the rug by college administrations. Through a multitude of national and individual school studies, the video found that a shocking 1 in 5 women will be assaulted in their time at college.

After watching the film, senior Jack Altman was left with a new understanding of the dangers that accompany college life.

"[Sexual assault] was an issue I knew [of] prior to watching it, but I didn't really know the scope or severity of it. I realized [going to college] could actually be a scary experience," said Altman.

Senior Roland Kim also found many of the statistics in the video astounding, especially most the number of reported assaults that go unreported.

"Before the video I was not aware of the number of women who face sexual assault, especially all the women who are then ignored," Kim reflected.

To senior adviser Andrew Milne, his advisers did not seem shocked that the issue was present, but more saddened by the reality of the film.

"They seemed disappointed more than anything else," Milne clarified.

Senior Lauren Wittenmyer was similarly saddened by the realities shown, but she was not astonished by them.

"I already knew rape culture was a major problem on college campuses and the video didn't really teach me anything new about it. However, I thought the video highlighted a very important aspect of college life that a lot of people choose to ignore," said Wittenmyer.

Similarly, Alana Goldstein, was not only unsurprised by the numbers presented in the film, but even felt that the recorded numbers may be lower than the truth.

"I wish I could say that sexual assault at college and university isn't something I need to be wary of. Even the statistics that were shown are way lower than the actual sexual assault instances that probably happen since so much goes unreported," said Goldstein.

Despite already being aware of the problem at hand, Goldstein still felt that the film was well done and something seniors should continue to watch.

"I think that the video did

a good job at demonstrating the extent of the problem sexual assault is across colleges and universities around the United States," she said. "It really showed that the epidemic isn't just at one school and that there is a consistent culture that school administrations have let run rampant."

While the video presented the problem well, it did not touch on the solutions, leaving that as one of the key questions for advisers to discuss.

Math teacher Katherine Tinsmeier worked to help advisers have conversations that focused on solutions to the problem.

"I hope that my advisers didn't come away from the video and discussion with a sense of hopelessness and fear about college. I know that we tried to supplement the documentary with information about how to make safer choices for yourself, and how to stand up for others as bystanders," said

Tinsmeier.

Similarly, Milne's advisory spent time discussing ways to address the problem.

"The boys were affected by the gravity of the movie. They were disappointed by what they saw and wanted to know how society hopes to make things better," said Milne.

There was also a group discussion among advisers about areas of potential improvement for future years.

Watching the video was certainly a step in the right direction, and students hope the school will continue to address these issues.

"I think we need to do this not just about the college and university level, but also about our time here at New Trier. Sexual assaults are a huge problem at the high school level, too. It would benefit everybody to start addressing this problem earlier on," said Goldstein.

How to report sexual misconduct at NT

NT has a process in place to handle sexual misconduct. If you are a student and you experience sexual misconduct, you should report it to the appropriate authority. The process is designed to be fair and equitable for all parties involved.

For more information on the reporting process, please visit the NT website or contact the appropriate authority. The goal is to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all students.

The NT community is committed to preventing sexual misconduct and supporting those who have experienced it. We encourage all students to be vigilant and to report any concerns.

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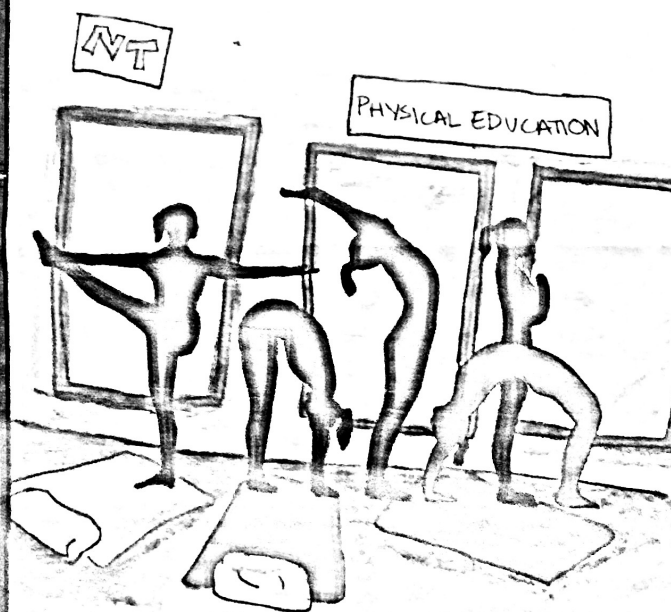
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Liebovich

Fit Female class teaches self-defense skills

by Alex Rubinstein

New Trier offers two Kinetic Wellness classes - Fit Female and Yoga/Self-Defense - that incorporate self-defense into the curriculum to give students tools in order to prevent sexual assault.

Fit Female emphasizes the importance of students knowing self defense, and the class works on taking measures to prevent sexual assault to give students the tools they need to protect themselves in dangerous situations.

Fit Female teacher Kathryn Kalnes said, "In the self defense unit, it's not just about how to get out of holds and things like that, but really 90% of self defense is about awareness and avoidance."

Yoga and Self Defense teacher, Lawrence Stoegebauer, also focuses on

knowing your surroundings.

"We talk about awareness, and how people can be predators so that if you know what they [the predators] are thinking, you can stay out of the situation," said Stoegebauer.

Junior Jules Brown takes Yoga and Self Defense this year. She said outside of self defense moves, the class talks about how to be safe when walking alone at night. "We talk about what choices we have instead of attacking someone such as running or calling for help."

Kalnes said, "You always hear that we should just be teaching people to not assault, to stop raping, and to stop asking for sexual pictures. I'm hoping that is being done in different sectors, but I am in front of my classes of female students, and we live in this world where we have to be aware, and we have to have this in the back of our minds."

Kalnes emphasized she doesn't want students to be afraid, just aware of

the current climate.

"I tell them that it's not about scaring you into never leaving your house, or never going to a party, but you have to think of these things. You can't just walk out of your house without the thought that someone has to know where you are. It's the world we live in," said Kalnes.

Fit Female student, junior Chloe Shapiro, said that in Fit Female, they learn self defense moves in order to prepare students for the world beyond high school.

Shapiro said, "We also talked about sexual assault on college campuses and about how many of the cases go unreported. This unit has opened my eyes to the real world."

Junior Bujin Gandelger added that since sexual assault can happen to anybody, regardless of gender. Students in fit female learn the importance of awareness when in public. Stoegebauer agreed that sexual assault occurs regardless of gender.

"We teach boys and girls self defense, and in doing so, you are not only helping individuals understand, and protect themselves but stay out of situations."

Stoegebauer teaches his self defense classes what sexual assault is, and explains what is right and wrong.

"I explain to them that sexual assault can just be an inappropriate touch. I also think it's important to know that it's never [the victim's] fault. It doesn't mean you're lesser, it doesn't mean you're weaker, doesn't mean you deserve it. That way a person can move on from that and feel stronger," said Stoegebauer.

Kalnes also emphasizes the fact that it is never the victim's fault in her Fit Female classes.

"I really want my students to come away knowing that the assault was not their fault."

Kalnes wants her students to walk away with not just knowledge about self defense, but also with the ability to seek help from a trusted adult or a friend if something does happen.

"We are going to talk about it as much as we can to prevent it, but if it happens, it is not in your control, it's not your fault, and we will support you here at New Trier."

How Do We Define Toxic Masculinity

by Darcie Kim

When we have conversations about sexual assault, they often center around the victims or the circumstances surrounding the assault. Alcohol, drugs, revealing clothing, flirtatious behavior, and regret are frequently held responsible for setting the precedent for sexual assault. But, a culprit that we too often hesitate to name consists of harmful societal expectations of masculinity.

There's often an assumption that toxic masculinity is an attack on inherent masculinity, and the misrepresentation of this term has unfortunately led to the popular interpretation that toxic masculinity is the belief that all ideas and associations surrounding manhood are toxic.

"I thought that toxic masculinity was just a term feminists used to

exaggerate the negative qualities of guys," said a male student.

However, the point of the term toxic masculinity is to draw attention to the narrow stereotypes that surround males, and how these stereotypes are further encouraged by the "boys will be boys" mentality and ultimately allow for misogyny.

Boys don't need to be strong. Boys don't need to hide emotion. Boys don't need to hook up with numerous girls to prove their masculinity. Boys don't need to objectify girls to impress their friends.

Some students participate in this culture of toxic masculinity. Another male student said that, "Toxic masculinity definitely exists here because sex is glorified. I hear guys talking about hook-ups and the objectification of girls all the time."

Senior Eli Friedman said, "Toxic masculinity manifests in men who compete with each other to impress

women, and at times put down other men who are into something not considered 'masculine' by the culture. There is a desire for domination with toxic masculinity. This could definitely result in sexual abuse, which is often carried out for power rather than sexual gratification."

What we should take from toxic masculinity is that men need to refuse the "boys will be boys" attitude and hold other men accountable for misogynistic mentalities and behaviors.

If a guy is aggressively coming on to or flirting with someone at a party, we shouldn't excuse this by saying that because boys are inherently aggressive creatures, their actions are understandable. If a guy sexually assaults someone wearing revealing clothes, we shouldn't excuse that by saying guys are overly sexual creatures who are naturally attracted to people dressed sexy

A 2011 study by The Journal of Adolescent Health titled, "Time-Varying Risk Factors and Sexual Aggression Perpetration Among Male College Students," followed more than 700 men through four years of college.

The research found that while alcohol use was always higher among men who committed more sexual assaults, the trend in assault itself wasn't directly caused by alcohol use.

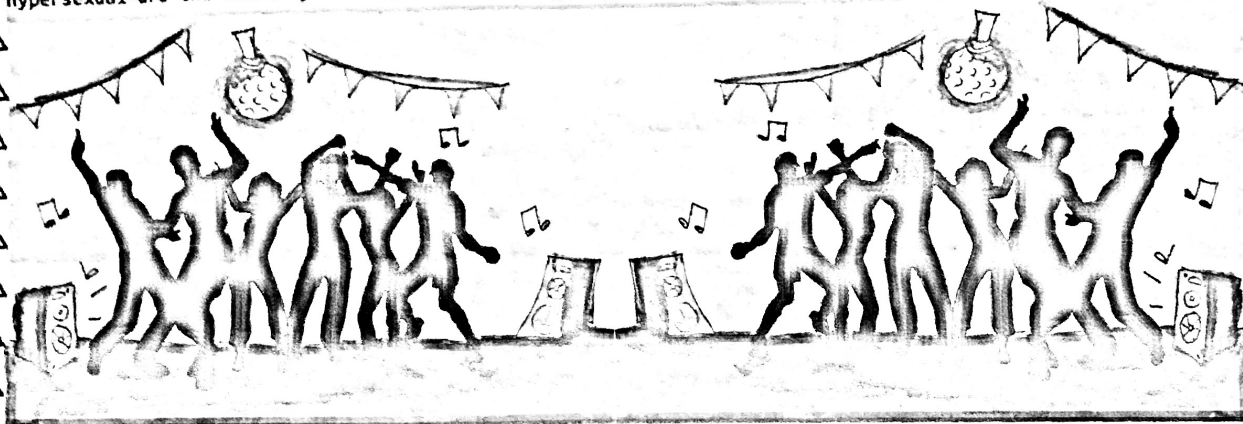
For men who committed more sexual assault and men who committed less sexual assaults, they reported drinking less by their senior year in college. But the men who committed fewer assaults also reported "falling rates of impulsivity, hostility toward women, and beliefs that supported rape. The men whose rates of assault were going up, in contrast, reported a growing sense of peer support for forced sex, peer pressure, pornography use, and hostility toward women," according to FiveThirtyEight.

Thus, cultural expectations and social accepted attitudes about women and power are what ultimately contribute to sexual assault.

"There is a certain power dynamic created by the pervasiveness of toxic masculinity that allows for men to believe that women fundamentally owe them something, and that can be a huge factor behind sexual assault. Toxic masculinity can sometimes warp how men, especially among groups of other men, perceive such violence," said senior Will Thornton.

While there are many underlying factors that contribute to issues between men and women, societal expectations of masculinity and femininity could be at the root of a lot of our problems. Changing these perceived normalities will take time, but there is hope.

"Toxic masculinity" is a narrow and repressive description of manhood, designating manhood as defined by violence, sex, status and aggression. It's the cultural ideal of manliness, where strength is everything while emotions are a weakness; where sex and brutality are yardsticks by which men are measured, while supposedly "feminine" traits—which can range from emotional vulnerability to simply not being hypersexual—are the means by which your status as "man" can be taken away" (tolerance.org)



Ho! up, Ho! up, We Dem Boyz

by Ezra Wallach

For the entirety of our childhood, we boys have subconsciously been taught that masculinity consisted of strength, toughness, apathy, and confidence among other things. In the past few years though, the concept of toxic masculinity has been tossed around, attempting to shine light on unrealistic expectations that both boys and girls place on boys to act tough and strong.

This movement has tried to encourage boys to seek help with mental health problems, to pursue interests outside of gender norms, to not resort to violence, and possibly most importantly, to stand up for women and women's rights, too.

But, the complication lies in the fact that some of these less "masculine" actions, such as crying in public or supporting women, will still be judged by certain communities, families and groups to stray away from what traditional masculinity looks like, and would essentially lean to the side of femininity, which is "weakness"—this somewhat untrue truth is what often causes men to act tough even when they don't really want to.

But, if someone doesn't act traditionally masculine, it doesn't mean they are feminine, and it doesn't mean that they can't really be masculine too.

In fact, the less masculine op-

tion would arguably be to conform to these gender norms and be a man even when you don't feel like one. The choice that requires real bravery and strength is the one that lets men be comfortable in themselves and can likely help out women in the process, even if it means sacrificing what many believe it means to be a man.

My idea to write this was sparked by a TED talk I saw a year or so ago by Justin Baldoni. He says this to the audience, "I challenge you to see if you can use the same qualities that you feel make you a man to go deeper into yourself. Your strength, your bravery, your toughness: Can we redefine what those mean and use them to explore our hearts? Are you brave enough to be vulnerable? To reach out to another man when you need help? To dive headfirst into your shame? Are you strong enough to be sensitive, to cry whether you are hurting or you're happy, even if it makes you look weak?"

Strength comes from going against what others tell you that you are supposed to do, even if it entails some sort of sacrifice. The question should not be whether you are man enough to work out at Lifetime every single day, or if you are man enough to deal with all of your mental health problems on your own, the question should be whether or not you are man enough to admit that you aren't traditionally masculine at all.

When I heard this line of think-

ing for the first time, it changed my perspective on everything that I thought would make me seem like a man—I even made my New Year's resolution this year to cry more.

Even though I knew that standing up for women or letting my emotions fly free was likely the right thing to do, I never considered it to be manly. But, it just makes so much sense.

He goes on to say this too: "Are you confident enough to listen to the women in your life? To hear their ideas and their solutions? To hold their anguish and actually believe them, even if what they're saying is against you? And will you be man enough to stand up to other men when you hear 'locker room talk,' when you hear stories of sexual harassment? When you hear your boys talking about grabbing a— or getting her drunk, will you actually stand up and do something so that one day we don't have to live in a world where a woman has to risk everything and come forward to say the words 'me too'?"

The more we make these terrible actions towards women seem cowardly or unmanly, the less likely the bro-culture is to accept them, starting in high school.

None of this is to say that by getting rid ourselves of toxic masculinity, we will rid of sexual misconduct or sexism altogether—it's much more complicated than just that. But,

by encouraging real discussion on what it means to be a man, we can deter men from doing these acts, and encourage more of them to stand up against those who do so.

Competitions with friends on who can hook up with the hottest girl might seem harmless and fun, but the essential need for power that some guys feel within their communities or groups contributes to pain that women feel by being objectified or harassed at the same time, too.

The fear of what it means to do the right thing in the context of still being manly, is what often stops us from doing it. But, what if we choose to realize and understand that to stand up and go against these outdated norms is really where our masculinity should come from? Now, this should be scary, and this will be harder. This requires more strength.

I can't say I am perfect on this issue. I have definitely said or done some things to fit in or to seem like a man, but this fact shouldn't disqualify me or anyone from getting better in the future. At times, I have found superficial strength in acting like a man even when I didn't feel like one, and even some weakness in not acting in the way I knew was right. Sometimes, I simply didn't have enough strength to seem feminine.

Remember, the culture has taught boys to be this way, and it will likely take a long time to reverse these ideas. So, we should be patient.

We should hold men accountable for their actions but understand that for some, what they know is being uprooted, and what they thought was the "manly" thing to do is no longer accepted by society.

This will not be easy, and it will require a major cultural change to have these new ideas about masculinity impact everyone, but that isn't the point.

By knowing that standing up to bad guys or crying during movies (because hiding emotions usually makes them worse) is the right thing to do for yourself, and that it requires "masculine" strength, hopefully more men will feel compelled to change for the better.

Find strength in being vulnerable. Find strength in being a feminist. Find strength in going to a therapist. Find strength in choosing to be openly gay. Find strength in wearing the clothes you want to wear. Or, choose to find strength in doing exactly what every other guy is doing, which will sacrifice your individuality, and likely hurt yourself along with the women in your life by doing so.

Stand up for what is right for others and for yourself and the rest will fall into place. But, no matter what, we boys should never be worrying about whether or not we are being a man when we do so.

"Surviving R. Kelly" reveals R&B singer's sexual allegations

by Millie Winter

On Jan. 2, Lifetime Television released the six episode series, "Surviving R. Kelly," a documentary on the sexual assault allegations against American singer-songwriter R. Kelly.

The first two episodes introduce Robert Sylvester Kelly in the context of the childhood he experienced. The purpose of these episodes is to give the viewer insight into how the singer grew up. The episodes also attempt to explain his subsequent actions in adulthood. At a young age, Kelly was sexually assaulted by a family member. He lived on the south side of Chicago in a poverty stricken home where adult supervision simply didn't exist.

The show then gets into how

his bad behavior started when his music hit the charts. In 1992-93, he released two popular, chart-topping albums, and several of the songs referenced a sexual relationship that he had with the then 15 year-old singer Aaliyah Haughton. At this point in the documentary turns from R. Kelly as prey, to an adult predator.

At the end of the second episode and all through the rest of the series, the show gets hard to watch. I watched it with my mom who remembered having her eyes glued to the news when the initial allegations came out in the late 1990s. Even though my mom had already heard of the accusations, clearly the rest of the show was unsettling for her as well.

One by one, brave and damaged women preached of the abuse they suffered at the hands of R. Kelly when they were only children,

some as young as 14. This was not just sexual assault, but perverse, degrading acts. This, for me, was the hardest part to watch. For the first time, these women were telling their story and they knew it wasn't just to the person holding the camera, but to the millions of people watching the show, and to Kelly himself.

Every woman looked so strong as they spoke, even when they cried or tried to fight back tears. One woman, whose success as a performer is, in part, due to her relationship with R. Kelly, spoke with strength and insight into the fact that her underaged niece was exploited by the famous and wealthy celebrity—and how she blames herself. The ripple effects of R. Kelly's abuse continue in ways that are still revealing themselves.

In watching this series, my first reaction was shock. Shock that

this kind of behavior even happens. Why would someone think they can behave in this illegal way? How can such a famous (he wrote "I Believe I Can Fly") singer-songwriter continue his career and the world doesn't care about the accusations against him?

This documentary proved to me that sometimes celebrities are in their own world with their own set of rules, rules that only apply to them. It's disgusting.

There is part of me that wonders if R. Kelly wasn't talented and had no fame whether or not he would've already been convicted. Or, if he hadn't had all the benefits of fame, would he never have had the chance to exploit and damage so many young girls in the first place?

As of Feb. 10 of this year, R. Kelly was charged with ten counts of sexual abuse here in Chicago. He

was accused of aggravated criminal sexual abuse against four victims, three of whom were minors. This can carry a sentence of three to seven years for each count.

After watching Surviving R. Kelly, hearing the survivors, my heart breaks for their suffering and I want him to pay.

On Apr. 26, R. Kelly failed to show up in court. He lost the lawsuit alleging the underage sex abuse.

This specific lawsuit was only for a single case of his assault, of a girl with whom he had repeated sexual contact with from June 1998. She was 16 at the time.

It shouldn't take twenty years and a documentary series to help these types of cases rise to national prominence.

It scares me to think of how many more stories like this there could be hidden behind the fame.

Appreciating authors' work despite allegations

by Molly George

The content of several English classes has become controversial with the recent issue over including authors with assault allegations in class curriculums.

American Studies classes didn't teach the work of Sherman Alexie this year, though his poems have been taught in the past and AS classes read "The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven" last year.

Though he writes from a cultural perspective that is valuable to teach in our classrooms, being one of the few published Native American authors, the sexual misconduct allegations Alexie faces were reason enough to take him off the reading list.

There is a fine line between avoiding a controversial author and cutting out one of the limited Native American voices in literature.

This year, teachers favored Louise Erdrich poetry instead, according to library department chair Erika Immel, who said, "We have this diverse population and we need to collect materials that support all the different backgrounds, voices, and perspectives that the school embodies," when stocking the library.

For a diverse library, discussions about how balancing culture and perspective change the way we approach texts will become more important.

In research, Immel said, "we are constantly saying who's the author, why should we believe them, why are they reputable, why do they have the credentials to write that article?"

This academic perspective fits research methods, but in considering individual authors' backgrounds, Immel said, "There's a difference between having a literary work on our shelves and saying we support the author. We're looking at much more than the author when we collect materials."

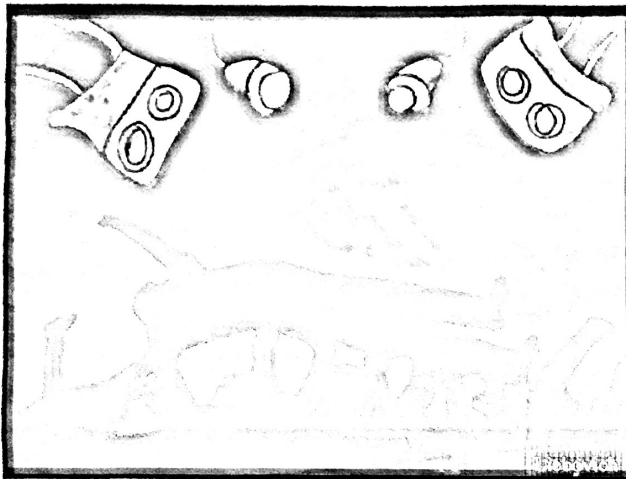
There is an important distinction between consuming art and supporting the artist. In a classroom, it depends on the context of the text and the reader's purpose.

Teachers who believe in the value of a text separate from or despite the author's actions are clear that they maintain the emphasis on classrooms being safe spaces. Considering the diverse (and unknown) backgrounds and experiences of a class, English teacher Brett Rubin said the department discussed that until an author is "demonstrably convicted," teaching their works can promote nuanced discussion.

Junot Diaz is the author of "The Brief Wondrous Life of Oscar Wao," a Pulitzer Prize winning novel. Diaz also faces allegations of sexual misconduct and misogynistic behavior.

Some say the situation depends on the gravity of the accusations; in Diaz's case, the allegations did not compromise his positions as a Pulitzer Prize board member, MIT professor, and fiction editor of the Boston Review, according to NPR.

Despite these allegations against the author, Rubin, who teaches Global Voices, explained that



there is a place for Diaz's text in his classroom because "we can make our way through it and leave an opportunity to talk about it, instead of deciding" any conclusions about the situation or avoiding the discussion altogether.

According to Rubin, this discussion provides "an opportunity to sit with the discomfort, navigate through it, and learn how to contextualize those we might immediately disagree with."

Studying this text teaches students to have difficult discussions in the context of current events. The context of an author's experience gives a book more weight when it includes similar experiences, like the published fiction and memoirs of Diaz.

Rubin's class read articles and discussed Diaz's sexual assault allegations before reading his book, senior Kara Philoon said.

"This definitely affected the way I read the book and shaped some of my perspectives. I wasn't uncomfortable reading the book but the allegations were something I kept in mind while reading."

Rubin emphasized the purpose of this dialogue: "We study art in part to better appreciate a nuance. There's very little black and white."

Philoon described a "gray area" of Diaz's allegations appearing less despicable than confirmed assault. She also said, "I don't think it can be taught without prefacing the situation before, but at the same time there's lots of great books written by authors who aren't in this kind of situation."

This attitude fits with many situations where consuming art is not the same as supporting the artist. It eventually leads to the question of how much we can separate art from artists, and to what extent artists' immoral actions can be tolerated.

Discussing stories about sexual assault that have already been told in literature forms a culture that allows people to keep telling their stories. However controversial or disturbing, it may be better that these issues come to the forefront when authors face allegations, crafting literature as a platform for cultural awareness and change.

Listen to what you're listening to

by Alyssa Pak

"If you're back here only taking pictures, you gon' have to take your a-- back home 'cause the only thing you're taking is your clothes off." If I told you that some guy said this to me, I'd hope that you'd be somewhat disturbed. But it's actually a lyric from the song "Kiss Land," which is my favorite album by The Weeknd. Still, if the lyrics are troublesome enough where someone saying them in real life would be problematic, why do we continue to listen to this kind of music?

Obviously everyone has the freedom of expression, so singers and rappers can talk about whatever they want in their songs. Despite the number of songs on my playlist that I always skip, "LA Confidential" by Tory Lanez is never one of them. Lanez is singing about cheating on his girlfriend, saying that he'd never actually leave her, so thus his mistress must be 1. Not be just "anybody" and 2. Not expect to be his girlfriend. His excuse is that he gets lonely sometimes.

I'm not gonna lie, I really do like this song, but it makes me wonder—if we're popularizing songs about a guy who's straight up saying that he's cheating because he's lonely and then asking her to cover up for him in front of his friends, is that normalizing said behavior to a certain extent? I can't speak for everyone, but I know that I've been somewhat desensitized to lyrics that are demeaning to women. And although I try to avoid adding songs that are

overly-misogynistic to playlists, I still listen to songs like "LA Confidential" and enjoy it.

Despite what some might consider offensive language, the production is still well-executed with a catchy beat and ringing synths, making the song a unique form of art that can still be appreciated by many. I think we all realize that listening to music with crude lyrics isn't an excuse to propagate that behavior in real life, but it certainly normalizes it to a degree.

We accept that with hip hop and rap comes iced out watches, designer brands, and a strong party and drug culture. This is prominent in industries of all music genres, but is highlighted through the lyrics of songs like NAV's recent "Tussin'" when he says "I spend a quarter on my watch, I drip drip my main b-- down in rust, put a side b-- in Gucci socks." Often the lyrics aren't innocuous though, like in "My Collection" by Future when he raps "Any time I got you, girl you my possession. Even if I hit you once, you part my collection."

Realistically, wherever there's parties and drugs and women, there's a pretty high chance that some sort of sexual harassment or assault is occurring. But the popularity of these types of songs almost makes assault seem more of a trivial topic than it actually is. Wealthy male artists who are revered by hundreds of thousands of teenagers taking a serious issue and putting it against a rhythmic beat almost glamorizes the issue and makes it seem like something cool or desirable, like "once you have money and power you can dominate women too."

Not surprisingly, artists such as Chris Brown, Swae Lee, and recently Kodak Black have all been accused of sexual misconduct. Looking at these lyrics without the context of the synths and the bass always surprises me, and I sometimes feel uneasy listening to so much music from a genre that contributes to the perception of women as just another facet of a wealthy lifestyle or even just lifestyle in general.

Even poppy hip-hop star Post Malone has issues when it comes to respecting women, especially in his angst-filled "Over Now," where he sings about a lover who he never wants to go back to. "I ma put that b--p in a mother-- bodybag, so you know that I'm never ever coming back," he says angrily. At his concerts, he has his fans chant "b--" referring to his ex-girlfriend, which gets the crowd going, but somehow doesn't feel quite right.

The thing about trap music is that as a result of the explicit wording, the frequent message of domesticating women can be more much more pronounced and derogatory. I'd say that creative license does exist and that the artist's work doesn't necessarily reflect the artist, but the words and phrases that are used by many rap artists can be triggering for many. While it's unrealistic to expect the disappearance of misogynistic culture in general and thus misogynistic lyrics, being mindful of what we're listening to can be the first step in diverging from a culture that automatically routes towards male dominance.

Consent means more than a simple "yes"

by Layla Saqibuddin

According to Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity. It doesn't have to be verbal, but communicating verbally and agreeing to different sexual activities can help both you and your partner know and respect each other's boundaries.

On the other hand, many believe that as long as they don't hear the word "no," all sorts of sexual activity is okay to do. The truth is, however, that's not enough to "give" consent or initiate sexual activity.

According to Planned Parenthood, consent is as easy as "FRIES." F stands for, "freely given." This means that doing something sexual is a decision that should be made without pressure, force, manipulation, or while intoxicated.

R stands for Reversible. "Anyone can change their mind about what they want to do, at any time. Even if you've done it before or are in the middle of having sex," the Planned Parenthood site states.

I stands for "Informed." This means be honest. For example, "if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, that's not consent."

Next we have E, which stands for Enthusiastic. If someone isn't excited, or really into it, that's also not consent.

18% of college students think someone has consented as long as they don't say "No."

Lastly, S stands for Specific. Being specific means "saying yes to one thing like going to the bedroom to make out." On the other hand it "doesn't mean they've said yes to others like oral sex."

Hence, without consent, sexual activity, including touching, is sexual assault or rape. According to the Washington Post, however, between January and March of 2015, 18% of college students think someone has consented as long as they don't say

"No."

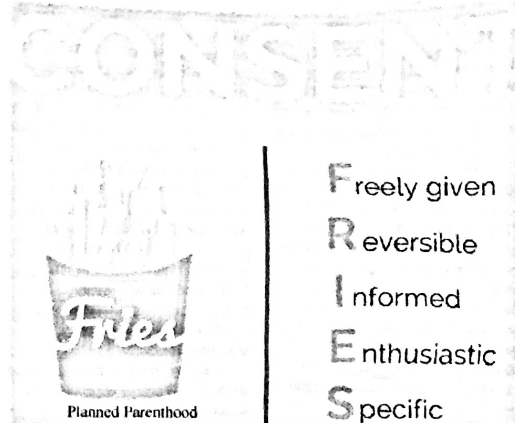
According to the Washington Post, partners try to read and assume body language. John Indermuehle, a student at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell who was quoted from the Washington post said, "most men wouldn't think to ask explicitly for consent if it was clear the other party was interested." Instead, "men try to read body language," said Indermuehle.

Indermuehle points out many assume body language, take advantage, and don't communicate. Saalika Khan, a student at Towson University, believed her experience showed how important it is to give consent. A few years ago, a man tried to sneak into her bed while she was asleep, putting his arms around her and kissing her. She slapped and punched him.

"I don't know why guys think, 'If I just do it, she'll do it, too,'" Khan said. "I never understood that. There has to be a conversation."

High school students shared their opinion on what consent is.

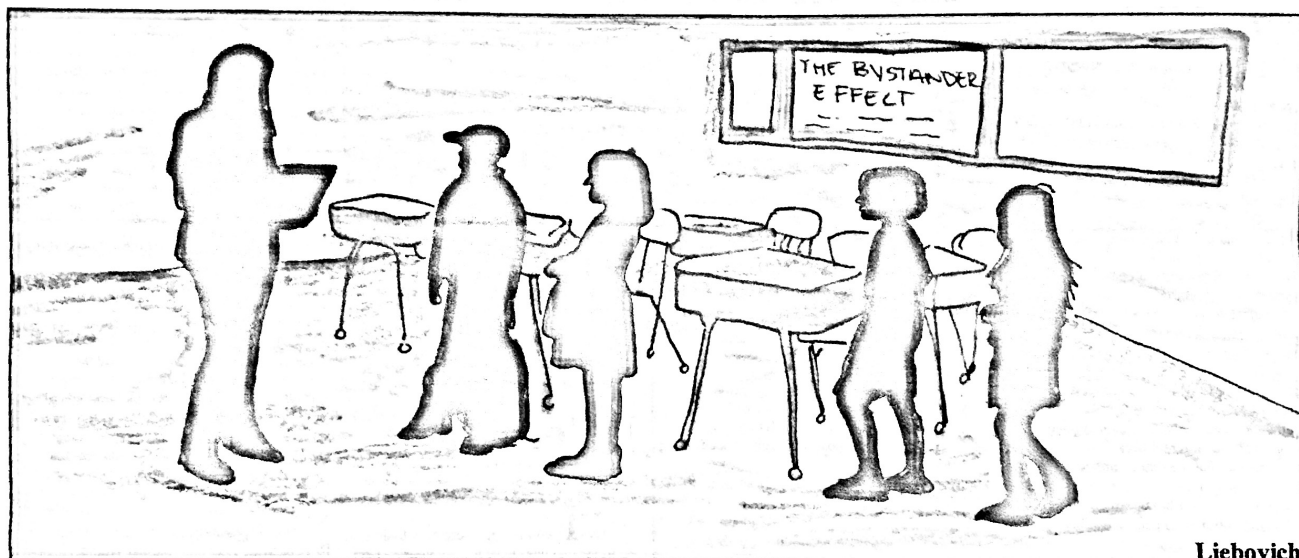
"I think that consent is coherent when there's a very clear statement



made by you that you would like to continue sexual advances or activity in a sober state with a clear mind" said junior Jeremy Lau.

Moreover, Senior Anahi Toolabian believes in order to have safe sex, partners should be open about their needs and wants from the other person.

"We can also prevent sexual assault by educating students what to do in certain situations. We should also talk about what we would do in certain situations and what consent it. Hence, we can just respect our significant other in a more meaningful and safer way," said Toolabian.



Liebovich

Former LA teacher sentenced to 35 years

by Eva Rotyburg

Students growing up on the North Shore usually go to school with a sense of safety and trust in their educational environment. However, a recent arrest of a teacher in the community reminds us that we are not completely sheltered.

Matthew Laird, 33, was sentenced to 35 years in prison on Apr. 17, after admitting to raping a student.

He is a former teacher from North Shore Academy in Highland Park and Loyola Academy in Wilmette, and he worked as a quiz bowl coach and club sponsor at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire.

Laird pleaded guilty to charges of aggravated criminal sexual assault, and criminal sexual assault, and possession of child pornography in exchange for prosecutors dropping dozens of other charges, according to the Wilmette Beacon.

Laird was first arrested last October following a tip in January

2018 that someone had uploaded child pornography on a adult pornography website.

Detectives tracked the upload to an internet address associated with his home in Glenview, and after obtaining a search warrant, seized electronic devices containing hundreds of videos and images of child pornography, according to the Wilmette Beacon.

The harrowing results of the trial have had an impact on students attending Laird's places of employment.

'It's important to recognize that we shouldn't be surprised something like this is happening in our area. We aren't immune from sexual assaults'

Ari Marcelo, a sophomore at Huntley High School, attended North Shore Academy and was a student of Laird's as a sophomore. Marcelo said Laird "was very friendly with everyone and liked to talk a lot."

Laird taught English at Loyola Academy from 2011 to 2014. In 2014, he began as a teacher's aide at North Shore Academy, part of the North Shore Special Education District, NSSD, that included students from 18 public school districts in the area.

Laird became a teacher at the school in 2016-17. In early October 2018, NSSD Superintendent Kurt Schneider said the district immediately placed Laird on administrative leave after the original tip.

Marcelo said, "He seemed to be a little touchy. Like one of those teachers who casually touches you on the shoulder. Thinking about it now I just get creeped out because it seems so evident now, but it was sort of normal then."

Schneider confirmed Laird was fired by the district on Oct. 10, 2018

because he refused to cooperate with NSSD's internal investigation into the allegations.

"We have no confirmation at this time that any North Shore Academy students are involved in this," Schneider said in a statement on Wednesday, Oct. 24, 2018.

"From the minute we learned of this investigation, we have worked closely to provide computers, photos, personnel files, etc., to aid the police."

Laird began a sexual relationship with a high school freshman in 2008 while working at Loyola.

After she graduated and moved away for college, she agreed to spend the night at Laird's house while on a visit home, but she made it clear that she had no interest in having sex with him, prosecutors said.

The woman said she woke up to find Laird sexually assaulting her, and Laird was found to have recorded a video of the rape and uploaded it onto the internet, prosecutors said.

After Laird was jailed with no bail on charges of raping the former high school student, investigators

found evidence of additional victims, according to prosecutors.

He was subsequently indicted on additional counts of sexual assault and possession of child pornography before entering his guilty plea on Apr. 17.

Martina Lobou, a sophomore at Stevenson High School, where he was a Scholastic Bowl Coach, said, "It's hard to believe a normal adult at my school actually did these things."

The events also have hit students at New Trier. Adhishree Kathikar, a sophomore, said "It's pretty scary, the possibility of something like that happening in our community is something people don't see."

Alanna Goldstein, a senior, agreed.

"It's important to recognize that we shouldn't be surprised something like this is happening in our area. We aren't immune from sexual assaults."

Six former Loyola priests involved in scandal

by Hope Talbot

An additional layer of the Catholic Church's sexual abuse scandals was revealed as of Dec. 17, when an other list of accused priests was made public by the USA Midwest Province Jesuits that included six former clergy members of Loyola Academy.

Three days later, the Illinois attorney general released reports in which they discovered six of the state's diocese failed to disclose 500 additional allegation cases of priest molestation to authorities, meaning 75 percent of established victims reports went unheard.

While new developments have emerged, the Catholic Church's reported history of abuse dates all the way back to 1955, right around when Loyola's first incident occurring with Reverend Donald J. McGuire.

McGuire's abuse of Loyola students continued until 1957 when he, like many other clerical predators, was relocated to various institutions where his patterns of assault would span all the way to 2005.

The list on Midwest Jesuits Website was published with a statement saying that, "Many of these allegations were made after an accused Jesuit died and therefore

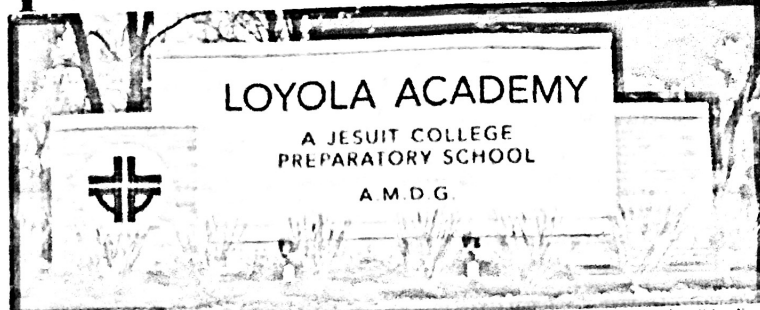
he did not have the opportunity to respond for himself," and that the list was in no way legal action against the alleged.

While McGuire served prison time, several of the other accused Loyola priests, including, Rev. Wilton L. Skiffington, Rev. Gerald A. Streeter, Rev. Ignatius M. Burritt, and Rev. Donald J. O'Shaug would die before facing little to no forms of consequence despite believable evidence, making Midwest's claims appear to be evasive to the suffering that was caused.

Former Loyola Academy President, Rev. M. Lawrence Reuter, who was permanently "defrocked," or stripped of any kind of clergy association, had several valid accusations against him, yet still served the longest serving presidency from 1975 to 1990, an example of the victim-shaming culture that often exists around cases of assault that involves religious institutions.

The seemingly "hush-hush" nature of clerical abuse sparked the Boston Globe to uncover a similar report in 2002 following the story of father John G. Geoghan, a Boston Priest, who fondled or raped more than 130 children.

Despite stories of abuse that spanned three-decades, the cardinal and bishops overseeing Geoghan did



Previous Loyola priests were among 500 Midwestern clergy accused of sexual abuse last December. | Wikipedia

little to stop it.

What the Globe team investigated would later become the inspiration for the movie "Spotlight," but more importantly would allow for secrets hidden for generations to finally come forward.

"The safety, security and well-being of our students are our highest priorities. Loyola Academy teachers, counselors, coaches, campus ministers and staff members are committed to creating a supportive and loving community where our students feel safe and thrive," stated Loyola Academy Communications.

"We thoroughly screen our applicants and conduct annual

criminal background checks for all school personnel, as well as annually process our employees through the state child abuse and neglect tracking system."

Loyola now requires all employees to go through an orientation upon being hired and continues throughout the individuals' career to enforce clear boundaries between adults and minors.

The school stressed as well that staff is required by law to be "mandated reporters" and step in if they witness anything suspicious.

On Feb. 21, Pope Francis met with 190 bishops from around the world to discuss the events that

unfolded last December. He ended simply by saying, "listen to the cry of children who ask for justice."

Loyola Academy encourages victims of abuse, no matter how recent the incident, to both contact law enforcement as well as Midwest Province's director of the Office of Safe Environment, Marjorie O'Dea.

Father Brian Paulson, provincial of the USA Midwest Province, said within the next year there would be another review of the organizations' records by consultants from Hillard Heintze.

When sports fans go too far

by Jack Sohle

Sports fandom is a powerful drug.

It makes us do some pretty crazy things. It makes us paint our chests and our faces, it makes us stand outside for three hours in single-digit temperatures, and it makes us jump up and down a month and a half removed from reconstructive knee surgery.

Just an educated guess on that last one. And the Bears had just clinched the division for the first time since 2010, so this hypothetical person's logic was flawless.

And all that is fun! Fandom, when done correctly, can be an awesome thing.

Sadly, this article isn't about that.

Instead, it's about sports fandom and compelling people to say, do, and tweet things like this.

"Erica Kinsman I hope you get in a car accident."

"I'm done. I give no f*** about the accuser now, Erica Kinsman never ever come back to Tally."

"I'm gonna say this as thoughtful as I possibly can... F*** you Erica Kinsman you lying, money hungry, soul sucking W*****!"

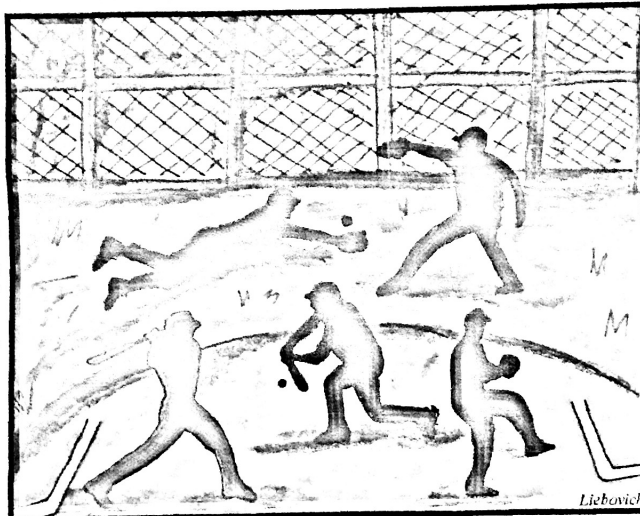
These are all insults hurled at Erica Kinsman, a Florida State student who accused Jameis Winston, the Seminoles' national championship and Heisman Trophy-winning quarterback at the time, of rape. All were found with a simple twitter search.

They don't even come close to the worst of it, either. According to the film "The Hunting Ground," she received threats to burn down her sorority house.

Each of the accounts who tweeted those horrible things had something in common. They had either a Florida geotag or #Noles in their bio or they included a Florida State Football profile picture. Their hero was accused of a heinous crime, and they - like so many others - saw the case through garnet and gold-colored glasses.

This in no way, shape, or form excuses those Florida State fans' actions, or the behavior of anyone else who says or does awful things in the defense of their favorite players. Those actions do, however, provide a concrete example of what many sports fans' first impulse may be if a member of their team makes headlines for horrible reasons.

I'm not immune to it either; in the past



five years both Patrick Kane and Derrick Rose were accused of rape and my immediate concern - before taking a minute to think clearly - was more for my team than for the women who were allegedly assaulted. I remain ashamed of that to this day, but it's sadly not all that uncommon.

Instincts like that are why it's important to have second thoughts and think critically, because while a minuscule proportion of sports fans are terrible enough to send death threats and tweet awful things, a much larger percentage will voice their opinion on the subject in more seemingly benign ways.

If that happens, it can be much more difficult to hold athletes who are proven to commit sexual assault accountable. The court of public opinion is a very real and very powerful mechanism, and when it shifts far enough towards the survivor and away from the perpetrator, teams may be compelled to take action.

For example, in 2014 when Ravens running back Ray Rice punched his wife in an elevator, his team did nothing and he was given a measly two-game suspension. Months later, video evidence came out and the public's outrage turned towards Rice, who was released later that day.

This is why sports fans actually do have a great deal of power. If they disregard their first instincts that tell them to defend their hero, they have the ability to force their favorite teams to do the right thing.

Roe v. Wade under siege post-Kennedy

by Emma Mansour

For the past 46 years, Roe v. Wade has guaranteed women the right to an abortion, but the current makeup of the Supreme Court may put this precedent at risk.

In October 2018, justice Brett Kavanaugh was appointed to the supreme court after justice Kennedy retired. Kennedy had been historically conservative as a justice, though voted more liberally when it came to abortion, joining the Majority rule in Roe v. Wade.

Until his retirement, the Supreme Court was reliably in favor of abortion rights, keeping a 5-4 majority in most cases. With this change in the court comes the possibility for Roe v. Wade to be overturned.

While the precedent can't just be overturned at the desire of the justices, cases concerning rights outlined in Roe v. Wade allow for justices to reexamine the ruling.

One recent case was that of an Ohio bill that bans abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected, making it more difficult for women to

get abortions.

This law is in partial contradiction with Roe v. Wade, so while it would be difficult to take effect, it allows the Supreme court to reexamine Roe v. Wade and potentially overturn it.

This can be a difficult thought for some. Senior Keara McLaughlin said, "As someone who is pro-choice, the fact that republican men want to legislate my body, is very distressing and wrong."

In terms of likelihood, senior Will Thornton said, "I think that Roe v. Wade is so crucial precedent wise that I don't think it will be overturned, even with the most conservative of justices."

While abortion is generally discussed on a moral basis, it is a topic with many nuances that contribute to the debate, one of which is the question of potential-parents being ready to have children.

Junior Maddie Jednorowicz said, "I don't think [Roe v. Wade] should be overturned because the law allows for people of all different privileges, especially those who don't have the capability to care for a child, a choice to decide what is best for their future."

Another aspect of abortion is the question of safety of women and how overturning the precedent may affect that. Women may turn to unsafe methods to carry out an abortion if they are unable to safely and legally get one.

McLaughlin added, "If it were to be overturned there would be a lot of dangers to the health of women everywhere."

Though less prominent within the conversation surrounding abortion, senior Will Embree brought up the question of how a change in precedent may affect the world at large.

"On a moral and personal level, I am pro-life, but on a national scale I believe that abortion should be legal because it is beneficial to the world's overpopulation crisis and will augment the fight against scarcity of resources," said Embree.

Another complexity is when a survivor of sexual assault becomes pregnant. The current law pertaining to such situations exempts survivors of "forcible rape" from other abortion laws.

With minimal laws protecting and considering pregnant survivors of sexual assault, the overturning of Roe v. Wade would likely complicate this matter further.

No matter how complicated or controversial this topic may be among the American public, it is now up to the Supreme Court to either uphold or overturn their precedent if given the chance. How they will decide is unclear, and it will only be determined with time.

Sexual assault a growing fear for incoming college freshmen

by Megan Reimer

College is a time of excitement, adventure, and maturity in a young adult's life. A time where people from all over the world, of different backgrounds, and different genders can come together and build relationships and create memories that will last forever.

However, as is becoming more evident in the wake of the Me Too movement, certain college experiences that last forever can also be frightening and horrific.

The sexual assault cases that occur on college campuses have been adding a new level of nervousness in the minds of incoming college freshmen.

Many senior advisers prepared

students for these types of situations on campus grounds with the viewing of the documentary film, "The Hunting Ground."

Some seniors, however, feel that the film did not help prepare them for the upcoming four years.

Senior Maggie Graves said, "I feel like the discussion on 'The Hunting Ground' wasn't very great, it made me a little nervous about going off to school."

As women have a disproportionately higher rate of experiencing sexual assault/rape than men do on college campuses, this is not a problem male students have to think about as much.

Senior Chaney Laros said, "I'm excited for college but I think it's important that we don't become bystanders and take action if we see something wrong happening."

A report by RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) found that among undergraduate students, 23.1% of females and 5.4% of males experience rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation during their college years.

Many students are left wondering how they can prepare themselves for these sorts of situations.

Seniors Jame Sierens and Sylvia Miller said there is some fear and apprehension about going to college. "When I heard about all the cases I knew I was going to need to bring pepper spray with me, and we are going to have to consider staying together in groups, and creating ways to keep ourselves safe," said Sierens.

Another statistic from RAINN reported that every 98 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted.

For those who do not live in the United States, these sorts of fears about going to college because of the risk of becoming a sexual assault victim are almost non-existent.

Senior and Exchange Student Isla Savola, who is returning to Finland next year instead of going to college said, "It's never been something that I've had to think about."

She added, "The amount of sexual assault cases in Finland is nothing compared to here in the U.S. and the culture around the whole college thing is completely different."

After viewing "The Hunting Ground," the very real revelation that sexual assault is not an uncommon occurrence on a college campus set in with a lot of seniors.

"It can happen at big name schools or little colleges, which can

make the overall prospect of going to college a bit scarier," said Graves.

Senior Julia Helian said, "I feel horrible knowing about all the sexual assault cases that happen on college campuses, too often the victim is blamed and not the school for how it is handled and I think that makes me feel a bit nervous about the whole college experience."

The viewing of the film has prompted some seniors to consider a college's safety statistics when evaluating if a school would be a good fit.

Senior Lauren Zaborski said, "to be honest, [sexual assault] scares me. Some of the colleges I've visited have had high statistics for rape, which I have had to look at because of this problem."

"Hunting Ground" screened in senior advisories for 2nd year straight

by Stephanie Kim

For the second year in a row and the fourth year overall, senior advisories have watched "The Hunting Ground" for the senior class as a part of a scheduled extended advisory, which was received in a variety of ways by seniors and advisers.

The decision to play "The Hunting Ground" again as part of this year's senior programming factored in a myriad of opinions, most importantly the ones of the senior advisers themselves.

"Every year, Dr. Pearson and I are always wanting to engage our senior advisers in thinking of topics and themes for their seniors, and our senior advisers selected 'The Hunting Ground' again this year," said senior Girls' Adviser Chair Susan Paunan. "There was a push [from the advisers] for the school to show it again."

The screening of "The Hunting Ground" was integrated into seniors' school day through sanctioning multiple extended advisory periods for it, much like the viewing in 2018 and entirely changed from the way the viewing was handled in 2017, where it was made into an optional day.

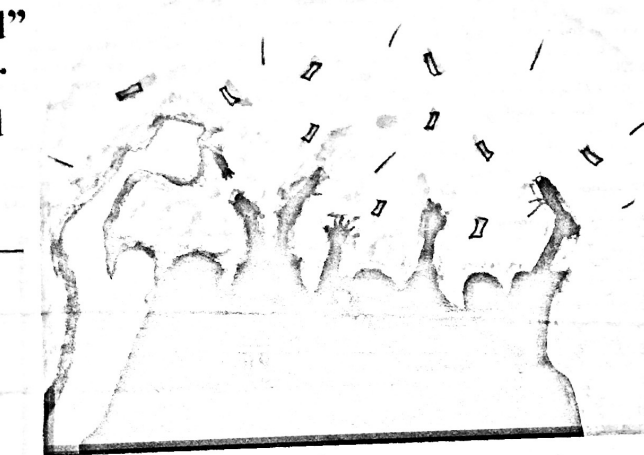
"We had extra time in those advisory periods, and what we found last year was that the seniors felt really positively about using that time," explained Paunan.

For many students and advisers, the topics of rape, sexual harassment, and sexual assault on college campuses are considered to be extremely crucial to discuss as seniors approach the beginning of their college lives, a vital reason why "The Hunting Ground" has been expanded to all advisories since its first screening in 2015 with a single girls' advisory.

"This is information that every person should be exposed to and learn. In order to start changing these issues, we need to first be educated on them, and sexual assault, especially on college campuses, is a huge and devastating problem," said senior Ella Schotz.

Senior Maggie Samson echoed Schotz's sentiments. "Everyone has a different perspective on the topic, and in advisory, it should be open for discussion to hear other people's opinions and discuss what tragic realistic events happen in college and after college that we're sometimes exposed to in high school."

Despite the benefits of having viewed "The Hunting Ground" for another year, some seniors expressed a desire for the circumstances surrounding the viewing as well as the advisory discussions to have been handled in a different manner.



"I think that it was terrible that we were forced to go to class directly after watching, with no time to decompress or discuss the video. I personally found it deeply upsetting, and it was hard to focus during classes," said Schotz.

On top of some seniors believing that the screening felt a bit crammed into the advisory period, some also would have preferred the advisory discussions to have occurred more individually.

For Schotz, her advisory experienced discomfort during the discussion phase of "The Hunting Ground" viewing, when they had to pair up with a male advisory, including feeling targeted herself when she and her fellow advisees were asked if they feared being sexually assaulted.

Schotz explained, "Although on the actual day it was fine, I don't see much value in girls pairing with boys' advisories. I think they can get something from talking with us, but not vice versa."

Samson offered her take on how the discussions could have been planned in hindsight. "I don't think advisories should meet before and discuss the topic. Each advisory should watch it separately, and then pair up with a boys' or girls' advisory, and discuss their opinions and what they thought about the movie," said Samson. "Then next should be the presentation."

As for whether the film will be screened again next year, Paunan notes that while the topics covered in "The Hunting Ground" regarding sexual assault and rape will continue to be central to senior advisories' programming, the viewing of the film itself may not be guaranteed.

"The topics of the film are important to discuss, but I can't say for sure if we'll show it again. We recognize that the film was made at a certain time, and it might not be 100% relevant to current statistics," said Paunan.

Clothesline Project puts survivor's stories on tees

by Julia Nagel

The Clothesline Project, an art project run by the Northwest Center Against Sexual Assault and supported by Peer Helping, is on display every other year at both the East and West campuses.

This project utilizes a unique medium, T-shirts, to share the stories of survivors and promote an end to sexual violence. The shirts are written or drawn on either by someone who is a survivor of sexual abuse or by a friend/family member of a survivor.

The mission statement on The Clothesline Project website states that "The Clothesline Project provides evidence that incest, domestic violence, and sexual violence exists in our communities. It is a visual reminder of statistics that we often ignore. It gives a voice to those who have been forcibly silenced."

Although The Clothesline Project is a far-reaching project, the shirts displayed at the East and West campuses are limited to those that have been created by students at New Trier or other surrounding schools.

"The T-shirts that are displayed, we really keep them local. So, they're all from schools on the North Shore," said faculty co-sponsor of Peer Helping Sarah Fergus.

Junior Madeline Jednorowicz, a co-head of Peer Helping, believes the project is important because it raises awareness about the prevalence of this issue to the New Trier community.

"[We] don't realize how close all of these situations are. [We] think it's more distant

from us; it's something [we] read about in the news."

Jessica Caccavallo, the Northwest CASA Prevention Education Coordinator, agreed that The Clothesline Project can help raise awareness. She also noted that raising awareness is often very important in an affluent community like New Trier, where many students may not believe such issues are taking place.

"It shows that it happens at this school, and it happens at other schools. Violence has no bounds as far as economic status goes," said Caccavallo.

Health teacher Andy Horne said the project is a positive influence because students who view the project are less likely to joke about sexual violence to their friends and are also more knowledgeable about how to help a friend/family member who is a survivor of sexual violence.

In addition to raising awareness, Horne said the project also provides survivors with a chance to feel less alone and a method to voice their experiences.

"If anyone has been the target of sexual assault or experienced it and maybe has never come forth with dealing with that incident, this can be an outlet for them potentially, or at least another moment to create a door to go seek help."

When the exhibit is displayed at New Trier, advisers or other teachers can sign up to bring their students.

After visiting the exhibit, students who are survivors of abuse or know people who are have the opportunity to make a shirt in whatever color reflects their or their loved one's experience with sexual assault. For example, purple shirts represent survivors of sexual assault due to perceived sexual orientation, and red or pink represents survivors of rape or sexual assault.

Fergus said that viewing the project can be a very impactful experience to students.

"It's certainly a very strong platform. It's in your face. You can't ignore it," said Fergus.

Another faculty co-sponsor of Peer Helping, Kathryn Kalnes, believes that the conversations facilitated by this exhibit are arguably just as, if not more, important and impactful than the viewing of the exhibit itself.

She said, for this reason, that Peer Helping works to make sure that students and teachers discuss the issues that the project sheds light on even after students are done looking at the shirts.

"That's why we always send out the packet of resources to teachers, because we don't want it to be a [situation where] the student just walks in, sees these shirts, and leaves and there's no follow up," said Kalnes.

Although the exhibit was not displayed at New Trier this school year, it will be back fall of 2019. In the meantime, Caccavallo encourages students to reach out if they want to help.

"If people want to volunteer, or if there is a group that wants to rally around this project, contact me, because we need more advocates in schools."