

Baby, I'm a
MONARCHIST



TWITCH (COVER ART)

MARTHA
MARTHA@RISEUP.NET

TALI POCKET
TALIPOCKET@RISEUP.NET

Charlie
charlie@riseup.net

BLUE

BLUE@ACTION-MEDICAL.NET

Maya RRR
obsessionsketch@graffiti.net

Laura
unsound@rakis

Intro.

This zine is rushed and incomplete. It was started while one of us was working a demanding, full-time job, and the other was working through college mid-terms. It is being finished around eight am the morning of the zine fair for which it was being prepared. There are contributions from a few, but not as many as we would have liked. At our earliest convenience we will be republishing an updated, revised and expanded version. Nevertheless, the message is still hopefully there.

This zine is the experiences of two womyn with one particular man in our community. It was not easy to write. It is also a glimpse into some of the underlying cultural factors that allow sexual assault to be marginalized, silenced, and dismissed, even within self-proclaimed radical communities. Sexual assault is not an isolated matter, rather it is part of the complex social structure of patriarchy. It is unfortunate that we have not had the time or resources to address the intricacies of these issues further, but we are eagerly planning to do so.

Rich is dangerous. To protect our community from further attacks by him, we must make everyone aware of his disturbing patterns of assault. We are taking this action on paper to create a lasting record that minimizes the potential for rumors to continue. We hope that this offers other survivors hope and strength. We also hope to empower other activists to be supportive allies as they work to eradicate sexual assault.

We would like to apologize for the constant use of the word *womyn* (or woman or women). We are aware that sexual assault happens to people of all genders and is perpetrated by people of all genders. We have both been assaulted by Rich and we are both womyn-identified. However, that does not mean that Rich has only assaulted people who identify as womyn, nor does it mean that he won't assault people who don't identify as womyn. We plan on correcting this in future editions of this zine and are very sorry for marginalizing non-womyn survivors.

Mad Love,

Tali & Laura

Subject: Re: i hope you are ok

From: talipocket@riseup.net

Date: Fri, October 11, 2002 6:33 pm

To: myfriend@notforyoutoknow.com

i think in general i have a pretty good place in this world. there are a lot of amazing people in my life and i'm doing a lot of amazing things and i'm lucky that my eyes are open wide so i can see a bigger picture and i feel purpose and i have a lot of adventures and a lot of joyful moments and a lot of painful moments and a lot of real moments and i've seen a whole lot of things and i'm really young and i have so much more time and and and and...

but right now shit fucking sucks. there is a lot that is wrong right now. i'm going to vent a little bit because you are removed from my situation. here is the deal: i have several weeks of life and school to catch up on from when i was really sick. i have a trial october 28th, and the thought of going back into that courtroom makes me nauseated instantly. and i was sexually assaulted last march and a couple nights ago. when it rains it pours ey? and it's raining!!! and cold. it's all kind of scary. the assault last march was a lot worse than a couple nights ago. far worse. but it was someone who i didn't know very well and who was very easy to cut out of my life and avoid. a couple nights ago wasn't as bad but it caused me to have a flashback to last march which caused me to freak out in front of the person who was assaulting me, which was very very bad. but the real problem is that this person is part of the activist/punk/zine scene and is pretty high profile and fairly well known. and i feel a responsibility to do something about this. i could ruin this guys life. like i could trash it, without having to do anything

malicious, just by going public. and if i don't do something he will do this to someone else. i'm not the first, i know that. but i have no desire to ruin someone's life, even if they are a lousy shitbag like he is. and it's tough cos i've been friends with him for two years, i mean i fuckin hate him now, but....FUUUUUUCK!!! i hate this soooooooo much. someone assaults me and now *I* have all this responsibility to fix it, not only do i have to heal myself, which i'm doing a shit job of, but i've got to do something about him!!! i'm not bothering with the legal system of course...argh. what the fuck am i to do? what the fuck. i don't want this responsibility!! i don't have *time*! i don't have the energy and i can't fuckin do it on my own and i'm too scattered in my life to have a successful support network. and my friends are too all over. and to be honest i don't trust this whole scene to care, fucking patriarchy...and he calls himself a feminist!!! i was at his house interviewing him for my men and masculinity tutorial and he fucking assaults me unfuckingbelievable. I have to make some decisions soon and i don't want to. and what to do about my school work "i'm sorry professor x i couldn't do my work cos some asshole didn't listen when i said no and then i freaked out because i had a flashback to the last asshole who didn't stop, i know i've been sick and in court and i've missed half the classes but do you think you could give me another extension, i'm just having a rough time you know?" or "judge x, do you think we could just stop playing this game? you know? i've had a rough time i'm dealing with a lot of assholes and i was really sick and i just have a lot to do? do you think we could skip this whole trial business? it's just disorderly conduct, just violations..."

in some ways it would be easier if it all felt like an emergency or crisis. i mean it is a crisis but it's not an emergency. and it would

be easier if it was. because then the clock would stop and everything would change and it would be fucking horrible but it would be easy. this is the better way to go, but it's a lot harder. when my life got like this in the past i used to talk about how if one more thing went wrong i was going to lose it. but now i know that i'm not going to lose it. i filled my quota of losing it when i was 12. and i know what happens to people who lose it in this society and i'm never going there again. i feel stupid every time i say all of this. i don't know why. i don't know what to do with it all. nothing feels cleansing. i used to cut a lot but i've stopped doing that i don't plan to start again.

ok. i'm done. thanks for reading.
siiiiiiiiiiiiiiigh. i wish i was good at screaming. or at least being angry.

tali

May 5, 2001

RichMackin (1:39:17 AM): at least know where you stand

RichMackin (1:39:20 AM): with me

TaliPocket (1:39:32 AM): yes.

RichMackin (1:39:59 AM): like, if I was single and not hooking up and had a few beers in me, you know not to be in my house alone with me, it would be bad

RichMackin (1:40:21 AM): as opposed to other men would try and convince you and then get creepy

Here's how sex works in MY community:

Antioch College Survival Guide 2002-2003

Sexual Offense Prevention Policy (SOPP)

Approved on April 23, 2002

PREFACE

In 1991, a group of Antioch students began creating this policy which would alter the culture of an entire community. This policy is the embodiment of Antioch College's commitment to ending sexual violence and fostering a culture of consensual sexuality. It governs the Antioch College Community by working with existing staff and faculty policies. It now exists as a piece of a larger educational framework charged with furthering these goals. The intent of this document is not to replace existing local, state, or federal laws, but to create an educational system to deal with sexual offenses within our community. All new students and visitors are required to sign a contract stating that they have read and understand the expectations of the policy. Due to the educational nature of this policy, the standards of conduct are different from those set forth by law. It is recommended that individuals discuss safer sex practices before initiating sexual behaviors. The college encourages community members to report violations of local, state, and federal law to the appropriate government agency.

CONSENT

"Consent" is defined as the act of willingly and verbally agreeing to engage in specific sexual conduct. Previously agreed upon forms of non-verbal communication are appropriate methods for expressing consent. In order for "consent" to be valid, all parties must have unimpaired judgment and a shared understanding of the nature of the act to which they are consenting including safer sex practices. The person who initiates sexual conduct is responsible for verbally asking for the "consent" of the individual(s) involved. "Consent" must be obtained with each new level of sexual conduct. The person with whom sexual conduct is initiated must verbally express "consent" or lack of "consent". Silence conveys a lack of consent. If at any time consent is withdrawn, the conduct must stop immediately.

OFFENSES DEFINED

Any non-consensual sexual conduct is an offense under this policy. Examples of offenses include but are not limited to:

- Sexual Assault is a non-consensual sexual act including but not limited to vaginal penetration, anal penetration and oral sex. Penetration, however slight, includes the insertion of objects or body parts.
- Sexual Imposition is non-consensual sexual touching.
- Sexual Harassment is any unwanted sexual attention including but not limited to sexually threatening or offensive behavior.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Community members must respect confidentiality in matters relating to the Sexual Offense Prevention Policy. If confidentiality is violated, the Advocate or any party may take the Primary Witness, the Respondent, or any community member before Community Standards Board. Students, staff, faculty, and administration are responsible for maintaining confidentiality. To accuse a community member of committing a sexual offense under this policy without following the appropriate procedures is a violation of community standards.

If the hearing process is utilized, a Primary Witness' name may not be released to the community without their consent. Until the hearing board makes a finding, the Respondent's name may not be released. Any evidence used to reach a decision is confidential unless there is an appeal. All records of the hearing board process are turned over to the college attorneys.

REMEDIES AND OPTIONS

Options and remedies are available to resolve complaints and ensure the educational mission of this policy is met. They are available to the Primary Witness and the Respondent. Some possible remedies follow:

- Mediation
- Optional attendance to survivor's groups
- Optional attendance to Alcoholics Anonymous or other substance abuse programs

- Working with the SAP on events or other activities

The Hearing Board may determine a new remedy (not on these lists) or choose from the above list or the following:

- Mandatory sexual offense therapy
- Mandatory substance abuse therapy,
- Public apology
- Community service
- Loss of on-campus housing
- Suspension or Expulsion

The Advocate (although non-voting) can assist in the creation or selection of an appropriate remedy.

"The Spirit of the Policy is YES"

The Spirit of Antioch's Sexual Offense Prevention Policy is about "Yes!": people having the opportunity in intimacy to face one another in deeper and truer, more honest, more fully satisfying ways; actually being bodily present with our selves and each other; the Cosmic YES of wholly present living. This 'spirit' of CONSENT--the awareness-raising/hair-raising aspect of the policy--catalyzes people to become aware of what they really want sexually, find ways to make a partner aware of that, and to be aware of what their partner is actually okay with sexually. Conscious and confident intimacy.

This spirit is about a fully affirmative YES. Not an ambiguous yes, or a "well-not-really-but-ok-I-guess yes," certainly not a "silent-no 'yes,'" or an "ouch" or "yuck-but-I'm-afraid-to-hurt-your-feelings yes." This is about YES, UM HUM, ABSOLUTELY, YIPPEE YAHOO YES! Being with someone who you are sure REALLY WANTS to be with you. Being with someone who you are sure YOU REALLY WANT to be with. THAT is EXCITING, is EROTIC, is DEEP, is GREAT, is YES! That is consent. That is the Spirit of the policy.

The Spirit of the policy is also about No, hearing that a person is really NOT OK being with you in this way or that way, and being able to tell a person that you are NOT OK doing this or that. It is also about the EXPECTATION that they will RESPECT your choices, your requests, and your answers to their requests WITHOUT deriding you,

manipulating you, or threatening you in any way. This spirit is about respecting that each person, for **WHATEVER REASONS** they choose, has a right to define why and how they will be touched, at any time or step along the way, no matter what you intend or want to share with them. (and vice versa.)

And because we come from a culture that so often disrespects personal choices sexually through confusing dynamics, gender role socializations, sexual manipulation, abuse and violence-part of the spirit of the policy is corrective. It helps us all learn to **SPELL OUT THE NO'S** so that each of us may feel freer and safer being assertive about and affirmed for **SPELLING OUT THE YESES**.

Antioch's SOP Policy is **SOCIAL REVOLUTION** - of course, why else would it ignite such a mixture of joy, empowerment, confusion and backlash? - and it is exhilarating to be part of a community that is working so hard to increase equality and mutual satisfaction, and to rectify domination and oppression.

CONSENSUAL SEXUALITY AT ANTIOCH

Under the Sexual Offense Prevention Policy:

- **All** sexual contact and conduct between any two (or more!) people must be consensual;
- Consent must be obtained verbally **before** there is any sexual contact or conduct;
- **Silence is never interpreted as consent;**
- If the level of sexual intimacy increases during an interaction (i.e., if two people move from kissing while fully clothed, which is one level, to undressing for direct physical contact, which is another level), **the people involved need to express their clear verbal consent before moving to that new level;**
- If one person wants to initiate moving to a different level of sexual intimacy in an interaction, that person is responsible for getting the consent of the other person(s) involved before moving to that level;

- If you have a particular level of sexual intimacy before with someone, you must still be sure there is consent **each and every time**;
- If you have a **sexually transmitted disease**, you must disclose this fact to a potential partner **before** engaging sexually;
- If anyone asks you to stop a particular kind of sexual attention or behavior, **you must stop it immediately no matter what your intentions are with the attention.**

Don't ever make assumptions about consent; assumptions can hurt someone and get you in trouble. Consent must be clear and verbal (i.e., saying, "Yes, I want to kiss you, too.")

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND CONSENT

Taking advantage of someone whose judgment is substantially impaired is not acceptable behavior, and is a time of high risk for something nonconsensual to happen. **Consent, even verbal consent, may not be valid during these times. Providing someone with alcohol to get them drunk so that person will consent to have sex with you (figuring you wouldn't get "as far" if that person were sober), is a violation under the SOPP.** If you are so drunk that you act inappropriately with someone (in a way you wouldn't if you were sober), or if you are so drunk you don't hear "no," you may be charged under the SOPP.

Again, the primary purpose of the SOPP is educational, in this case, about the high risk of alcohol and drugs interfering with people's ability to be consensual. If you have a hard time knowing or setting your own personal boundaries, or respecting other people's boundaries, you may have a harder time if alcohol or drugs are involved. For truly consensual sex, you and your partner(s) should be sober to be sexual.

This was written by my close friend and roommate from last semester about our school's Sexual Offense Prevention Policy:

One of the reasons Antioch was my first choice as I applied to colleges my senior year was because of the Sexual Offense Prevention Policy, a unique feature and a radical one at that. The policy states that clear verbal consent must be obtained before any physical contact is made. That includes initial contact as well as advancement. I was excited because my adolescence was full of older guys, most of whom assumed for me how far I wanted to go with them physically. My third night at Antioch I was laying in the field under the stars with a strange boy and talking when he asked me if he could touch my hair. I asked in return if I could hold his hand and so began the steep escapade of falling in love. I did a full term at Antioch in the fall, hooked up with several people and was very used to practicing the policy. The fluttering chest and toe sensation as I opened my mouth to ask permission for physical contact was the same feeling I got before Antioch when I was about to touch somebody's knee under the table or pounce on their lips, only now I was also sure I would not be slapped. Anyhow, how many times any girl you know has given into pressure for sexual activity because she didn't want to make a scene/disappoint/seem prude? More than you'd think. More than you'd hope. The SOPP was written up and put to practice after a case of date rape on campus in the 1990's and since then has been one of the reasons various kids from all life stories choose Yellow Springs to be their next home. As a result most kids on campus (a very, very sexually active campus (maybe that's why) engage in sexual play consensually and comfortably. At least that is the idea I have and the experience I have had while at Antioch.

Right before I came to New York I spent a few weeks in Los Angeles, where I went to high

school. I hung out with old high school friends and one night ended up in the apartment of an old crush. Pressed into the couch under him, getting increasingly more nervous, I attempted to tell him about the Antioch Sexual Offense Prevention Policy, hoping he would begin to follow the example. The response I got was, "You are in UCLA now, baby, we do things differently here." I demanded he take me home right away. Look, the SOPP was successful in building up my self-confidence and assertiveness as well!

In New York I met a community of radical kids through one boy I knew through a friend at Antioch. Over the few months here I hooked up with five boys, only one of whom made sure I had a chance to verbally communicate my level of comfort with the physical contact we had. Another crusty punk boy I made out with one night repeatedly asked me to let him go down on me, and I repeatedly said "no." I should not have had to say no more than once. Another boy was invited over for tea and cuddling by me, and unexpectedly kissed me as we were settling down for sleep by pulling my face to his with his hand on the back of my head; then continued to kiss me and touch me as I was falling asleep, though I told him I was tired and not in the optimal condition for play. I did not pull away or yell at him, though I should have - having grown up influenced by the sexism of my society, I don't fully recognize the wrongness of a sexual situation as it is happening. Asking before you kiss or touch someone may be an idea people are not used to, but it seems simple enough to figure out on one's own, verbal communication being about respect.

Once in a while I feel comfortable being kissed without being asked first, but the rarity of such a case has me wishing everyone got used to talking. No excitement is lost and no moment is ruined, rather a certain kind of sweetness and appreciation is added because

both people now feel a spark of respect and courtesy mixed in with their chemistry. Asking is easier than resisting those who do not want to ask; keeping silent is easy too. What would be a drawback of asking? The possibility of being rejected? Why would anyone want to be with someone who does not want to be with them anyway?

Giving and receiving physical pleasure is an amazing ability, a gift. It can also be a source of a lifetime of pain, a tool of power, and a reason for self-loathing. Seems like implementing the model of the Sexual Offense Prevention Policy into any environment where people mingle in anticipation of mating, like college campuses, high schools, camps, work places and such would solve a lot of problems, save many tears, accomplish a lot of bonds.

~Maya Rivina

January 18, 2002

RichMackin: long story short, I ran into ___ at a party, confronted her, she had no idea what we were talking about and we made out

RichMackin: weird, but I figured a good publicity for me.. if I raped her, she wouldn't make out with me.

March 10th, 2002. I'm tired and hung over after last night's party and trying not to think about what happened in the small hours of the night – my memory and emotions are jumbled but I know that I wish whatever happened, hadn't. Confusion leads me to just blame it on myself, blame it on alcohol, and block the details out of my mind – but there's a lingering feeling of dirtiness, smallness, disgust, and shame.

Before I have a chance to speak to him again, this comes:

Date: Wed, 13 Mar 2002 16:04:10 -0500
From: Rich Mackin <richmackin@richmackin.org>
To: unsound@rakis.net
Subject: That's why I'm Easy, easy like sunday Mooooornin'

Laura,

I just wanted to say that I neither have a crush on you nor want to date you or anything, but WOW. If that is you drunk and sick and tired, well, you have got to be absolutely amazing. The way you kiss and the way you use your delicate fingers to trace my skin...You are unbelievably sensual- which is a far greater compliment than just being sexy.

So yeah, I don't think either of us want emotional mushiness, but I am all a twitter over you physically.

And yes, you are a damn cool person, I have always liked and admired you, and I think you know that.

Rich

P.s- just sayin', not fishing for feedback

The after-assault email. It's a trademark by now and I've even come to expect it. What I didn't expect was such an unintentional admission of nonconsent, in addition to patronizing language and blatant objectification. I do my best to laugh off the email, the night, the degradation. I joke about it to my friends, but I vow to them and myself that I will never let that situation happen again.

December 30th, 2002.

Another after-assault email, and this time I'm not laughing. Maybe it's the 4 months at Antioch, but something in me has changed – I am angry, I am aware of my pain, and I am so conscious that what he has done to me – last night and over the past year – is wrong. For the first time in years I find myself actually wishing physical pain on somebody. I had been so explicit – hours of conversation had gone into

topics such as sexual assault, polyamory and emotions, my current crush who I was feeling vaguely monogamous with, and very specifically, WHY I DID NOT WANT TO BE SEXUALLY INVOLVED WITH RICH IN PARTICULAR. It was all made so clear and he seemed so sincere. He started attaching disclaimers to invites, like 'I say this as a platonic-non-sexual-friend invite, not a you're-a-cute-girl invite, not that you're *not* a cute girl...' Hanging out that night was understood by both parties as an attempt to give a friend one *more chance at maintaining a platonic relationship*. And in the middle of the night, woken up by his fingers and his mouth, I realized that that was impossible.

Date: Mon, 30 Dec 2002 12:58:45 -0500
From: Rich Mackin <richmackin@earthlink.net>
To: Laura <unsound@rakis.net>
Subject: Hello

1) I think I have always been clear that I have always liked and respected you. Well, there you have it again. I actually think I like you more as time goes. For one, you are more outspoken and seem more comfortable with yourself. For two, you become more you the more time you have to work on being you, instead of letting life grind you down. Also, being 20 and wanting to sled is cooler than being 17 and wanting to sled (or even 30 and wanting to sled, because I do notice my 20 some friends are usually more concerned with "acting their age"

2) Heather says I should have gone for it. Damn. I like her.

3) I told Heather you asked when you get to meet her and she asked where you were and I said "ohio" and she asked where in Ohio and I told her ANTIOCH and she said "That's what I hoped you would say" I guess she has friends there and would like to visit. SO I cannot ask for a specific date yet, but it would be cool to try and set up a show there- thinking maybe April 1 or 2 or so.

This one was a shocker. "Should have gone for it"? As if he didn't, as if my repeated No's and physical force were of his initiative. As if I'm something to be "gone for" in the first place. Almost a year later and I had built up the confidence and energy for a confrontation.

RichMackin: Was I bad? or just the situation is something we don't need....
unsoundgal: no you didn't try THAT hard, but you still tried when i had said i didnt want to? i mean, if you had tried hard, wouldn't that be rape?

RichMackin: Well, I would think seduction...

RichMackin: and you had 2 beers, you weren't drunk

RichMackin: and you were also physically affectionate, granted not at all to

the extent I was

RichMackin: and we were talking about it the whole time

unsoundgal: what about seduction? i am physically affectionate to my friends - and i wish i could cuddle with my male friends without that being an invite.

unsoundgal: er, taken as an invite.

RichMackin: and I mentioned that we seemed to be at a point where we weren't being sexual, but we weren't exactly NOT being sexual

RichMackin: I am not denying that you have somewhat of a point, but I don't think I did anything BAD

unsoundgal: but me rubbing your arm doesn't mean that i take back all the times i've said i don't want to have sex with you - including that night. i'm curious what your definition of bad is, here.

Rich has since apologized to me, mostly for things he claims to not remember doing - he must have been "asleep or half-asleep." Recently he has told me that he is sorry for "hurting" me. Not once has he actually taken responsibility for his *actions*, though. Apologizing for my "hurt" is like sending a condolence card - but my hurt comes from his actions. His assault. His rape. Claiming "sex addiction" doesn't cut it. It shadows the actual problem at hand, and does nothing for the fact that I have had to go through these experiences because of him.

~Laura

Stand Up Boys

by Blue

This is my third attempt at writing this. I have set out to write something on sexual violence. I have to write this for a few reasons. First of all I am a white presumably straight boy. I experience a large amount of privilege from a social hierarchy that oppresses an overwhelming portion of this country and the earth. The white male wrote the fucked up constitution, which legitimized the existence of a "new" country birthed from the blood of the people native to this land and built with the blood of enslaved Africans. (Sexual violence has been happening since the beginning of human existence I am merely offering a perspective on the society I live in) This country, and thus this society, has continued this wonderful tradition of oppression in the name of our founding fathers aka "freedom givers". Throughout this whole process rape was a critical weapon for the control of people. From this process comes the privilege I experience today. I reject this country and the system of oppression it sets up. Easier said than done right? I have to speak out because I am a boy. I have to constantly be looking at my motivation, review my actions with the utmost criticism and not fall into that self-hating poor me guilt shit that is a poor excuse to not do anything.

The next reason is that I am a survivor. Sexual violence is not talked about in our society nearly enough. When sexual violence is talked about in our society it is gendered to the beat. Sexual violence is not only something that happens to women joggers in central park at night by men they have never seen before. Sexual violence happens to people. Sexual violence happens to people of all ages races classes sexes genders religions political

affiliations and regions of the world. I must speak out as a way of reaffirming, to my self, that I am a survivor and not a victim. I still blame and hate myself for the abuse that happened to me as a young person coming into the weird world of hormones called puberty. I have a tendency to separate myself out of the picture when I talk about sexual violence. I write it off as being not as bad as other people's experiences. After all I'm still alive and experiencing privilege.

The next reason I think it is important to talk about sexual violence is that I end up around a lot of little kids. I look at these smart playful little boys and think 1 out of every 3 of you will rape someone. I see the media shoving it down our throats with all of the fucked up advertising and thinly veiled rape scenes, on TV and in the movies, which pass for sex scenes. The only chance that this world has is its youth and we bombard them with teachings about gender roles, fucked up relationships, unfulfilled sex, body image, domination, and violence and hatred. I could go on for hours about reasons that people should deal with sexual violence but that is not all I want to say. What I really want to talk about is how no matter how many patches or zines about smashing patriarchy a carhart sporting anarcho ken has, sexual violence happens in our activist communities. I am completely disgusted at how us boys in our communities deal with patriarchy and its horrific impacts. It is god dam pathetic. I constantly hear shit like "its so hard to talk to guys about this stuff" "but he does so much good work" "how come this meeting is only going to talk about how _____ feels like she might have gotten raped" "she was all over him" "I've worked through all my shit" "we should just kick his ass"

Look boys there is a lot of work that needs to be done in this fucked up world but

shit aint never going to change unless we take an extremely active role in dealing with sexual violence. It is one of the more horrific ways that people are taught their place in this social hierarchy. So I urge us all to fucking listen for a minute to people in our lives that are not boys. If they are saying something you don't understand/ don't think is important/ don't agree with, do not dismiss it. Think about why you don't get it. Take up responsibility for dealing with the fucked up aspects of us. Identify our privilege and where it comes from and be accountable to other people. Support each other in dealing with this instead of going to the women in our lives to hold our hands through another "tough time". Know who you are, where you come from and own it.

On Losing Friends

I have known Rich for two and a half years now. During that time we have been very close friends. We met through a common activist group, continued to be involved in similar activism, and over the past two years have had a friendship rooted in much more than mere political beliefs. Rich's friendship has played a significant part in my life and my "growing up" (as I met him when I was sixteen and in high school). Rich and I attended protests and conferences together, and I attended my first street medic training with him, from which I've gone on to be involved in action-medical. When I moved into the city last year, I was a matter of blocks from Rich, and we would hang out daily. Many nights were spent staying up and talking until the sun rose. I shouldn't have to validate anything by proving that I know Rich, but recent mudslinging has put me in a very defensive position. My point is, Rich was not a random person. He was someone close to me. I valued his friendship, but I am no longer willing to put up with his mistreatment. So now I am losing a friend. And that sucks.

Three years of friendship, possibilities for love, support, and fun are a pretty substantial reason for denial. Beyond that, they're certainly incentive to keep quiet. For over a year I was aware of Rich's patterns and problematic behavior towards me and other women, but I thought that if I just ignored and did my best to avoid certain behaviors of Rich I could still benefit from the good aspects of his personality. I'm currently seeing a lot of similar reactions and attitudes coming from friends and acquaintances of his. But sexual assault is not an incident to be isolated or swept under the carpet. It is a pattern, a trait, and stems from who he is. It is not a part that can be separated from the whole.

The idea that Rich is not his actions is a dangerous one. For his treatment of women to be separated from his personality, his sense of humor, or his activist work is an invitation for those actions to be discredited or ignored. I cannot ask that Rich's friends abandon their relationships with him as I have had to, nor would I wish that – the process that I wish to see him go through is one of reconstruction, and one that he cannot go through alone. However, I do ask that my, and many other women's experiences, be present in the mind of his friends and acquaintances when interacting with him. I would not come out publicly with my experiences if it were not for the hope that it will have beneficial results, and prevention of further harm to other women.

~Laura

"RICH MACKIN (SOLO ACOUSTIC POWER VIOLENCE)"*

BY TALI

*The title of this piece is a quote from promotion of a show that Rich was doing. I thought it was a more than appropriate title.

Curled in the fetal position on the orange line heading home, October 8th 2003, I had some big thoughts. The first thought was *Hey, I'm not shaking anymore!* The second thought was *Oh Shit! It happened again.* Again. And the third big thought, actually the biggest of them all: *This time is different from all the other times, this time it's going to matter, this time something is going to happen, this time I'm going to do something, this time it's all going to change.* And I promptly decided to forget it happened and to not tell anyone about the whole fiasco.

October 8, 2003 11:57 p.m.

Hey,

except for the obvious, it was really nice talking to you, and nice to be in an interview situation that wasn't getting my ass kissed about being a funny zine guy.

I'm sorry it turned out weird. Cuddling was nice. Since you were quiet, I am unsure how big a deal this all is on the grand scheme of things. I hope all is ok. I will talk to you soon and see you around thanksgiving.

Rich

Lucky for me, and I'd like to think it lucky for other womyn out there, I'm not so good at keeping quiet. Within a few days my silence lifted. It was stunningly difficult to talk about. After I admitted that it happened, it took me about a week to actually be able to describe the whole event. I would think the words out in my head, *and then he said "Trust me" and kissed my mouth even though I had specifically asked him not to*, and that's where they'd stay. I'd roll them around in my head and imagine saying it and think about him doing it and then I'd get stuck and the minutes would go by and then the hours would go by and I'm still on that one sentence. Detail by detail. Day by day. Recovering from sexual assault is like recovering from any other major injury or illness-it takes a fucking long time and it leaves me with scars

and weak spots. But they are just that, a spot, isolated. Overall, I have become a stronger person. Maybe if I did not have this armor and this determination built up from past assaults, I would not be able to take this on.

Twice a Victim, Fault the Victim

I get nervous when I let on that I have been assaulted before; it has an insidious stigma. There is this very self-serving, patriarchal idea that someone who has been the victim of multiple assaults must be putting themselves at risk and therefore they are responsible for the misfortune that keeps befalling them. This is how the blame gets shifted. Unfortunately for me, having a vagina, and being 5' 1" and 106 lbs on good days, is putting myself at risk and I have made a conscious decision that this is a risk I am going to take. I am also going to go outside alone. I am going to have male friends. I am going to be in cities. And I am going to have sex.

This myth of "twice a victim: fault the victim" is especially powerful because most womyn will not be assaulted once. That is, they will not be assaulted *just* once. Therefore, if we follow the logic of this myth, none of us are actually being assaulted, ever; we're all just putting ourselves in bad situations! The sheer prevalence of sexual assault is actually creating an environment where sexual assault is acceptable and at the same time never happens. As John Støttenberg put it, "Right to rape, wrong to be raped."

I knew I was going to need to do something about Rich. I knew there had been complaints about him before. Unfortunately, I was not able to act quick enough. I have a chronic illness, was in court every couple weeks, and was trying desperately to make it through another semester. Sexual assault does not come with a pause button. It happens, the world spins around a couple times, and then I get up and start running to catch up with my life and hope that those episodes of grief and paralysis will be few and far between. I was terribly busy and every time I sat down to draft my anger to Rich I would be overwhelmed and consumed by the enormity of what it would mean to adequately confront his behavior. Weeks stretched on and I did nothing. I hardly told anyone about it. I was scared of the brushfire of gossip. If I did talk about it, I never said his name. I got progressively sicker. I took a plea deal in court, instead of pressing on for trial as I had planned. And I dropped out of school.

AND THEN HE ASSAULTED MY FRIEND.

When Laura told me what happened, I was overcome with anger and grief and guilt. If I had acted sooner, than maybe he would not have been able to hurt her. It was obvious to Laura and I that something needed to happen. Not stopping Rich would mean that more womyn would be assaulted. We will do everything in our power to stop Rich, we are not willing to let him continue with his destructive behaviors.

Hypocrisy

I was not at Rich's house that evening just to hang out. I had been studying men, masculinity and patriarchy and a professor that I was working with assigned a project that included interviewing an adult male about their feelings surrounding gender and other related issues. I decided to interview Rich. I have to admit that I wasn't choosing Rich because I thought he would be a bastion of feminism and gender equality. I thought that Rich had some pretty fucked up ideas about womyn and about sex and I thought it would be interesting to see how that related to (or clashed with) his activism.

We did the interview and the results were mostly unsurprising. I think it is notable that in this interview Rich identified himself as a feminist. Also, I was particularly concerned when Rich denounced an idea that he attributed to bell hooks. The idea was that it is not the responsibility of the oppressed to educate their oppressors about the nature of their misconduct. Rich disagreed, if the oppressed don't do it, who will? How will the oppressors learn?

This sentiment can be easily connected to the way Rich has, so far, handled being called on his assaultive behavior. While Rich has apologized to me, begged for forgiveness, and promised change, he has done a piss poor job of taking ownership for his behavior. Rich must understand that he is responsible for his actions; he must own them. Apologizing is never enough, and will never be enough. Taking ownership is not enough either but it is an essential first step. Every person who Rich has assaulted should not need to submit a deposition to warrant an apology from Rich. If Rich was truly committed to change within himself and to enacting change in the communities of which he is a member, he would take ownership for his actions without being prompted to do so. While Rich has apologized to me, he has not taken ownership for any of his violence towards me or towards anyone else.

Rich poses as an activist, as a radical, as a feminist, and as an ally. As a womyn, as a radical, as a feminist, and as a survivor, I am not going to be the one to leave. I have spent the last six months

avoiding Rich. I skip shows that I know he is going to be at. If there is a party that he might attend, I call ahead to find out whether he is expected to be there. If people are not sure whether he is going to show up or not, I don't go. The one time that I accidentally ended up in the same room as him it was unbearably uncomfortable and I spent the evening feeling incredibly self conscious because I was worried that he might be *looking at me*. This has to stop.

RichMackin (11:45:22 PM): My problem is not that I am doing sexual things decidedly that I shouldn't

RichMackin (11:45:44 PM): but that I am doing things without entirely realizing that I am.

TaliPocket (11:45:54 PM): that's really fucking scary rich

RichMackin (11:46:02 PM): yes

TaliPocket (11:46:37 PM): that's also very convenient for you

RichMackin (11:47:14 PM): well, it was convenient for me to avoid dealing with this

TaliPocket (11:47:27 PM): oh yeah?

TaliPocket (11:47:56 PM): and you have decided to deal with it because it has become inconvenient to not deal with it.

RichMackin (11:49:01 PM): Well, I would like to think that part of me does care about being a good person and not harming people.

RichMackin (11:49:02 PM): BUT

RichMackin (11:49:15 PM): yes, I really have nothing to say in my defense.

TaliPocket (11:50:01 PM): well rich. it's always inconvenient for me. every time i get assaulted it's wicked inconvenient

TaliPocket (11:50:11 PM): so inconvenient that i don't usually do anything about the fuckers

RichMackin (11:50:30 PM): thank you for talking to me about this at all

TaliPocket (11:51:13 PM): but lucky for you, the hypocrisy of your situation was just so infuriating that i decided to inconvenience myself even more and try to deal with you

TaliPocket (11:52:50 PM): and it's losing situation for me. the whole way through.

TaliPocket (11:53:23 PM): and the best thing that can happen for you is that you'll become a better person

TaliPocket (11:53:39 PM): i on the other hand don't stand to gain much at all.

RichMackin (11:53:58 PM): but if I stop being someone who hurts people, you are helping to stop people from being hurt

RichMackin (11:54:08 PM): you are being an activist
TaliPocket (11:54:28 PM): i am always an activist.

Response

Amidst some of the thoroughly disgusting, disappointing and hurtful discussions that have already begun to take place, I have seen a great deal of confusion over what exactly these "accusations" are and who the "accusers" are. Before having any information, people have asked why the Lucy Parson's Center would cancel an event *just* because Rich "made girls uncomfortable" (do I even need to comment here?!). This is not surprising considering the huge discrepancies between what Rich has privately admitted and what he publicly concedes. Here is an example of a statement he has made in public "As for my actions towards women, I have done a number of things that individually might seem no big deal- giving a backrub without asking if I could, being overly touchy, in one serious case using completely inappropriate language with a female friend who I should have more sensitive to. On a case by case basis, most of this can be dismissed or forgiven, but as I look at the patterns..." Alright, just to make things abundantly clear, this zine is not just about a non-consensual backrub, being overly touchy (whatever the fuck that means) or when Rich announced to me that he was "going to be a little aggressive" (and was), it is about the fact that a man who associates with a community of activists and refers to himself as a *feminist*, has a pattern of assaulting, and if I must pull out the big guns, raping womyn within that community. And for the record, I am accusing Rich of sexually assaulting me on multiple occasions.

Another misconception that is sprouting up all over the place is that the LPC statement is the first time Rich has been confronted about problematic statements and actions. This is simply not true. I am concerned that this assumption is rooted with Rich, and I'm quite positive that he is aware of having been previously confronted on several occasions. If there is anyone who should not have been surprised by the LPC statement it is Rich Mackin himself.

Since the public confrontation has begun, Rich has devised a defense wherein he defers responsibility away from himself and onto a problem of sexual addiction. The timing of Rich's realization that *he is suffering* from this addiction is highly suspect, and leads me to question the validity of these assertions. However, whether or not Rich has a legitimate addiction to sex, this does not excuse him of any responsibility for his actions. As he has already begun to do in private, Rich needs to say publicly that he has assaulted and raped womyn, not

announce that he is a sex addict. Rich has gone so far as to try to suggest that this disorder is a bigger problem than the fact that he assaults womyn. This is an audacious statement. In my opinion the only problem that is bigger than assaulting womyn, is assaulting AND murdering them, and while I think Rich has skeletons in his closet, I would hope that we're still talking in metaphor.

Moment By Moment

Already people are demanding for "the accusers" to give details, to give proof. I'm really sorry that I didn't video tape all those times Rich assaulted myself and other womyn, so what do you want us to do, reenact it? I do not feel that it is necessary for me to give a moment by moment account of what went on in Rich Mackin's apartment all those times. First of all, this form of verification, this way of legitimizing a complaint is not only ineffective as a consequence for the perpetrator, but more importantly, it is painful and damaging for the survivor. I have been stripped and violated enough. If I believed that by detailing every moment of those assaults, Rich would stop raping people and I would stop hurting, then I would brace myself and write down my naked story for all to scrutinize.

Aside from it being completely unnecessary, I fear that the pain it will cause me to write publicly in detail about such personal and wounding events, will be intense and long lasting, partially because there is always pain in recalling trauma, but also because I am terrified of my experience being invalidated. I have no doubt that the people who read this and support me would be further horrified, angered, and saddened to read a detailed account, but I don't believe that their support is contingent on receiving such a statement. As to the people who do not support me and to those who would defend Rich, I believe that not only will your opinion not be swayed by a detailed account, but that it will be used against me as yet another form of patriarchal violence.

What Now?!

Rich is an admitted sexual assaulter. He has proven that he is a danger to womyn and as of now Rich has said that he cannot control himself. While I do not believe that it is beyond Rich's ability to treat womyn respectfully, any assertion about being incapable of **not** assaulting womyn should be taken **very** seriously. Until Rich is able to show the community that he can control his assaultive behaviors, he should certainly not be in radical space, and hopefully other spaces that respect the rights of womyn to be safe would set similar standards.

This sort of action serves three distinct purposes. It keeps space safe for womyn. It sends a message to Rich, that his behavior is unacceptable, and supports him by keeping him away from womyn. And it sends a message to everyone that survivors will be supported, and that assaulters will be challenged.

I know that the LPC has received an incredible amount of flak and threats for their brave statement. As a survivor of Rich Mackin's assault, I am incredibly grateful that a collective would have the strength to take a stand on such a sadly divisive issue. It excites me that another local collective, the Boston Area Liberation Medic Squad (BALM) would follow suit and reaffirm their policy towards sexual violence. Rich has caused an incredible amount of harm to this community. However, through the work of survivors like Laura and myself and through the courage of collectives like BALM and LPC, perhaps we can jump start this conversation. I'm sick of hearing anarchist boys plan the revolution for 9 am tomorrow. However if radical communities can succeed in dealing with sexual assault, I might be a little less skeptical.

System, Sex, and Patriarchy
Charlie Clements

"We are all given the choice whether to use law or to use our bear hands, but if you know what needs to be torn down, tear it down." –
Andrea Dworkin

A note on terminology: Language is so fundamental an aspect of psychology that we rarely realize the extent to which we are sculpted by it. In our culture women are defined in relation to men as 'that which lacks'. The relational binary definition of gender is reflected in our language: men, and wo-men. To define women thus is to further their subjection and hinder liberation. To this end it becomes important to analyze and, insofar as it is possible, re-sculpt language. Though some attempts have been made in the last century to un-gender language and remove the '-men' from 'women' I find these attempts largely ineffective except to the extent that they call attention to the problem. As such I continue to use the insufficient sexist terminology: "men" and "women".

Patriarchy, in a very general sense, is the systemized and legitimized rule of men over any and all other genders and sexes. It is, in fact, the denial of the very existence of more than two biological sexes and two directly correspondent genders: male to man, as female to woman. Were patriarchy limited, however, simply to enforced gender roles its deconstruction would be a simple matter. Patriarchy is, of course, far more complex than this. It encompasses and creates each thing in the world; it defines our politics, our law, our psychology, and our language. We are sculpted by our society, socialized by patriarchy, molded and pressed to fit the demands of male rule. It keeps guard while we are speaking, moving, dressing, voting, working, and having sex. Patriarchy is the omnipresent eye watching each action and each thought of every individual. It is the all-seeing, all-knowing ruler of all that is human. Patriarchy is the god of a male dominated world. Within patriarchy are created two distinct sexual classes: man, and non-man, casually labeled 'woman', although clearly this second class, the dominated class, includes those of all non-male genders. The sexual classes function along similar basic lines as the economic class system: one class rules, and the other is ruled; one is served, the other serves; one is free, the other in chains; one subject, the other object. The all-pervasiveness of this system, the depths to which we all bypass our own subjectivity and individuality to become sexual drones, can be

seen when we examine one of the primary mechanisms by which patriarchy is enforced.

Within any hierarchy difference must be made visible. Men must know who to order, humiliate, subject, and abuse. Slaves must be black; Jews must wear armbands; women must smile and be pretty. The main method of sexual classification is the mandatory gender marking found in western culture. The psychology of each individual *evolves within the system of patriarchy and as such grows to represent* it. Men become men, and women become women, any divergence is leveled out by surgery or social ostracism and mockery. Within patriarchal society women become so deeply socialized as to willingly mark themselves as targets. Women become caricatures of themselves, propped up on heels, scarred by surgery, and hidden by makeup. Were male rule, however, so simple a matter as dress, patriarchy would have ceased as a system of domination centuries ago. More fundamentally patriarchy allows women no positive options within the system. An essential attribute of any oppressive system is the limit forced upon those oppressed, subjection to whichever direction they turn. To "be a women" is to be dominated, but to throw aside gender marking, to whatever extent possible, is to be alone. To dress, walk, speak, or think outside of one's gender is to submit one's self to rejection and social outcasting.

The extent to which patriarchy has overcome any potential gender-free society becomes evident once we consider the effects on the individual of the rejection of gender marking. Women and men move differently; men take up more space and are more free with their limbs, women's bodies are restricted and they walk in the least aggressive or direct manner possible. In conversation men assert themselves while women wait until they are asked to speak, until they are doted upon, at which point, of course, they are patronized, mocked, and shut up. Even our language is gendered, our pronouns and names bring with them the sex of the individual. To refer to a person at all is to refer to their gender. One simply cannot speak in any language without referring to gender. When a child is born without obvious gender, with multiple genitals or without any, they are surgically and hormonally modified to fit the norm. There is simply no room left open outside of the dualistic sex system. To not belong to one of the two permitted genders is to be outside of society, to be abnormal. Lesbians are raped for a "cure"; gay men are beaten and murdered for looking in the wrong direction; trans, queer, gender fuck, and amorphous individuals are seen as freakish, as unnatural. There is, of course, no natural evidence of the gender binaries. The number of sexually changing species is enormous; sex and gender are largely fluid in the

natural world. To the extent that it defines our society the very concept of sex is unnatural. Sex and gender are thus entirely human concepts which have been written onto the natural world through the abuses of science, and onto the minds and souls of humans through the abuses of psychology and medicine. Enforced gender is the base upon which patriarchy is set, it is that which alternately dominates or liberates.

Men and women are socialized differently in every respect, and out of these differences evolve two separate worlds. The male world is that of liberty, rule, independence, sexual access, and privileged. The woman's world is one of servitude, toil, denial, violence, and rape. The public world, that of industry and government, is that of men. The private world, of the home and bedroom, is the world of woman. In this distinction is found the essence of patriarchy. The private world of women is the natural, the assumed and apolitical. Women exist in a world of permanence beyond critique. They are shut up. A woman questioning is immediately questioned back, is immediately taken less seriously. When a man rapes or beats a woman, when a woman's sex is taken advantage of, this is assumed to be natural. The man is simply taken as a desiring and sexual monster-machine who will consume the sex of any girl who may happen to stumble upon his territory. To these ends the rape and battery of women across the globe is a private matter, it is a problem with the woman, with the victim. She has crossed the wrong path; she has made herself vulnerable; she has not taken the necessary precautions. It is her fault. Those poor men, they simply can't control themselves.

When women cry that they are oppressed, when they tell the world that they are being beaten and raped and battered into fear every day of their lives, they are not believed. The subject becomes the matter for debate. The truth is, when any individual is harmed there can be no debate. We question the motives of the woman in pain, we push her aside because she was asking for it. Our entire culture acts against the woman in tears. Any critique of this situation is mocked and brushed aside, patronized with political correctness trainings and sexual harassment seminars. However necessary these correctives may be, the femicide at the heart of patriarchy is still taken as unquestionable; it is beyond critique. The culture of patriarchy is predicated upon the domination of women and other non-male genders; to question culture is to question what is taken to be natural, it is to work outside of logic. Women must not speak up, must not question, and must not say no. They are demanded as the private slaves and sexual tools of men. Disobedient woman are beaten and raped into submission, they lack the very body from which to raise a cry of alarm. Within patriarchy women are not given the option of no. They can, however, take it.

The overthrow of the patriarchal domination of all non-male genders requires a radical change in every aspect of our culture. Male rule is unquestioned in the psychology of patriarchy and so the most necessary change is to liberate the psychology of the ruled. In order to fight patriarchy there must be room to think outside of the system of oppression. We cannot yet envision a gender free society. To not dress like a woman must be to dress like a man, as even our clothing is gendered. This act in itself questions the patriarchal assumptions, but it is not an act outside of patriarchy in essence. To replace gendered words with non-gendered words does not attack the gender reference at the heart of our linguistics, but it is a step, and it calls attention. No matter how utopian the scheme, we simply cannot step outside of our colonized consciousness and conceive a world of gender freedom. Men may rule, however, only so long as their reign is left unquestioned. The enculturation of patriarchy has largely succeeded in silencing the profound critique of patriarchy, and yet there is room for praxis. Within a systematized oppression every action is committed in the context of oppression, of domination, and as such every act must be questioned.

An important question in the realm of patriarchy then, is the individual woman's responsibility to act against a sexist system. Is a woman marrying, having sex, or wearing heels morally culpable for her complicity in the patriarchy, even though she exists in a patriarchal world where to act otherwise will result only in her inability to function in the most basic levels of society? Are women to be faulted for accommodating sex marking if to not do so would lead only to their ridicule and further exclusion? If a woman refuses intercourse she is seen as failing to fulfill her most basic, most natural, task. In a society whose economic and political structures are such that the refusal to marry puts the woman at a significant disadvantage, are we to blame these women for submitting to such a horrendously unjust institution? In one sense no. Fundamental to sexual oppression is the concept of the double bind wherein individuals are presented no options and subjection whatever way they choose. In our society women must choose either to subject themselves as the sexual and economic slaves to men (and, in fact, must submit to gender itself), or to choose otherwise, thereby leading to their exclusion, ridicule, and poverty. There is, in this sense, no beneficial choice for women to make, and this is precisely what keeps movements of liberation silent, and systems of oppression in place.

When no woman may comfortably step outside of patriarchy one must look for a movement of women. No single person can hope to effect radical societal change through a single act of refusal if such an act entails the exclusion of the individual, but if an entire oppressed

class acts, the system will have to change. To this end, education and consciousness raising are the most important tactics for feminist praxis. The psychology of domination must be thrown aside through the act of questioning the most basic attributes of everyday life. Until women and non-males reach a sort of class-consciousness and en masse demand their liberation, all that women will be left with is the oppressive double bind: damned if she does, damned if doesn't.

On Lack of Support and Solidarity

From the beginning, I knew that this was a process that Tali and I could not go through alone. We were scared and somewhat pessimistic about the effectiveness of our speaking out, and feared further victimization. We knew that there must be other women who had been assaulted by Rich, yet we were not aware of or in contact with them. So I reached to outside sources for support.

I emailed a member of local feminist group Moshtrogen asking for support. They said they were all ears, and I told them some of my experience with Rich and that I wanted to take action, possibly for Beantown Zinetown. I never heard back from them. Without my consent, two members of the group proceeded to contact my (*male*) friend who had previously been a roommate of Rich's to verify Rich's status and treatment of women, as many of the group members, presumably even after hearing my story, still felt that he was harmless.

Other than that, I never opened up to anyone else in the Boston activist community, minus a few close friends, so it was rather suspect when rumors of "boycotts" of Beantown Zinetown started popping up.

The fact that a self-proclaimed feminist group would need male confirmation of a woman's experience rather than providing immediate support quite frankly scares me. While perhaps I should have been more explicit that my experiences were being told in confidentiality, I certainly never expected for them to be publicly referred to on internet boards, or anything in need of further verification or validation. I was not asking for a jury to decide whether they believed me or not. I was asking for help. It worries me that this is the same group scheduled to give a workshop on rape culture this weekend at the zine fair.

Frustrated and feeling helpless, I approached a counselor at my school with the idea of creating a zine about my experiences with

Rich, and sexual assault in general. She advised strongly against the creation of any public statement, saying that I could possibly be sued for slander. I tried explaining that this was an issue very much embedded in an activist community, and chances of legal procedures being used were slim. I explained that just as Rich would not take me to court, I would not take him to the cops. Yet her suggestion was to call the police or social services, and possibly exaggerate my story. I then got to hear about how women often place themselves in bad situations, and that I had made bad decisions in the past with Rich. I walked out of there in tears. Since then, the topic of Rich and sexual assault has consumed my life to the point that it is the major topic of discussion everywhere down to the action-medical list – a community in which only a handful of people even know Rich. Many of the recent posts in this community have been supportive and inspiring (although the initial ones were invalidating and humiliating). Nevertheless, it feels as though I can't turn anywhere without past experiences being shoved in my face.

I'm able to handle this consumption because I'm passionate about something pro-active coming out of these discussions. I'm not ashamed of my experiences with Rich, and I'm willing to be open about them as a means of prevention of further harm to other women. But one of the main intentions of this zine is to serve as a call to action. Clearly, our communities are sufficiently lacking in survivor support. The fact that anyone would ever suggest that I take my case to the police astounds me; if my own, "radical" community won't support me, how could I possibly expect the state to?! The topic of sexual assault in activist and radical communities is one that has been swept under the carpet far too long, and *safe and supportive* discussion and action are long overdue.

~Laura

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Re: me

From: "Rich Mackin" <richmackin@earthlink.net>

Date: Tue, March 25, 2003 10:50 am

To: martha@riseup.net

Martha.

> I am cautiously optimistic that you seem to finally be confronting your hurtful and dangerous behaviors. I am concerned with your use of the label "sex addict." I feel like it potentially allows you to excuse your actions or defer responsibility for them.<

I am using that term because I am not sure if using the term "sexual predator" is accurate, because I think I have problems related to my sexuality beyond the hurtful behaviors that seem to be the core of this controversy.

I don't think there is a term that isn't loaded in some way. I think that the term sex addict describes me, but I understand that admitting an addiction often ties into an idea of powerlessness, victim status, and discussion of actions as symptoms of a disease. Sexual addiction might be WHY I do things, but that doesn't mean it isn't my responsibility to do something about how I act on it, and to question the whys and see what I can do to change things.

> What worries me personally most about your sexual behavior is that you seem to get a sexual charge out of being in a position of power over your partner. You seek

out women more than ten years younger than you for sexual activity. When you are in a sexual situation and are asked to stop, you have been known to just switch activities instead of actually stopping. I also think you fetishize small women.<

nod

> You have sexually assaulted multiple women. I guess I'd be much more impressed to hear you say that out loud and acknowledge it more than I'm interested in hearing a statement that you are a sex addict. It's not about you this time, Rich. It's about the girls and women you've hurt. That's lasting damage. You can't fix it by saying you're a sex addict, and you can't excuse it by saying you're a sex addict. In fact, you can't EVER fix it.<

> I'm concerned that you may be doing something equivalent to saying "I know I burned your house down, but I'm a pyromaniac" instead of "I'm so sorry I hurt and scared you, and I have removed all the matches from my life until I have it under control."<

Talk to Tali. I would like to think that this is what I am doing, she can tell you if she thinks I am doing this or not. I actually had a livejournal post written that addressed this, but several people, including a lover who concurs with my problems and feels that I have coerced her on occasion, feel that I need to let this sink in a bit more before making anything for the record.

> Acknowledging the problem is an important first step. I just think you're thinking about the wrong problem. "I'm addicted to sex" is a much easier thing to say than "I force and coerce young women into performing sexual acts with me and I touch them against their will." Dealing with this is

not going to be easy for you. It's going to be even harder for your victims.<

I think that my problems with sex are more encompassing than my coercing women, which I admit to doing. I think that the problem is not framed by me doing things against women's will so much as me doing things that I am not understanding that are against women's will. This isn't a cop-out, this is me saying that my problems involve judgement problems. If a woman says no and I force her, that is wrong, but cut-and-dry. What I do is create situations where I put women in situations that they shouldn't even be dealing with. I don't think of the situations as women not wanting my advances, but as women not wanting the specific action being addressed, which is why I try something else.

The point I am trying to make is that I not only need to deal with the things that I do that can be considered sexual assault, but with my mindset that allows me to do these things and not see it as assault. My first steps are to make sure I CANNOT wind up in these situations, so that there is no trial- and-error. I need to make sure I am not physically able to hurt women, and then I need to render myself incapable of doing things that cause harm, physical barriers or not.

> I think a public statement is going to be necessary, and is certainly the polite adult thing to do. Issuing an apology to the women you've hurt and a statement about what you plan to do to ensure that no woman ever has to go through that at your hands again would be a good start. That's my personal opinion though, not necessarily one shared by your victims. I don't by the way, consider myself one of your victims. I am not going to stop speaking to you. I am going to discontinue any physical/affectionate contact with

you. That is why I shook your hand at the show. Letting you touch me any more than that would feel to me like betraying women who don't feel as safe with you. I don't feel threatened by you due mostly to the fact that I would have no qualms about hitting you, and I'm quite sure that I am physically stronger than you. I think a good first step for you to take in acknowledging the threat you present to women would be to stop touching them in any way that could be interpreted as sexual. If you want to talk further about your issues I'd be ok with that. I hope I've presented myself that way throughout this situation.<

You have. The problem is that I have been very caught up in defending specific actions- because many of the things I did, out of context, can be defended (arguably- I am not saying that they are justified by any means,) just that I kept seeing details that I could address as details, not seeing the avalanche that all the little snowflakes was making up.

> I am glad that you want to stop hurting people. I think that you should get in touch with one of the feminist psychotherapy collectives in the boston area, or in portland (but the sooner the better) and make an appointment. I know that the tapestry collective in cambridge definitely does work with men as clients.<

Since I am leaving in a week, I really won't be able to do anything about this until I get to Portland. I am looking into my resources there, but since this really is about 20 hours since this really has HIT me, I haven't made much progress. Obviously, I have not only contacted you about this, but have informed heather of the entire situation (barring names of some of those involved), have solicited opinions from a close friend and lover who is in her 20's and not in the punk or activist scene (although she, as well as heather,

brought up many of the same points as if there was a meeting about this before hand.)

> You have my support in your efforts to stop hurting women.<

Thank you. I think I will need it.

Rich

RichMackin (6:20:09 PM): Ok

RichMackin (6:20:24 PM): Ok, Ciara started telling people I was a rapist

RichMackin (6:20:41 PM): later, I did something shitty to you, you called me on it, we talked about it.

RichMackin (6:20:50 PM): Then the weird Laura thing happened

RichMackin (6:21:03 PM): which I tried to talk to her about, but she doesn't want to

RichMackin (6:21:15 PM): understandable, not saying anything bad about her

RichMackin (6:21:27 PM): This means that I do have some sort of pattern

RichMackin (6:21:46 PM): which means I might have done other shittier things not realizing the impact I might have had

10 am, Saturday, March 29, 2003

Dear Mr. Mackin,

In this letter is a list of demands and expectations. We have compiled this list because you have asked us what you can do. We hope and expect that this guide and your response will provide other individuals and organizations with a frame of reference for continuing (or discontinuing) their relationships with you.

You have proven to be adept at manipulation. To support you, we have created these expectations so that there is no wiggle room; it will be insurmountably difficult to satisfy them without your utmost sincerity and devotion. They will be incredibly hard to fulfill, but this ensures that your completion of this rigorous process will be meaningful and successful.

This list is subject to revision as deemed necessary by the survivors. If there are changes you will be notified in writing.

1. You will voluntarily cancel your upcoming tour in order to devote your time and energy to reparations and education.
2. You will take ownership for your actions: You will submit statements to Tali, Laura, and any other womyn you have harassed, assaulted, or raped detailing specifics of the offending behavior or language, claiming full responsibility for them, detailing why the action or speech was harmful, and offering apology without justifications. Once these statements are completed to the satisfaction of the survivors of your assaults, you will compose a public statement taking full ownership for all assaults/harassment/rape, specifying your plan for a permanent end to this pattern of sexual misconduct. This statement must be approved by all involved survivors before it is publicly released.
3. You will fully disclose your history of sexual misconduct to: all sexual partners, past, present and future; anyone with whom you share a short or long term living space; all activist groups you have worked with/ are working with/ will work with; any space you perform in, and anyone who distributes your publications.
4. You will stop touching womyn. Because you have proved yourself incapable of touching womyn in non-sexual ways and

have admitted your inability to distinguish between sexual and non-sexual touch, between consensual and non-consensual interactions, we believe that the safest course of action is for you to cease touching womyn, including current partners, particularly since at least one has told you she feels you have coerced her into sexual activities. You will not touch womyn until all aforementioned public and private apologies have been made, and not until those people supporting you in your quest for change (partners, therapists, and friends) are in absolute concurrence that you are ready to attempt to engage in appropriate, responsible, safe and consensual sexual activity.

5. You will seek explicitly feminist psychotherapy to learn to interact with womyn in appropriate, safe, and respectful ways, and to unlearn the inappropriate, dangerous, and disrespectful behaviors in which you engage.
6. You will participate in anti-oppression trainings addressing male privilege, white privilege, and heterosexual privilege.
7. When you are able to consistently behave in a respectful manner, you will involve yourself with groups educating and facilitating men in learning to treat all people with respect and hold men accountable for their words and actions. You will do this work in radical communities.
8. You will take creative and meaningful (as defined by the survivor) actions in order to compensate for all the resources and energy that you have stolen from Laura, Tali and any other womyn whom you have harmed. These reparations are for the survivors, not for you.

We expect nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura, Martha, Tali". The script is cursive and fluid, with the names written in a single line.

Laura, Martha, and Tali

“Drama”

The recent leak of information due to previously mentioned lack of solidarity and betrayal has led to a ridiculous extent of rumors, mudslinging, and debate that has been very hurtful and frustrating to me. I don't want to have to address any of this. Reading forums such as livejournal.com and xadamx.com has just been distracting and counter-productive for me in trying to put together an effective zine. However, these forums have escalated to a point at which I feel it is important to clarify a few points:

- Many people are saying that the “situation” is being “poorly-handled.” Before the publication of this zine, Tali and I have made no public statements, and certainly were not the instigators of recent rumors. The fact that this was “poorly-handled” is due to people's own scandal-hungry gossip, and has only been more hurtful to those of us actually involved in the situation.

- I have never met or even spoke to Ciara Xyerra. This zine is not affiliated with her, though it is certainly in solidarity with the women she has spoken out for. Rich's hatred toward Ciara has diverted attention from the main issue – his patterns of sexual assault – and focused in on a personal grudge. Rich refers to Ciara as his “primary accuser,” and then denies the charges that she holds against him. Until the publication of this zine, Tali and I have not *publicly* accused Rich of anything, and thus the “primary accuser” is not to be confused with either Tali or I.

- Many individuals are demanding dates, times and details to “verify” claims against Rich. I don't feel that I should have to disclose such personal and humiliating facts to complete strangers for them to create a courtroom out of my sex life. Just as I don't wish to be further objectified by Rich, I also don't wish to be objectified by having details of my personal life discussed and torn apart on internet message boards.

- I have, however, confronted Rich extensively about past situations, and he has not denied any of it. Nothing is being said or alluded to publicly that Rich has not already been made aware of. Dates and details have been clarified with him. I have used the words rape, sexual assault, nonconsent, lying, and danger talking to him about our history. His response described my account as “fair and warranted,” “valid and justified.”

- I was not involved in the Lucy Parsons Center's statement against Rich and on providing safe spaces, and since I haven't yet spoken out to them or publicly at all, their decision to do this was not based on my experiences with Rich. LPC's radical and courageous approach to survivor support is not just based on past individual experiences but on prevention as well.

- Included in the Lucy Parsons statement were claims that Rich is racist and transphobic. I do not dispute these claims but they are not my focus in promoting awareness of Rich's history and danger to women. Because of these claims, Rich has managed to manipulate the discussion into focusing on "false accusations" – diverting discussion away from his admitted history of sexual assault.

- The most recent focus of both Rich and his defenders is that Rich is a "sex addict" – I find this diagnosis to be both invalidating as a survivor of his assault, and disrespectful to the actual behavioral disorder. Sex addiction is a coping mechanism. It is not an excuse to rape people. Rich's problems certainly run deeper than isolated incidents of assault, but those certainly should not be overshadowed by what he perceives as a bigger problem.

~Laura

Definitions

Sexual Assault: A non-consensual sexual act. This includes any sexual touching, where sexual is defined by the survivor. It also includes, but is not limited to vaginal penetration, anal penetration and oral sex. Penetration, however slight, is the insertion of any object or body part into any orifice.

Sexual Imposition: *Non-consensual sexual touching.*

Sexual Harassment: Any unwanted sexual attention including but not limited to sexually threatening or offensive behavior.

Rape: A form of sexual assault. Non-consensual sex, where sex is defined by the survivor.

Ownership: Taking full responsibility for one's actions verbally, detailing the action and its effects it had without providing justification.

Justification: A reason or excuse for committing an action.

Definitions from "System, Sex, and Patriarchy"

Binary: An opposing set of two. In this case, the gender binary: male opposed to female.

Femicide: The systematized murder of women as a group and not because of reasons unique to the individual. As genocide to a culture, femicide to women.

Gender Marking: The mandatory conformity to certain culturally defined standards of dress, speech, movement, opinion, language, etc. which come to demark and define the binary sexes.

Praxis: Using theory as a basis for action and action as a basis for theory

Definitions on Racism

Because of recent further allegations of Rich Mackin's misconduct and subsequent discussion of racism, I felt it appropriate to include these:

Prejudice: Socialization towards pre-judging

-Race Prejudice: prejudice focused on race

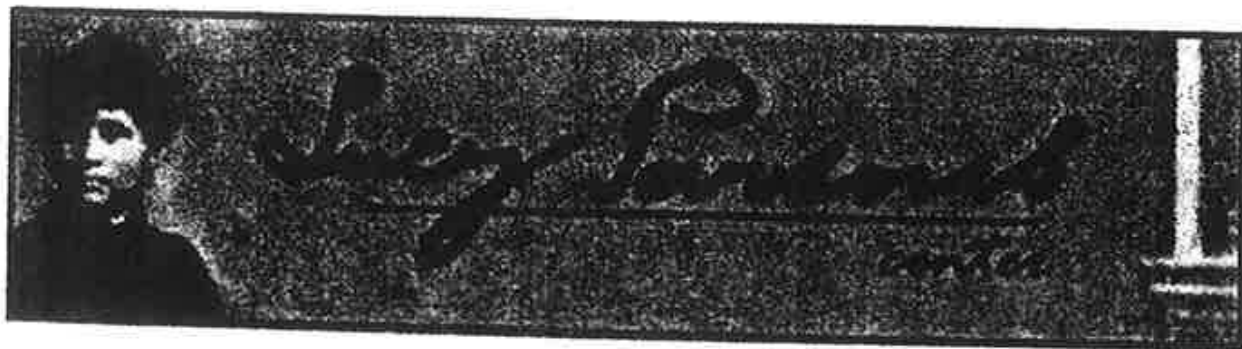
Institution: an organization of human activity that gives a context of legitimacy vs. illegitimacy for what people do

Power: means of achieving or maintaining something

-Power as institutional: use of socially (i.e. conventionally) legitimate institutions to gain or maintain something

Racism = Race Prejudice + Institutional Power: the (*conscious or unconscious*) use of institutional power to maintain unequal status and superiority over others on the basis of the race construct

Racist: one whose actions flow from and whose status and privilege is bolstered by racially supremacist attitudes or principles, whether or not the person acts this way intentionally.



The Lucy Parsons Center has formally decided not to permit Rich Mackin to use our space for readings, speeches, or workshops.

The LPC is committed to radical struggles of liberation. We know that these struggles mean nothing if we do not live in revolutionary, anti-oppressive ways. As a result, we refuse to open our space to someone who has previously been accused of sexual assault and has responded by attempting to silence and invalidate his accusers. Further, Rich Mackin has publicly made racist and transphobic comments, both in his writings and at conferences (including previous Beantown Zinetowns). Finally, he has been sexually harassing towards girls and women to such a degree that many feel uncomfortable being around him--even going so far as to organize an alternate zine conference.

We apologize for the lateness of this statement. The events scheduled for the bookstore were never formally approved, though miscommunication caused them to be publicized as such. Regardless, our belief in liberation means that we will not allow our space to be a forum for Rich Mackin. The LPC is committed to girls, to women, to survivors, to people of color, to trans people--not to those who oppress and violate them.

Beantown Zinetown is welcome to use the bookstore on Sunday as expected, provided that Rich Mackin is not in attendance. We believe Beantown Zinetown is associated so strongly with him that the only way to maintain a survivor positive space is to create one in his absence. The scheduled Saturday night event with Rich Mackin will not occur at the bookstore. In its place, there will be a discussion at the LPC at 7:30 pm about sexual assault in activist communities and how survivors and allies can support each other in confronting and eliminating this problem.

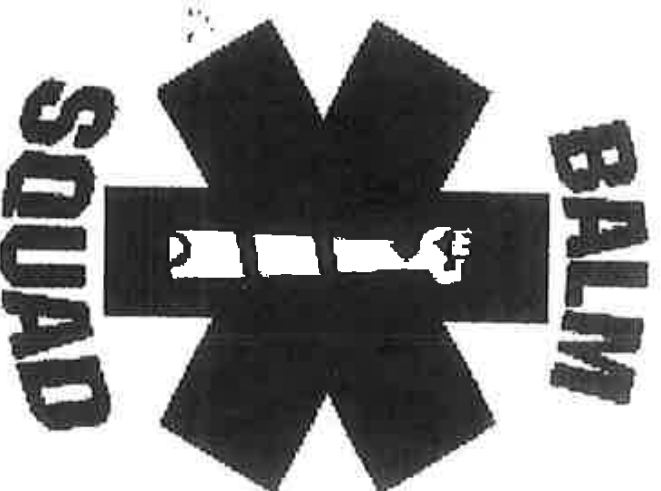
In solidarity and struggle,

The Lucy Parsons Center Collective

Sexual violence and oppression violate individuals as well as the values of our organization. The Boston Area Liberation Medic Squad (BALM Squad) works to promote the health and well-being of activists at progressive demonstrations and beyond. We will not tolerate sexual assault or harassment within our organization or within the larger progressive political movement.

Sexual violence has recently become a prominent issue in the Boston activist community. To further education, discussion and action related to this issue, we will:

- address all incidences of sexual harassment and assault as directly and immediately as possible
- educate ourselves about sexual violence and work to address this issue in our workshops and trainings
- work with others to develop a Boston activist community that 1) recognizes the social and political dynamics underlying sexual violence, 2) engages in active discussion about sexual violence and how it impacts our community, and 3) creates a network of resources and support for survivors



RichMackin (1:37:09 PM): Hey, once again I am online for a bit...IF you want to talk.
This will be my last IM unless you do want to talk. I hope all works out eventually..

I understand that when you put a nail in the wall, you can take the nail out, but the hole is still there.

I saw Michael Gregor today and his hair and beard were both trimmed neatly, it was weird.

~~4084~~ 2578" B" HEALTH/SEX - sexual assault

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