At the point of writing this article in mid April there have been over 250 media items regarding sexual and domestic violence in Vermont’s news outlets this year. Some of these articles have been following ongoing cases, like the prosecution of accused killers Brian Rooney and Chris Williams; some cover the developments in cases where family members’ diligence and determination helps to bring a perpetrator to justice, as with the recent advocacy on the part of Patricia Scoville’s parents who successfully advocated for measures to enhance the DNA database, measures which led to the identification and prosecution of their daughter’s rapist and murderer. Additionally, there seems to be a daily litany of disturbing child abuse cases, and cases that receive one or two days of coverage then fall off the media’s list of news worthy events.

In thinking about how domestic and sexual violence are covered in our local media, we wanted to consider what is missing in these reports: what is happening behind the public story? While the media’s job is to report on news-worthy events, coverage often focuses so intently on the lurid details of a case that it is easy to forget that behind the names and situations being reported. In many incidences, reporting focuses on criminal court proceedings, so much so that articles can read like court transcripts, making it easy for media consumers to depersonalize the victims and perpetrators, and to
see them as cases and their experiences as stories — to view these headlines with the same eye that watches crime shows on television. What happens when a person’s experience becomes a case?

Victims and survivors have little say over how or if their story is told, what part of their story receives attention and scrutiny or over what is omitted. There are countless stories that don’t reach the threshold for “headline” news, but in those that do, reporting often reinforces negative stereotypes about victims, such as subtly blaming victims for being in the wrong place at the wrong time or making some other “bad” decision that led to their victimization. We should consider this when we read the headlines and question the impact the media have on victims and those who are close to them.

When the media ‘gets it right” in its coverage of a domestic or sexual violence case, the impact of the coverage can do so much good. Many media outlets have been self-reflective of how they report, thinking about the language used and taking efforts not to identify victims. The media often report in a way that is respectful and supportive of victims. Victims and survivors can feel empowered and validated and society gets the opportunity to hold perpetrators accountable not only through the criminal justice system, but also in the court of public opinion.

When media broaden the scope of the story away from the criminal justice system we can gain an understanding about the real impact of domestic and sexual violence. We have the opportunity to see the experience directly through the people who were affected by it. We can see what happens to them and hear what they would like us to learn from their story.

It is risky and hard for victims to tell their stories to anyone, much less to the media. It is scary to think how words might be construed, how actions may be dissected, what support is risked by speaking out. Media must approach victims and survivors with a sense of dignity and respect, remembering that these are real people who are willing to take the risk so that we all might learn something. We have to create space in our media outlets for victims’ voices. Without these voices we perpetuate the silence of victimization, dehumanize their experiences, and play a part in silencing victims to make ourselves feel safer in order to believe that it couldn’t happen to us.

In this issue of the Network News we have asked victims/survivors, and advocates to share their experiences with the media and behind the headlines. We do not want to lose these voices because it is our collective story; one of dreams and disappointments, passions and fears. Their hurts are our hurts and their hearts beat collectively with ours.

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Flying over Vermont’s green mountains and valleys, looking down upon rural villages and communities lying quietly below, always gives me a sense of peace. The phrase peaceful communities expresses the feeling I experience when looking upon a sight so pristine; it often calls me to whisper under my breath a prayer of appreciation to something, someone, greater than myself. Although the sight is almost heavenly in nature -- especially when gazing upon a soft blanket of snow or the lush green pastures giving way to rooftops and church steeples — forever present in my mind as a survivor of violent crime is the reality, the reminder, that there is no perfect, safe haven. Enduring a violent crime in a community I once viewed as paradise changed my perspective forever.

Because of its nature, my case received a great deal of media attention, and people all over Vermont whom I had never met were aware of the violence perpetrated against me. A small part of my story was told by the media. Behind these headlines, another story was unfolding in my personal life and in my community, where friends, neighbors and strangers reacted to what had happened, provided me with support in many small yet meaningful ways, and showed me that my community was a place not only of potential danger but also of opportunities for connections and activism I had never imagined before.

It all began on June 19, 1992 while driving down the road in a 1977 Ford Thunderbird late at night. I realized I had a flat tire. I pulled into a well lit parking lot under a giant maple tree to examine it further. I knew that changing a flat on this big rig would be difficult if not impossible for me. Soon a man I had briefly met earlier that night pulled in alongside my car. This man, who also resided in the same small town as I, kidnapped, raped, and beat me, then left me in a remote wilderness area to die. Fortunately, I was rescued by five teenagers who were camped less than 1/10 of a mile from where he left me.

I was first taken to the local hospital where my injuries were stabilized and a caring detective gathered information to begin his investigation. I was then transported to a hospital which specialized in severe trauma. Although I was surrounded by medical professionals and my husband, I felt intense fear, knowing that the man still roamed free and would most likely seek me out to finish the job he thought he had completed, that of killing me. The hospital, working with the police, decided to hide my true identity. While this offered some comfort, it also made it difficult for friends and caring individuals to locate me. Due to the quick response by law enforcement and those in my community whom the detective was able to interview within 24 hours of the assault, the police apprehended this man on the 4th day.
My Community Responds

My community truly reflects the meaning of the word community rejoicing together, celebrating triumphs together and mourning losses together. At the time I was kidnapped, sexually assaulted and almost murdered, my community was shocked and angered at the idea that violent crime could occur in our rural valley. They sprang into action, providing an outpouring of support and commitment to help me and my family to recover from this trauma.

For starters, several family members and close friends came to visit me in the hospital. I recall my mother-in-law, along with my husband, sitting by my bedside every day and night. I can still recall the day my former supervisor came to visit. He brought big, red, juicy, delicious, strawberries. These strawberries were the first solid food I ate after I was taken off intravenous fluids. Another friend of ours came with his guitar and played some soothing music. I also received visits from a victim advocate. She provided me with information and a listening ear.

Upon being released from the hospital my husband and I realized we could not go back to our home, due to the need to have electricity and running water, essentials that we did not have at the time. In addition, I was afraid to be alone even though I knew the offender was in jail and would not be released on bail. We stayed with a friend of ours for a week and then moved to another friend’s house, and I slowly gained the ability to be alone for brief periods of time. Due to the severe head injury my days were spent sleeping, and going to physical therapy and counseling. Several of our friends took turns driving me to these appointments.

My friends and community members hosted a fund-raiser to help with my medical costs, which were astronomical even with health insurance and assistance from Vermont’s Victim Compensation Program. Unable to keep my job as a canoe guide, I was also unemployed for six months while I recuperated. In the early fall my friends and fellow community members organized a work party to help us bring in wood and complete other fall chores.

It was also during this time that the criminal justice system began to turn its wheels. Friends and fellow community members attended hearings on our behalf, and when the day came for the final hearing I recall walking into a packed courtroom. On one side of the room sat newspaper and television reporters, with their cameras and pens rolling. Again, part of my story would be told to a broad audience. Present also in the courtroom were people who supported me, members of my community, people who worked on my case, my attacker’s family and courtroom security. To feel safe I surrounded myself with family members and good friends, took a deep breath and entered this room. My attacker sat in shackles and chains at the defense table twenty feet in front of me.

After listening to testimony from prosecution and defense witnesses it was my turn. I answered questions from the prosecutor and defense attorney and read a statement that I had written about the effects that this traumatic event had on my life, drawing strength and courage from all the supportive family and friends in the courtroom that day. When the judge announced a sentence that was half as long as that recommended by the prosecutor and the parole board, I was not alone in feeling shock and disappointment. To this day I can recall the silence in that courtroom, the kind where one could hear a pin drop.

The Past Years

Since 1992 my family and I continue to receive support from this community. On the first year anniversary of my assault, four of the five teenagers who rescued me came to visit and together we planted an apple tree in my front yard. Many years later the tree bore five apples representing the five teenagers.

In 1994, wanting to return to college and learning that the local church offered scholarships for books, I contacted Pastor Dave. I recall that I declined his invitation to talk in his office due to fear of being alone with a male. However, this connection opened a door to speak about my assault and how my faith had been shattered. Pastor Dave and I spent the next few years discussing the role that faith can have in healing from violent crime.

On the fifth anniversary of my assault, Pastor Dave and I traveled together to the spot where I had been left for dead and conducted a small ceremony which included planting perennials as a way to reclaim this place that once held for me only trauma. In 2002, I shared the story of my new life born out of the ashes of violence with the entire church congregation.

Also in 2002, I rallied my friends and local community members to plan and organize an event we called Come Unite. Concerned about the future release and parole of the man who assaulted me, we hosted this event to heighten the local community’s awareness about violent sex offenders and their release and re-entry into society. At the time, Vermont had not yet posted its sex offender registry on the internet to broaden public access.
to information about convicted violent sex offenders.

Explaining that I could not live in a community with a man who had tried to kill me, I asked fellow community members to unite and work together to prevent my offender from being returned to this community. I then went one step further and asked them to help the community to which he might be released, by raising their awareness of notification and safety issues.

My experiences show how a community can build safety nets for all of its victims and survivors. Having worked as an advocate with other survivors, I am well aware that communities rarely come together to support survivors in the way mine did for me. While some acts of violent crime inspire community outrage, most go almost unnoticed; victims are largely unsupported in their communities and often are not believed or are seen as partially to blame for what was done to them.

There is a role for each community member to play in looking out for her/his neighbors, asking what a victim/survivor needs and building collaborative relationships to meet those needs. It is only by working together that we can achieve a true sense of safety. While we may not live in a safe and trusting world, we can support each other, we can mobilize and form partnerships, we can educate our youth, and we can create positive change. As Margaret Mead said, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

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**I Am a Survivor**

The man I fell in love with was not a very handsome man, but whoa, could he make me feel like the most beautiful and special woman in the world. It sure didn’t take long for the controlling behavior to start. Then the sexual abuse started. I knew that this was not okay. I was raped when I was 15 years old also. Then came the begging for forgiveness, and the caring, loving man I knew was back again. Happy once again --- for awhile anyway.

I started going to battered women’s meetings. I was so scared, but they assured me that everything I was feeling was normal and okay. Me? Normal? After what had happened to me and what I had put up with? That didn’t make any sense. I eventually came to realize that I was not the only one that felt ashamed and I sure was nowhere near alone in this. It took me a few times of going back again, before I finally got the courage and believed in myself enough to end it.

Now it has been over five years and I have not seen, nor have I spoken to him. I am married to a terrific man and I finally have a great life. Not that I still don’t look for those red flags in everyone I meet, but I believe that is something that will always be with me. It is how I protect myself. Battered Women’s saved my soul, my sanity, my life.

**A Love Story**

Man hater, they call us man haters. I don’t hate men. I hate beating. I hate rape. I hate the years of pain and loneliness that fill your soul when someone you trust — dad, brother, son, uncle, friend, husband, boyfriend — violates the core of your being because we as a society have taught them that it is an acceptable act.

Eve Ensler said “Rape is not the core reality that women should spend their energy surviving.” We deserve to be part of this global community as proactive contributors, rather than survivors reacting. When I think of what I could do with my life if my first memory was not of the bruises on my mother that were larger than my head, wider than my foot was long, and as colorful as rainbows, I am saddened and shocked by the potential impact that I could have made on the world. When I try to imagine how I might use my body if my first realization that my body was being used had not been that someone’s hands were hurting my small and bare vagina, I am both frustrated and intrigued.

I do not hate men. To the contrary, I love men, several of them with a passion so great that it gives meaning to my days. I have the great privilege to know great men, to know men whose gentility, kindness and strength go hand in hand with their respect for each
and every being they meet. These men have given me such gifts, such strength to go on, and hope for our world.

I do also love men so flawed, so ill-taught that they hurt me, themselves and many that they meet. I love some of them with such passion that I simply find it crushing how unlikely it is that they will change. I pray each day for them to recognize what they do to my mother, my niece, my sister-in-law, me, but I know that even if they do see it, they are facing a lifetime of beliefs and values to change it. I am so sad that this is what they face. I know that on some level they are more robbed than any of us by their action.

I am not a man hater. As Houston Baker says “Violence against women is not a women's problem. It is a problem for women, but it is not a women’s problem.” I want the men of this world to stand up and recognize how destructive this constant course of pain infliction is on our collective consciousness. I believe they can. I believe in men, and I love them.

My Turn: A Thought for My Michelle

Because of the numerous times I have unexpectedly felt a punch in the stomach at the sight of the cover of the Burlington Free Press, and because of the fact that my heart jumps in my chest at the thought of walking anywhere alone after sundown, I need to express love and forgiveness before the death of my beautiful friend stagnates to little more than a story from page 1A. I suppose no news is good news, and I suppose that my lady is not news at all, though her untimely murder trial is. Just when I think that the world has forgotten her name, there it is, staring back at me from a depressing front page story. Well, her name might be spelled right, but the Free Press is overlooking a crucial element: my friend Michelle is not there to stand by her name. News-worthy or not, Michelle Gardner-Quinn was your neighbor, the girl you bumped elbows with at the farmers' market, and the pedestrian you let cross at that crosswalk; she finally made it to live here in Vermont and her love still emanates from every blade of grass.

She used to snort a little bit when you got her laughing too hard (which was all the time). Her big brown eyes would sparkle when you got her talking about something she cared about – why she was vegan, the foreign countries she had lived in, her favorite books. She rode her bicycle everywhere and was the proud founder of a “biker gang”. Until you knew Michelle she was soft spoken and shy, yet at the same time she was assertive, strong-willed, and as invincible as 21 year olds tend to be (I love you, I love life, won’t we always?) Sometimes she would pull her hair into this funny little bun on top of her head when she got her hands dirty – on the Long Trail or in the garden – and I still second guess myself on some late nights at the UVM library when I am sitting near a tall brunette with a silly-looking bun. She was a passionate environmentalist and a good friend, someone with whom you wanted to share poetry, make (vegan) sushi, and do impromptu yoga, even if it was 2 in the morning. Her sharp mind, her warm spirit, and her eternal optimism continue to move me long after the second birthday in a row she did not get to spend here.

I forgive the despicable human being who hurt her and left her in the Huntington Gorge. I can only imagine the horrors someone must have lived through to want to kill someone. I am sorry that in his sick mind, my friend had to go. But I still fear him; I still walk the streets of this town (always with company) expecting a man like him to pounce. I do not fear a murder trial moving to Rutland; I fear little boys who grow up thinking it is okay to kill someone.

Some people get the chance to reach for dreams. Some get to watch their children grow. Some have that time, but most don’t know when theirs is up, or where it goes. So remember your neighbor Michelle, who had a long journey for her 21 years before she made it here. She lived in Brazil and South Africa and hailed from just outside of Washington DC. She was not a passer-by, and the murder trial following her death is not just a story. She once lived here and she wanted to change the world.
Following are brief excerpts of what a few advocates and organizations across the state are doing in response to high profile media cases in their communities.

Letter to the Editor

Voices Against Violence, St. Albans

After the murder of Gwen Gallup by her estranged husband the community was stunned because no one had known about the abuse Gwen endured for years... As a community we must be willing to acknowledge the pervasiveness of violence and commit to working together towards ending violence ... every day of every year.

Letter to the Editor

Battered Women’s Services & Shelter, Barre

[W]omen often do leave abusive relationships. They leave every day. However, leaving often significantly increases the level of danger ...

[T]he Thetford woman who was brutally attacked by her estranged husband is one recent example... she was in the process of getting a divorce and her husband believed that she was seeing another man, so he went to her home, with a baseball bat and proceeded to break her arm and pour lye over her body...

Women’s Rape Crisis Center, Burlington

We responded to a shaken and shocked community after the murders of both Laura Winterbottom and Michelle Gardner Quinn. Throughout all of our outreach efforts we have attempted to re-focus the dialogue. Inevitably, reporters will ask the age old question “what can women do to stay safe?” and time and time again, WRCC has responded by shifting the focus to the perpetrator and to the community as a whole. We ask the questions “Why did he do this?”, “Why was someone with such a long history of violence against women out on the streets?”, and “What can we do as a community to stop this from happening again?”
Barbara Whitchurch
Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services

[T]he Victim Assistance Program provides direct services to victims through the Victim Advocates in the Attorney General’s and State’s Attorney’s offices. They guide victims through the criminal justice process and provide information on the status of court cases, explain the court process, notify them of hearings, prepare them to testify, assist them in completing victim impact statements ...

In high-profile cases, Victim Advocates have offered special assistance to victims and their families. They have taken them to the crime scene, helped them read the autopsy report, walked the route with them that their loved one last walked. Additionally, they act as a buffer with the media by helping victims and families prepare a written statement for the media or even speaking to the media for them. Advocates can help family members understand that they have no obligation at this point beyond coping with the trauma.

Letter to the Editor
Safeline, Chelsea

The community of Bradford is very much in our thoughts in the wake of the multiple child sexual abuse and child pornography charges filed against Richard Foster, a longtime teacher and community member. Although some children are sexually assaulted by a stranger, in 90% of child sexual abuse cases, children are sexually assaulted by someone known to them, usually by someone they trust.

[If] any parent reading this has any questions or concerns and does not know where to turn---or if these incidents have brought up memories of your own abuse, please call Safeline -- You are not alone...

Nika Graci
Safeline, Chelsea

I was invited by the Post Mills Congregational Church to be part of a healing service dedicated to a Thetford woman who was brutally attacked by her estranged husband. Following the service I facilitated a meeting about domestic violence. Community members, supporters from surrounding congregations, friends of the woman and the Chief of the Thetford Police gathered in the historic church... I believe that we all came to understand that we had become part of the solution.... It takes a community to end domestic violence.

Letter to the Editor
WomenSafe, Middlebury

[A]ll victims of sexual assault, both women and men, deserve the right to confidentiality... Social stigma surrounding rape continues to keep it underreported, and thus, hidden. When a victim decides to report the crime it is often a difficult decision in which she must weigh the benefit of seeking justice and helping to protect others against the potential risk to ones own safety and well being.

Letter to the Editor
WomenSafe, Middlebury

[When] media attention overly focuses on rape cases in which possible false reporting has occurred, this perpetuates the social misperception that false reporting is a common event. The most commonly cited false accusation rate hovers around 2 %... Also, it should be stressed that a not guilty conviction is neither exoneration nor false reporting necessarily, but a legal decision based on the available evidence...

Amy Holloway
Vermont Department of Corrections

Over the last year we have been actively involved... in the release of high risk sex offenders. Recognizing the need to provide greater supports to victims as well as the offenders who are being released to the community, victim services, caseworkers, local service providers, community members and representatives from local governments are now included in the release planning process.

[B]efore any releases are made, key staff members meet to identify who is being released, where they are being released to, who needs to be involved in the release planning process and to follow up on any special victim safety issues and needs.
by Assistant Attorney General Amy S. FitzGerald, Chair of the Commission

Since 2002, the Commission has conducted in-depth reviews of domestic violence fatalities. In the reviews, Commissioners hear from a variety of witnesses including surviving family members, co-workers, friends, social service providers, advocates, state agency employees, law enforcement and prosecutors. We also review documents provided by government agencies and families.

After completing the case reviews, the Commission makes recommendations reflecting issues common to cases. We identify relevant professions and agencies that may be able to incorporate our recommendations in their practices and protocols.

In no way does the Commission intend to imply that any agency or policy is responsible directly or indirectly for these deaths. The goal of the Commission is to increase the safety of all Vermonters, not to assign blame.

Many agencies, non-profit organizations and individuals have engaged in substantial work to improve the community-based response to domestic violence. For example, the Commission in its 2007 recommendations addressed the problem of educating bystanders and witnesses to domestic violence, given the nature of the 2006 data and the two in-depth case reviews the Commission conducted. Following up, the Commission and many of our partners planned a statewide conference entitled “Before It’s Too Late: Taking Action to Prevent Domestic Violence Homicides in Vermont Communities.” (see box on next page for more details)

2007 was a particularly tragic year in Vermont. In one week there were four incidents of homicide and suicide that resulted in six adult deaths and seven children losing a parent. During the whole of 2007, 7 children witnessed their parents’ deaths or the aftermath, with one five-year-old child discovering the murder-suicide of the child’s mother and her partner.

There were 11 homicides of adults, 7 of which were domestic violence related as defined by the Commission and there were an additional three domestic violence related suicides. 71% of the domestic violence related deaths were committed with firearms. The homicides this year also included a bystander who was stabbed and killed coming to the aid of a friend being assaulted by an intimate partner.

The Commission asks all Vermonters to review our reports and provide us with comments and suggestions as we continue to study the trends and patterns of domestic violence fatalities. The Commission encourages community members to refer cases for the Commission to review. Please join us in our efforts to make Vermont communities safer.

The goal of the Commission is to act as a catalyst for efforts to improve Vermont’s communities and together to prevent future fatalities. We thank all of our partners for their conscientious efforts.

Amy S. FitzGerald can be reached at afitzgerald@atg.state.vt.us or 802-828-5520. Copies of Vermont’s Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission Reports are posted at www.state.vt.us/atg in the Domestic Violence and Report section.
The work is underway on the Vermont Approach’s Sexual Violence Prevention Plan that was introduced two years ago, and the Vermont Network is pleased to be a part of this work. One of the strategy teams is the Changing Media Representations Committee which started meeting in January. The committee is charged with changing media representations by creating media partners; carrying out media campaigns; promoting media literacy that addresses sexual violence; changing images of explicit, sexualized violence in advertising and entertainment; changing representations that objectify and exploit people’s identities; and spreading transformative messages. No small task!

The committee has engaged experts from across the state with knowledge in journalism, media studies, research, public health, media literacy, democracy and the media, violence against women and girls, film, television, radio production, e-business management, social networking, and marketing. Currently the committee is defining the problem and potential actions to take while looking across all levels of prevention. We are working on a grant to study the effects of language used in the media and are looking at existing research. We are quickly realizing how pervasive our media exposure is. Everywhere we turn media is conveying a story to us. What do we think of these stories, how do we change the ones that we think are harmful and replace these messages with new ones that promote prevention and safety? This is our work and we welcome your input. Bethany Pombar bethany@vtnetwork.org and Sharon Lamb slamb@smcvt.edu are the co-chairs of this committee.

If you would like more information on the Vermont Approach contact Anne Liske, Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator for the Anti-Violence Partnership at the University of Vermont at Anne.Liske@uvm.edu.

Before It’s Too Late: Taking Action to Prevent Domestic Violence Homicides in Vermont Communities

Collaborators are joining together on June 9th in Killington to present this one day conference. Many of us come in contact with perpetrators of domestic violence everyday. What do we do? How can we help the victim? What is safe? This conference will address these issues and give participants tools to intervene and help prevent ongoing violence.

Presenters will include:
• Neil Websdale, Ph.D on Fatality Review: the State of the Art
• David Adams, E.D.D, on Profile of Killers: Intelligence on Men Who Murder Their Intimate Partners, and
• Bobby Eckstein, with Bringing in the Bystander: Applying Bystander Intervention Strategies Towards the Prevention of Domestic Violence

This conference is being planned by the Vermont’s Domestic Violence Fatality Review Commission along with the Vermont Attorney General’s Office, the Vermont Council on Domestic Violence, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services, The Vermont Department of Health and the Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Contact Bethany Pombar at bethany@vtnetwork.org for more information.
**NEW AT THE NETWORK LIBRARY**

To become a member of the Network Library contact Alex: library@vtnetwork.org

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**Ryan’s Story**  
© 2007 Safe Passage Media

This 50-minute DVD is a bullying prevention program for grades 6-12. It is formulated around the story of Ryan Patrick Halligan’s suicide at age 13 and the bullying at school and on the Internet that he endured.

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**What You May Not Know**  
© 2007 Safe Passage Media

This 25-minute DVD is the story of John and Kelly Halligan. When they lost their 13 year-old Ryan to suicide they wondered how and why the warning signs escaped their attention. Ryan had been a victim of repeated bullying at school and on the Internet and yet he appeared to be the usual happy-go-lucky boy.

John embarked on a long journey to learn what drove his son to such a desperate act. He roamed the same dark back roads of cyberspace where Ryan had wandered – unfamiliar places for most parents. He uncovered the brutal ways children use the Internet to intimidate and humiliate one another, often without fully understanding the consequences of their actions…John became instrumental in getting bullying and suicide prevention laws enacted in Vermont.

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**Dreamworlds 3**  
© MEF

Sut Jhally has written and directed this 35-minute DVD that examinees the stories contemporary music videos tell about girls and women. It encourages viewers to consider how these narratives shape individual and cultural attitudes about sexuality. Please be aware that viewer discretion is advised due to violence and sexual imagery.

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“I Want a 24-hour Truce During Which There Is No Rape.”  
— Andrea Dworkin

(excerpt from the Midwest Regional Conference of the National Organization for Changing Men 1983)

As a feminist, I carry the rape of all the women I’ve talked to over the past ten years personally with me. As a woman, I carry my own rape with me. Do you remember pictures that you’ve seen of European cities during the plague, when there were wheelbarrows that would go along and people would just pick up corpses and throw them in? Well, that is what it is like knowing about rape. Piles and piles and piles of bodies that have whole lives and human names and human faces.

I speak for many feminists, not only myself, when I tell you that I am tired of what I know and sad beyond any words I have about what has already been done to women up to this point, now, up to 2:24 p.m. on this day, here in this place.

And I want one day of respite, one day off, one day in which no new bodies are piled up, one day in which no new agony is added to the old, and I am asking you to give it to me. And how could I ask you for less—it is so little. And how could you offer me less: it is so little. Even in wars, there are days of truce. Go and organize a truce. Stop your side for one day. I want a twenty-four-hour truce during which there is no rape.

I dare you to try it. I demand that you try it. I don’t mind begging you to try it. What else could you possibly be here to do? What else could this movement possibly mean? What else could matter so much?

And on that day, that day of truce, that day when not one woman is raped, we will begin the real practice of equality, because we can’t begin it before that day. Before that day it means nothing because it is nothing: it is not real; it is not true. But on that day it becomes real. And then, instead of rape we will for the first time in our lives—both men and women—begin to experience freedom. If you have a conception of freedom that includes the existence of rape, you are wrong. You cannot change what you say you want to change. For myself, I want to experience just one day of real freedom before I die. I leave you here to do that for me and for the women whom you say you love.”
Vermont Network Member Programs

AWARE
P.O. Box 307
Hardwick, VT 05843
Hotline: (802) 472.6463

Battered Women’s Services and Shelter* (BWSS)
P.O. Box 652
Barre, VT 05641
Hotline: 1.877.543.9498

Clarina Howard Nichols Center* (CHNC)
P.O. Box 517
Morrisville, VT 05661
Hotline: (802) 888.5256

NEKCA Step ONE
273 Main Street #1
Newport, VT 05855
Hotline: 1.800.224.7837

New Beginnings
23 Pleasant Street
Springfield, VT 05156
Hotline: (802) 885.2050 or (802) 674.6700

PAVE (Project Against Violent Encounters)
P. O. Box 227
Bennington, VT 05201
Hotline: (802) 442.2111

Rutland County Women’s Network & Shelter*
P. O. Box 313
Rutland, VT 05701
Hotline: (802) 775.3232

Safeline
P.O. Box 368
Chelsea, VT 05038
Hotline: 1.800.639.7233

Sexual Assault Crisis Team *(SACT)
4 Cottage Street
Barre, VT 05641
Hotline: (802) 479.5577

The Advocacy Program at Umbrella
1222 Main Street #301
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
Hotline: (802) 748.8141 or 748.8645

Voices Against Violence *(VAV)
P. O. Box 72
St. Albans, VT 05753
Hotline: (802) 524.6575

WISE*
36 Bank Street
Lebanon, NH 03766
Crisis Line: (603) 448.5525 or 1.866.348.WISE

Women Helping Battered Women* (WHBW)
P. O. Box 1535
Burlington, VT 05402
Hotline: (802) 658.1996 (also the TTY#)

Women’s Crisis Center* (WCC)
P. O. Box 92
Brattleboro, VT 05302
Hotline: (802) 254.6954 or 1.800.773.0689

Women’s Rape Crisis Center (WRCC)
P. O. Box 92
Burlington, VT 05402
Hotline: (802) 863.1236 or 1.800.773.0689
TTY: (802) 846.2544

WomenSafe
P. O. Box 67
Middlebury, VT 05753
Hotline: (802) 388.4205 or 1.800.388.4205
TTY: (802) 388.4305

* represents Programs with shelters

Statewide Hotlines
[Will connect you with closest local Program]
For SEXUAL ASSAULT 1.800.489.7273
For DOMESTIC VIOLENCE 1.800.228.7395