

## A victim tells her story

By JACKIE KLEIN

A suspect, posing as a newspaper carrier, attempts to break into a Southfield home. He's frightened away by the family dog.

Less than 30 minutes later, a man matching the suspect's description forces his way into another home in the area and tries to sexually assault a 22-year-old woman. The man runs away when he's confronted by the woman's mother.

These incidents happened in Southfield last year. In this case, the would-

**'I frantically called the police department and asked why they let the rapist go. That's the procedure, I was told.'**

— A rape victim

be rapist was arrested and convicted. But others in the city aren't as lucky as these near victims. A woman, lying down for an afternoon nap, was sex-

ually abused by a masked man who entered her home. A female office worker was raped in the parking lot when she left the building.

The hot seat which awaited the one of 10 rape victims who pressed charges cooled off a little when new legislation went into effect in Michigan about four years ago.

AUTHORS OF the bill said they hoped elimination of courtroom questioning about prior sexual conduct would encourage victims to report rapes.

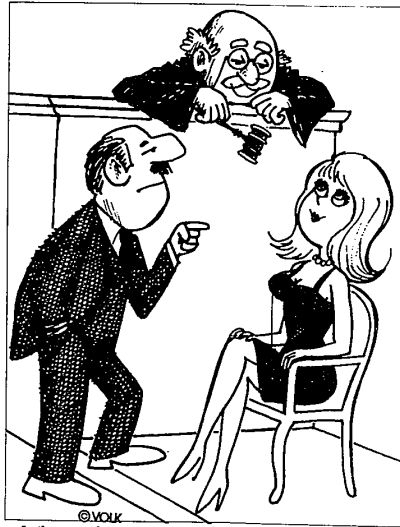
The law focuses attention on coercion used by the defendant. Under the old law, passed in 1973, attention often centered on the extent of the victim's resistance. It required a woman to "resist to the utmost."

One Southfield attorney said many jurors, especially men, figure if the victim survived the rape, she hadn't resisted enough. Under the current law, sexual assault need not involve the actual use of force. Threats of force or retaliation are enough to support a guilty verdict.

But the wheels of justice grind exceedingly slowly in many rape cases. One Southfield woman, three years ago, told her story in painful court testimony. The alleged assailant, a prominent businessman, denied the charges and a decision is yet to be made in the case.

The act of rape didn't happen here, the woman testified. It was in a new neighborhood in Oakland County where the victim met her assailant.

"I was introduced to this man by a friend who lived near his house," the woman said. "He asked if he could see me again and I agreed. Two weeks



In the eyes of some attorneys and judges, rape victims are sexy ladies who tempt their fate. Under old rape laws, victims had to prove they strongly resisted their attackers.

later, he picked me up for a date. He said we were going to a bar for a few drinks.

"I CHANGED into a red turtleneck shirt and a jumper that zipped in the back. We went to the bar. I told the man I had to get home, but he drove to a deserted site. He stopped the car, grabbed me and started smothering me with kisses. The more I pushed

him away, the more persistent he became.

"He became angry and pushed me down toward the steering wheel. 'Oh my God,' I thought, 'he's going to rape me.' He couldn't get my jumper off, so he began ripping the front of it. I began to scream and beg him to please let me go. It was hopeless.

"He became crazier and crazier and I hit him in the face with my fists. He swore and I saw his fist come at me. I

turned away and he cuffed the edge of my chin. Now I was afraid for my life. "I kept screaming and pushing at him. My brain made sudden waves. I must make sure when they find me dead that I've got his hair, his skin, his blood and, oh yes, my ring's in his car. I beat the horn and each time I hit it, he grabbed my arm to tuck it under me. 'Please, God, help me.' I screamed over and over again.

"Just when it seemed my strength had given out and I was doomed, I saw flashers reflecting around the car. The next thing I knew, the police busted open his side of the door and pulled him off me. Another officer gently helped me out of the car. I was shaking and crying hysterically.

"AT THE police station, they gave me coffee and a dress to put on. Then they took me to the hospital. I had a sperm count and nothing more. When I came home and called my doctor, he was shocked that I hadn't been given a penicillin or hormone shot or a morning-after pill to prevent pregnancy.

"I was handed a sheet of paper after I got out of the hospital. I had to make a statement in my own words and my hand was still shaking.

"They let my attacker go the next morning, perhaps to mingle with witnesses, get a lawyer and work out a deal to protect himself. I wasn't sure I was protected from him, and I frantically called the police department and asked why they let the rapist go.

"Police told me they warned my attacker not to come near me or bother me and he would appear in court. That's the procedure, I was told.

"I was told to take a polygraph test. Four police officers saw my attacker in the act of rape. A neighborhood was aroused by my horn blowing. Yet I was suspected of lying."

The alleged assailant could be convicted of second-degree sexual assault, a felony with a maximum sentence of 15 years. The charge refers to sexual contact rather than penetration. But the victim, who has since moved from Southfield, said she is sure her "attacker" will get off free. "That's the procedure," she said with a sigh.



### Chase ends

This is the result of a high-speed police chase from Detroit to Southfield at dawn last Wednesday. The man on the stretcher is Detroit police officer Clarence Nunn. He was injured at the end of a chase at Southfield and Eleven Mile roads. A Southfield police officer blocked the getaway car which ran through a red light and struck Nunn's scout car, police said. The suspect was arrested for fleeing police and violating traffic signals. (Photo by Ira Strickstein)

## Volunteers sought for Torch Drive

Volunteers are now being recruited for the United Foundation's 1978 Torch Drive community campaign in Southfield and Berkley.

People interested in helping by organizing campaign workers to distribute Torch Drive literature in their own neighborhoods should call the United Foundation office at 616-3096. The 1978 Torch Drive, which will run from Oct. 17 through Nov. 9, will raise operating funds for nearly 137 health

and community service organizations in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties.

General chairman for this year's campaign is Arthur R. Seder, Jr., chairman and president of American Natural Resources Company.

Community campaign region chairman for southeast Oakland County is Dorothy Fleck of Lathrup Village. Last year's Torch Drive raised \$42.6 million.

For information, call 779-1490.

### PWP slates region meet

The Eastern Michigan Regional Council of Parents Without Partners will have a quarterly meeting at the Troy Hilton Hotel.

Opening the two-day event will be a 9 p.m. dance Friday. The general public may attend.

Saturday events planned include the general business meeting, leadership

workshops, and an awards banquet and ball. Current courtesy cards or membership cards are required for admission to the Saturday dance.

PWP is an educational non-profit organization dedicated to the betterment of the lives and families of the single parent.

For information, call 779-1490.

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