

Summit Explores Dangers of Date Rape Drugs

By Colleen De Baise
CPS

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. — Their arms feel like jelly. Their legs feel like they're filled with sand.

Sometimes there are brief moments of consciousness, flashes of horrified awareness. But for the most part, victims of date rape drugs can't remember the attack or their attackers.

Nor can they ever forget. In a growing number of rape cases reported on college campuses, the weapon used to overpower victims is drugs, such as Rohypnol or GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate). When hidden in a drink, the odorless, tasteless drugs are often undetectable. The drugs make victims not only powerless to resist a sexual assault, but incapable of remembering what has happened to them.

"One of our victims said, 'I'd rather have the nightmare,'" said Gail Abarbanel, director of the rape treatment center at Santa Monica-UCLA, in remarks at an emergency campus summit on date rape drugs, held Jan. 26 in Springfield, Ill.

Hundreds of educators, counselors and law officials gathered at the one-day summit to share information on the drugs and ways to combat their use.

Illinois Attorney General Jim Ryan called the statewide meeting after three men from DeKalb, Ill. — home of Northern Illinois University — were indicted in December on charges of dealing GHB.

In a separate case, two Chicago-area men were charged in January with possession of GHB after more than six gallons of the drug was found in their home.

GHB is a powerful synthetic drug once widely promoted for body building. The drug, often home-brewed, can cause dizziness, drowsiness, vomiting, seizures and memory loss. Rohypnol, available as an over-the-counter sedative in other countries,

can cause drowsiness, confusion, impaired motor skills and unconsciousness.

Both drugs, when mixed with alcohol or other drugs, can cause death. Some students ingest the drugs themselves to get a quick high; others use them as a means of incapacitating their victims.

"They're very dangerous to consume and they're very dangerous when used as weapons against women," Ryan said.

Law enforcement officials are alarmed at the ease at which the drugs are available. Recipes for GHB, for instance, are scattered over the Internet, according to Illinois State Police Director Terry Gainer.

"Is it a little insulting that we have to have a summit on date rape drugs, that somehow the college student who sits in a philosophy class on Thursday is dropping a drug into our daughters' drinks on Friday?" Gainer said.

Unlike other drugs, GHB is easily formed by mixing together household products and a chemical sold at photography stores. The drug is linked to a growing number of rapes and robberies; in Chicago, police investigate GHB-related crimes weekly, Gainer said.

"There are strong laws on the books that will help us prosecute and lock these individuals up," he said.

Under federal law, the penalty for possession of Rohypnol is now the same as other controlled substances such as cocaine, LSD and heroine. The maximum punishment is a 20-year prison sentence.

That's not the case for GHB. While it is illegal to sell GHB, it is not illegal under federal law to possess or use the drug. The maximum penalty for selling the drug is imprisonment for less than one year.

Some states, however, have stiffened the penalties for GHB possession. In Illinois, for instance, possession of more than 200 grams of GHB with the intent to sell the drug carries

a punishment of up to 30 years in prison.

In cases where the drugs are used in conjunction with rapes, prosecutors have been frustrated with the lack of evidence needed for conviction. Date rape drugs are hard to trace because they leave the system quickly, in six to eight hours.

At the summit, university officials expressed their concern that the drugs may be circulating on their campuses.

Northern Illinois University officials say they are particularly worried given the recent arrests in DeKalb. One student has reported that she was given GHB at a fraternity party last November and subsequently raped, said Kathy Swanson, assistant to the president at NIU.

That case is under investigation. Meanwhile, the university has started a campaign against the drugs that includes posters in dormitories, Greek houses and bars.

"We feel even one incidence of GHB in conjunction with a rape is one too many," Swanson said.

But many students are still unaware of the drugs or their potential danger, according to a university survey conducted last year. Only 16 percent said they had ever heard of the drugs.

"I would not describe the atmosphere as one of fear," said Melanie Magara, a NIU spokesperson.

College students who attended the summit agreed, saying they hoped education campaigns would further awareness and help victims come forward.

"Students need to be more aware," said Lori Torigan, a senior resident assistant at Millikin University in Decatur, Ill. "I hope to take [this information] back to my residents as well as other students on campus."

Connie Hall, also a resident adviser at Millikin, said students are slowly beginning to realize the extent of the problem with date rape drugs.

"Students know what it is and that it does happen. We're getting more

aware of it and that's why I think our job is important," said Hall, a junior.

She would like to organize something similar to the summit on her campus. The best way she has been able to protect herself from sexual assault and date rape drugs, she said, is by learning as much about the problem as possible.

"Being educated got rid of the fear and gave me caution," she said.

In terms of prevention, the rape treatment center at Santa Monica-UCLA advises students to watch out for their friends when attending parties, clubs or bars.

Friends who appear intoxicated or get sick after drinking should be escorted home or receive medical attention, the center says.

Students can watch out for themselves by keeping an eye on their drink. Don't drink beverages that you do not open yourself, don't share drinks, don't drink from a punch bowl, and don't accept a drink from someone unless you watch the drink being poured at the bar, the center says.

Students who believe they may have been given a date rape drug should do the following, the center advises:

- Get to a safe place.
- Ask a trusted friend to stay with you

- Call the police.
- Go to a hospital as soon as possible. Ask for an examination and evidence collection. Request that the hospital take a urine sample so that drug testing can be done by a crime lab.

- Preserve as much physical evidence as possible. Do not urinate, shower, douche or change your clothes, and keep any other potential evidence, such as the glass that held your drink.

The center also advises victims to call a rape crisis facility for information and support.

Campus news briefs

by College Press Service

Student Sues For The Right To Stink

OSLO, Norway — A man barred from the University of Oslo because of his bad body odor is taking his case to the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, France.

According to news reports, the university prohibited the man from attending in 1981 after students and instructors complained about his strong smell and ragged clothing.

The man, who was studying astrophysics, has lived in a plastic-foam shack for the last 20 years. He claims that his home and his aversion to soap help him achieve a deeper understanding of the science, the Associated Press reported.

The would-be student also says he has a right to stink — an argument that so far hasn't been well received by Norwegian courts. He has lost every case he's filed, but his lawyer, John Christian Elden, said they're prepared to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

Elden said he'll argue that his client is entitled to a private life and an education no matter what he smells like.

University President Keeps His Job Despite Insensitive Remark

GAINESVILLE — Despite rumors that he had been ousted from his job, John Lombardi, president of the University of Florida, won't be leaving after all.

Lombardi, criticized for referring to Chancellor Adam Herbert as "an Oreo — black on the outside and white on the inside," has agreed to be supervised by an oversight committee made up of the university system's board of regents. Lombardi has publicly clashed with regents in the past, which prompted his many supporters — both black and white — to say the governing board was using the insensitive remark as an excuse to get rid of him.

The committee will advise and counsel Lombardi, who has apologized to Herbert and the public on several occasions, on his communication style. Lombardi also has agreed to "put any differences aside to work together on common goals."

Chelsea Believes In Her Dad

CHICAGO — Chelsea Clinton is standing by her man. In this case, her father, who faces allegations that he had an affair with a former White House intern only a few years older than she is.

Or so says the Rev. Jesse Jackson, who, at President Clinton's suggestion, recently spoke over the phone about the crisis with Chelsea.

"She's so sweet, strong and mature beyond her years," Jackson said of the 17-year-old freshman at Stanford University during a broadcast of CNN's "Larry King Live." "She is aware of what's happening and confronting it, and she wants to offer support for her father and mother."

"The very strong ties she has with (her mother) Hillary (Rodham Clinton) and the affection for her father are just very touching," Jackson continued, adding that he thinks Chelsea "totally believes" her father.

"(Chelsea) has grown up in a household of public struggle and confrontation. It's not the first time she's seen her father's name in the negative."

Miniskirts Threaten Thai GPAs

BANGKOK, Thailand — The higher the hemline, the lower the grade point average at Chulalongkorn University.

Instructors at the Bangkok school say they're going to reduce grades by five to 10 points for female students who refuse to cover their legs. University officials barred women from wearing short skirts in December, saying they encourage sexual predators and shatter cultural expectations that Thai women carry themselves with dignity and modesty.

To get their point across, university officials have hung posters around campus showing a salivating crocodile ogling a woman dressed in a miniskirt, the Associated Press reported. "Don't tempt," the posters state, adding that scantily clad women damage the university's reputation.

Old love letters no longer a private matter at Southern Illinois University

By Jason Adrian
Southern Illinois University Daily Egyptian

The love letter might not seem like such a private order of business to people who have seen "He's So Sweet, F***ing A**hole," an art exhibit on display at Southern Illinois University.

Hundreds of mostly handwritten letters are pasted on walls and strewn about the floor. Each is addressed to artist David Lohman, a senior in art and design. They're from several former girlfriends Lohman had between seventh grade and his senior year in high school.

In most letters, the girls express the love they felt for Lohman. A few are actually from the artist himself, asking for dates or sharing his feelings. While visitors wade through the gushing sentimentality and loopy handwriting, an audiotape featuring a collection of recordings several girls made for Lohman plays in the background. Many are singing and reciting poetry. A few actually address such pressing topics as marriage.

The exhibit has stirred controversy among some students, who feel Lohman is exploiting his former girlfriends.

"Obviously, at the time he had these relationships, [Lohman] felt similar to what these girls felt for him," said Angie Southworth, a sophomore in speech communication. "And now it seems like he's making a mockery of it. It's kind of condescending toward — not necessarily just girls — but anyone who has had any feelings like that."

"These girls probably thought it would be just between him and the paper, and now he's displaying it for everyone to see," Southworth continued. "It's like he's saying 'Look what

all these girls felt for me. Ha-ha. Now it's just a piece of art for me.'"

While the exhibit seems awfully callous and narcissistic to some, Lohman said a few of his former girlfriends know about it and aren't offended.

"Of course it's self-indulgent. What art isn't?" Lohman said. "I believe it's very honest and pure. Most shows that are around are afraid to delve into this territory."

"I think it's a good thing for a person to take stock in their past and analyze what they've done wrong and what they've done right. This wasn't meant to be a malicious show."

Along with biting criticism, Lohman is receiving his fair share of praise. A notebook reserved for visitors' comments sits in the center of the exhibit. While many have written about his distasteful judgment, others have applauded the way he's captured a period everyone goes through as they grow up — which, Lohman said, is precisely what the exhibit is about.

"It's a celebration of young love," he said. "That high school feeling that you get with your first crush and your first heartbreak," he said. "It's (about) getting rid of baggage and moving on."

Art and design Professor Joel Feldman said Lohman's use of himself and of his own experience is a step forward for the contemporary art world.

"In contemporary art, artists sometimes choose to use themselves — in a sense of their own bodies or experiences — and take a highly autobiographical approach by using personal experience as a metaphor for society at large or a segment of society at large," he said. "This shows (Lohman) is aware of different contemporary art strategies."

EIU student charged with homicide

(UPI)

CHARLESTON, Ill., Feb. 4 (UPI) — Charleston Police have charged an Eastern Illinois University student in the strangulation slaying of his 18-year-old girlfriend.

Authorities today said Justin J. Boulay, 20, St. Charles, left a note in his apartment indicating that he killed Andrea F. Will, a freshman from Batavia, early Tuesday, apparently because she wanted to end their relationship.

Police said Boulay and Will had been dating and she may have been

Poll: Generation 2001 favors old folks

(UPI)

MILWAUKEE, Feb. 4 (UPI) — A Lou Harris and Associates survey suggests a new era of parental respect — and a lack of it toward Generation Xers — will mark the first generation of young adults in the new millennium.

The survey of more than 2,000 college freshmen also gauged attitudes, fears and dreams of the "Chelsea Clinton class," which graduates in 2001.

Survey conductors labeled the group of 18- and 19-year-olds "Generation 2001."

Survey director Deanna Tillisch says as a group the respondents "show a certain sense and sensibility" coupled with "idealism, optimism and a vision of a better world."

While the survey says freshmen think they have technological and

trying to break up with him.

Officers were called to Boulay's apartment Tuesday and found Will's lifeless body. Boulay reportedly had telephoned his parents in Chicago's northwest Chicago to tell them he was in trouble.

"A note was found at the scene indicating he had killed her," said Charleston Police Lt. Hank Pauls. He said Will appeared to have been strangled and that the Illinois State Police, Eastern Illinois University Police and the Coles County Sheriff's Department were assisting in the homicide investigation.

educational advantages over previous generations, they still look up to the moral integrity and honesty of older folks.

When asked about generational integrity, 68 percent said they trust their parents' age group "a lot" while 79 percent said the same about their grandparents' generation.

Only 19 percent said they have a high level of trust for the Generation X crowd, and only 25 percent feel that way toward their own age group.

Two-thirds of those surveyed said it will be their responsibility to care for elderly parents. And mothers are the most admired by Generation 2001, followed by fathers.

The survey of 2,001 students was conducted at 101 colleges and universities nationwide between Nov. 11 and Jan. 12 for Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co. It has an error margin of plus or minus 2 percent.

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