



“Hunting Ground” opens up discussions on assault

by Hannah Sussman

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“They seemed disappointed more than anything else,” Milne clarified.

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

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

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

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

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

“I think that the video did

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

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

Math teacher Katherine Linsenmeier worked to help advisees have conversations that focused on solutions to the problem.

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

Linsenmeier.

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

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

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

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

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

How to report sexual misconduct at NT

This step-by-step guide outlines the process that a student should expect when reporting sexual misconduct at NT, as outlined by the Student Guidebook

1. The student may speak to any adviser, teacher, administrator, or other staff member about the incident
2. This staff member will then report the concern to the appropriate adviser chair
3. The student will then have a conversation with the Adviser Chair, or the student can also submit a written description of the incident and the outcome desired
4. The adviser chair will conduct interviews with the reporting student, witnesses, and the accused if possible. A formal report will be created and other necessary personnel (i.e. the principal, social workers) will be notified
5. Parents or guardians of the reporting student, the accused, and the witnesses will be notified of the details of the report and of school counseling services
6. Within 10 days of the complaint, if possible, a decision will be made and the reporting student’s and the accused’s parents or guardians will be informed
7. Either party may submit an appeal including any additional information to the assistant principal within 10 days of the adviser chair’s decision
8. Within 15 days, if possible, the assistant principal will deliver a written response to the reporting student and the accused
9. The Superintendent maintains the right to intervene and make final decisions on all matters

REMEMBER

Regardless of whether the incident took place on school grounds or not, if the student affected is feeling an impact at school, the school can become involved.

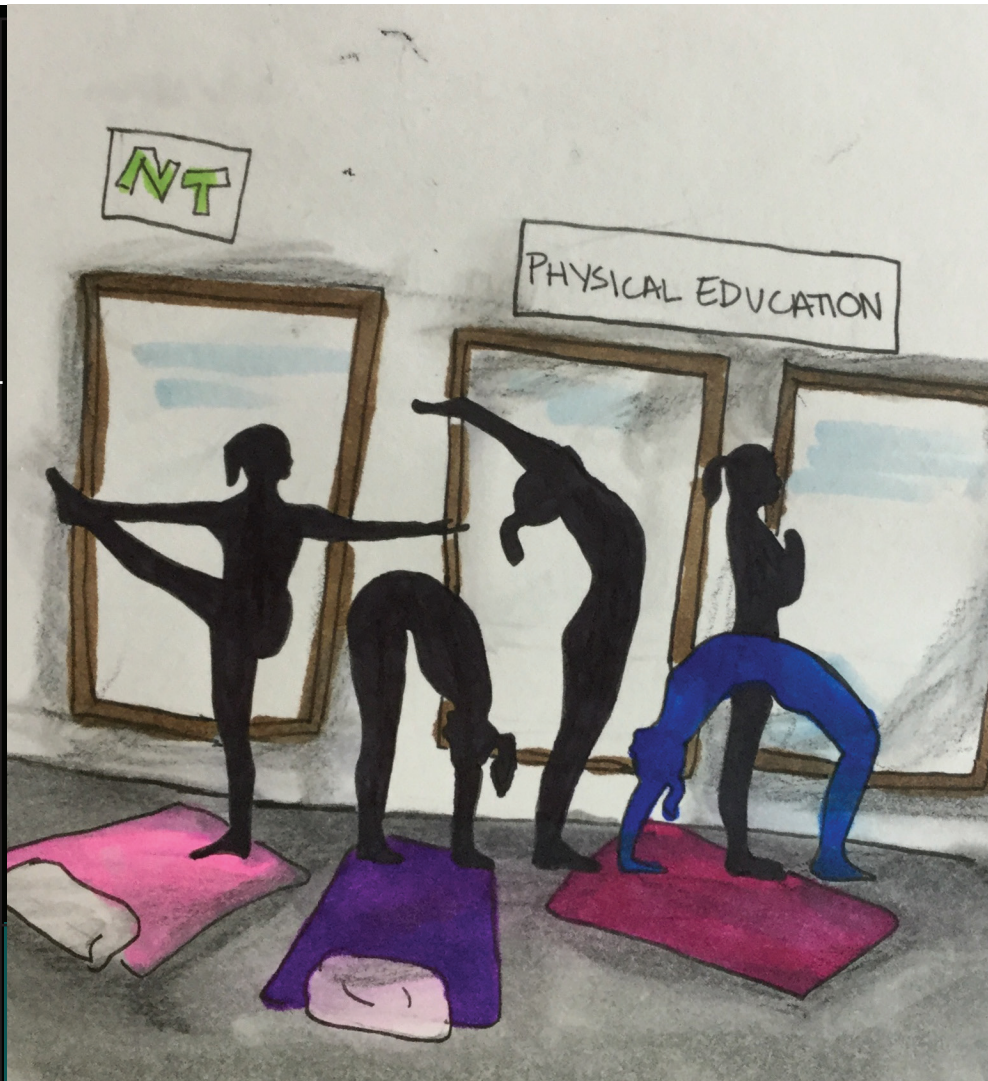
If the accused is not an NT student, the matter will be handled by police if the student and their family choose to engage with the police. The school will make the reporting student’s adviser and staff social workers aware of the incident.

If a sexual assault is reported by a student, no matter where it took place, the Winnetka Police Department will be informed by staff at the Winnetka Campus. If the report comes from a freshman student, the Northfield Police Department will be informed.

Sexual harassment will be reported to the police on a case-by-case basis.

The reporting student will not be informed of the disciplinary actions taken against the accused due to confidentiality.

Social workers are mandated reporters if the student’s safety is at risk. Otherwise, all conversations are confidential.



Liebovich

Fit Female class teaches self-defense skills

by Alex Rubinstein

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

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

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

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

knowing your surroundings.

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

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

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

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

the current climate.

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

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

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

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

“We teach boys and girls self defense, and in

doing so, you are not only helping individuals understand, and protect themselves but stay out of situations.

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

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

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

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

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

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