

Sexual Assault and Alcohol on College Campuses

Below is the transcription of an interview conducted by Dr. David Lisak (Associate Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts, Boston) with “Frank,” a pre-law student. The interview was part of a study in which 1,882 men were interviewed about their relationships and sexual partners. After conducting the interviews, the study focused on 120 of those men who described actions that fit the legal definition of rape. None of those men had ever been prosecuted for their crimes. The study found that most of these men were repeat rapists, responsible for an average of 5.8 rapes each. Though they freely admitted that they’d had sex with unwilling partners, they didn’t consider their actions rape. The 120 rapists were responsible for 1,225 separate acts of personal violence, including rape, battery, child physical abuse, and child sexual abuse.

Frank: We had parties every weekend, that’s what my fraternity was known for. And uh, we’d invite a bunch of girls, lay out a bunch of kegs or whatever we were drinkin’ that night, and everyone would just get plastered. And we’d all invite girls, all of us in the fraternity. You know, we’d be on the look out for the good-looking girls especially the freshmen, the really young ones. They were the easiest. It’s like they didn’t know the ropes kind of, you know, like they were easy prey. And they wouldn’t know anything about drinking or how much alcohol they could handle. So, you know, they wouldn’t know anything about our techniques.

Lisak: And what were those techniques?

Frank: Well we’d invite them to the party. You know, we’d make it seem like it was a real honor, like we didn’t just invite any girl, which I guess in a way is true. You know and then we’d get them drinking right away, we’d have those kegs but we’d also have some kind of punch also, you know, like our own home brew. And we’d make it with a real sweet juice and just pour in all kinds of alcohol. And it was really powerful stuff. The girls wouldn’t know what hit them. They’d all be guzzling it, ya know, because they were freshman, kind of nervous. And it was just juice anyway right?

Lisak: Well, when you say it was just juice, you mean the girls wouldn’t know that it was spiked with alcohol?

Frank: Well, they knew. I mean they knew that. At least the smart ones did. I mean it was a party right? Not some, you know, like social tea. I think they must have known. Most of them did anyone. The ones who didn’t had to have been really naïve.

Lisak: Well did you count on them being naïve?

Frank: Yeah, the real young ones. The naïve ones were the easiest. And they'd be the ones that we'd target.

Lisak: What do you mean by target?

Frank: Well that's what we'd call them. You know, we'd all be scouting for targets during the week. You know, we'd pick them out, work them over during the week, then get them all psyched up to come to one of our famous parties. They'd be the ones we'd really work on.

Lisak: What would happen once they were drunk at the party?

Frank: Well that's when one of us would make our move. You know, by then each one of the girls had been kind of staked out by one of us. Meaning one of the guys would be working on them, getting them drinks, you know keeping the juices flowing so to speak. You kinda had to know your moment, you know, when to make your move. You basically had to have an instinct for it.

Lisak: Can you describe what happened in the specific occasion referred to in your questionnaire?

Frank: Yeah sure, I had this girl staked out. I'd picked her out in one of my classes. You know, I'd worked on her. She was all prepped. I was watching for her, and the minute she walked into the door of the party, I was on her. And she was really good looking too. And we started drinking together, and I could tell she was kind of nervous. I could tell she was nervous because she was drinking that stuff so fast.

Lisak: What was she drinking?

Frank: Well it was some kind of punch we'd made. You know, the usual thing.

Lisak: Did she know it was spiked with alcohol?

Frank: I don't really know although she must have after a while, because she started to get plastered, in just a few minutes. And, so I started making my moves on her. I kinda leaned in close, got my arm around her. And then at the right moment I kissed her, and moved in a little closer. You know, like the usual kind of stuff. I'm sure it was no surprise to her. She'd done it a thousand times before. And after a while I asked her if she wanted to go up to my room, you know, get away from the noise. And she came right a way, so. Actually it wasn't my room. We always had several rooms designated before the party, you know that were all prepped for this.

Lisak: Designated rooms?

Frank: Yeah, we'd set aside a few rooms to bring the girls up to once they were ready.

Lisak: What happened when you got to one of the designated rooms?

Frank: Well she was really woozy, by this time. So I brought up another drink, you know, sat her down on one of the beds. Sat down next to her. And pretty soon I just made my move. I don't remember exactly what I did first. I probably, you know, leaned her down on the bed, started working on her clothes, feeling her up.

Lisak: How did she respond?

Frank: I don't remember. I started working her blouse off and I think she might have said something. I don't remember. I didn't expect her to get into it right away.

Lisak: Did she say anything?

Frank: Yeah at some point she started saying things like, "You know I don't want to do this right away," or something like that. I just kept working on her clothes. You know, she started squirming, but that actually helped, because her blouse came off easier. I kinda leaned on her, kept feeling her up, getting more into it. She tried to push me off, so I pushed her back down.

Lisak: Where you angry?

Frank: Well, you know, it pissed me off that she'd played along the whole way and then decided to squirm out of it at the end. She was so plastered she probably didn't know what was going on anyway. I don't know. Maybe that's why she started pushing on me. But I just kept leaning on her, pulling off her clothes, and at some point she stopped squirming. I don't know. Maybe she passed out. Her eyes were closed.

Lisak: What happened?

Frank: I fucked her.

Lisak: Did you have to lean on her, hold her down when you did it?

Frank: Yeah, I had my arm across her chest like this, you know. That's how I did it.

Lisak: Was she squirming?

Frank: Yeah she was squirming but not as much anymore.

Lisak: What happened afterwards?

Frank: I got dressed and went back to the party.

Lisak: What did she do?

Frank: She left.