

Survivors share their stories

“I got the investigation report back and I was reading through the witness accounts, and it just seemed really one-sided. It seemed the questions they asked them were pertaining to me” - Anonymous



Art by Caitlyn Tan

This drawing by Caitlyn Tan is being used to replace a photo of a survivor who wished to remain anonymous.

1. What happened?

My freshman year, spring term, I was sexually assaulted by a member of a men's athletic team. It occurred at an off-campus house.

The seniors were hosting a party and obviously alcohol was involved, and I was drinking, and, for the most part, I was in the basement just dancing with my friends. I didn't wanna do anything with anyone, and this boy, he came up from behind me and he started dancing on me and like, in the moment – sorry if this is T.M.I – I just froze up, and I thought “Oh, maybe he'll see that I'm not doing anything and he'll walk away.” No, that did not happen.

So, he kept dancing on me. But it didn't stop from there. He then started molesting me. In that room. In front of everyone. He was fondling my breasts, then he actually put his hand down my pants, and he tried fingering me, and at that point I was able to pull him out, but he didn't go away. He was still forcing himself on me and I was shaking my head like, “no, no”, but he didn't stop.

And, I don't quiet remember what else happened, but the next thing I remember was we were outside the house, he was trying to take me back to his place, and at that point I was trying to be

more verbal and said “no, we can't do this. We can't.” and finally at that point someone separated us, and the rest of the night I was crying and stuff.

The next morning, I was really frazzled by the incident, like, I did not want to go outside my dorm.

It wasn't until weeks later when I reached out to one of my older teammates to tell her what occurred, 'cause it put a lot of emotional distress on me and I was having panic attacks whenever he was near. I had trouble sleeping at night and I had nightmares about it, too. So, I finally reached out to someone and told her.

At that point I decided I did not want to go through and report it. I didn't want to put any more attention on myself, especially since it happened in front of other people. But then, I didn't report until fall term of my sophomore year when the same guy raped one of my best friends. We both decided he was a threat to campus and that's when we went forward with Title IX. I filled a complaint against him and not only did he refuse to take responsibility, but then he denied that it ever happened.

And then he got other teammates involved to speak out against me. They were saying

that.. they tried to make it seem as though it was me who initiated it, which was not the case. That's really all that comes to mind now. 'Cause there was a lot that went down during that time.

2. Did you know him from the team?

Yeah, I sorta did. I never really interacted with him until that point. And it wasn't the first incident I had with him either. But personally I didn't really know him or every really talk to him or hung out with him or anything.

3. Can you tell us more about the Title IX process?

When I heard he raped my best friend, I didn't know what was going on and I was freaking out cause that same week I was talking to my friend and I told her I felt I was being over dramatic about everything.

That following Sunday, I didn't see her at all around campus, like not in the library not in the CSL, and I know when she's depressed she stays in and keeps to herself.

So, I texted her just to check in. Later that night, I got a text that said she couldn't explain the situation cause it was too sensitive. But then she also said I was right to be afraid of this person and in that moment my heart just shattered, like “Oh my God, please God, tell me she didn't... she didn't go through what I did.” The following day, I had trouble concentrating in class cause I couldn't stop thinking about it. And we were still in communication, my friend, and she told me our head coach knew the situation.

So, right after class I went straight to him and we talked. At that time, I broke down and cried and told him about my incident. He's a mandatory reporter so he called the Title IX team and a coordinator reached out to me.

He asked if I wanted to meet and I did and I explained what happened and they told me what my options were and I decided I wanted to go through with an

investigation and at first I kinda felt confident about it. They explained to me how the process worked, they even gave me a flow-chart of what goes on.

At that point, I felt like I had control and that everything was going to be okay, but then I heard that he didn't want to take responsibility and that further complicates the process. It draws it out longer.

Then during winter break I got the investigation report back and I was reading through the witness accounts, and it just seemed really one-sided. It seemed the questions they asked them were pertaining to me. For example, one witness that provided... I guess they asked her what I was wearing that night. And obviously that same question was not applied to him. I was talking to my friends who were witnesses, and they told me it felt one-sided too and they were asking stuff like, “So, what's her behavior really like?” It kinda seemed like they were trying to brush it under the rug.

And at that point I was just an emotional wreck and I decided to stop the process. So, with Title IX when you report there's two forms of resolution. There's the formal resolution, which, you go through the entire process, the investigation, which eventually leads to a hearing. Then there's informal resolution and with that, pretty much everything's up in the air. It's more of a negotiation, I guess. So, when they explained that to me it kinda seemed like it something the victim initiates, but Dean Shnack told me that he brought up the possibility of it and at the time I was like, “No. I don't wanna do that. I don't wanna have things go his way.”

And then after reading through the investigation report I decided to stop. I no longer felt like I had control over what was going on.

The process was taking too long and I didn't feel like I was gonna get the resolution I want-

ed. At that point this guy actually transferred out of Augustana. He wasn't suspended or expelled; he left on his own terms. It felt like they kinda took a step back from that.

During the process I had a no contact order against him. Later, during spring break, he requested to follow me on Instagram.

When I first filled the no contact order, I was instructed to contact public safety if that was a breach, but since I was not on campus I didn't think that was necessary.

I emailed Dean Schnack and I told her, “Hey, I know I stopped the process, but it's in my understanding that the no contact order is still in effect and I'd like to keep it this way.”

I tried to explain to her that he tried to make contact with me, and basically she told me there's nothing they can do to enforce that and if I was really concerned she could help me go to the Rock Island Police Department. But, I didn't want to do that. Just remembering how long their process took and I didn't want to undergo all that emotional stress again.

4. Was he on the team until he transferred?

Yes.

5. Did they talk about removing him from the team?

As far as I know he wasn't kicked off or anything. Or if he quit. That was never really discussed with me. But I know the head coach had talks with the entire team about it. But I don't think he was formally expelled from the team or anything.

Before all that, I was really comfortable with the team. My freshman year, I probably would've said I would've done anything for them, but now I don't feel that same way. Both the men's and women's teams are really close and even outside of practice and competitions we spend so much time together at meals and in the library and since then it hasn't been the same.