



The Listening Ear's Quarterly Newsletter

I'm All Ears

Issue Number 03-03
3rd Quarter 2003

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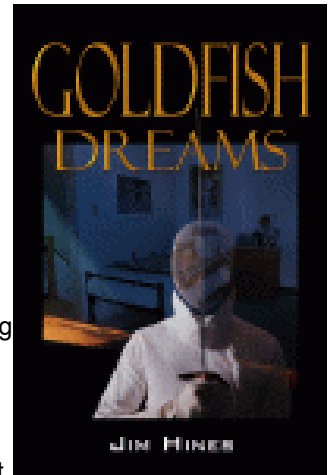
Goldfish Dreams

The novel "Goldfish Dreams", by former Ear Jim Hines, is an amazingly true-to-life tale of an incest survivor and her journey toward healing.

The book focuses on Eileen Greenwood, a freshman at Southern Michigan University haunted by nightmares of her brother, who sexually abused her. Although her father angrily disbelieves her, she begins to let out her long-held secret and, as a result, initiates the process of healing and trying to understand what caused her brother to molest her.

All of the book's characters possess very human flaws, including the crisis counselor who tries to help Eileen. Not even the villains are perfectly unlikable as Eileen's brother is revealed to struggle with guilt over what he's done to his sister.

Hines said it was important for all the characters to be imperfect to make it more real, and the book's realism repeatedly struck me. It continuously brought home the reality that sexual assault happens to very real people and that perpetrators are often people we don't want to suspect.



Still, even though it deals with a heavy subject, Hines manages to include humor in the book. "The lives of sexual assault survivors are not completely sad all the time," he said. "Besides," he added, "I wanted to portray sexual assault in a different way, showing the triumphs and downfalls."

Hines also stayed away from graphic portrayals of the incident which are often featured in rape memoirs. "I wanted to focus on the healing rather than the crime itself."

Hines worked as a sexual assault counselor with the Listening Ear for five years, which was instrumental in writing "Goldfish Dreams". "Without the Ear and without the Sexual Assault Counseling program, I wouldn't have the ability to write this book and probably wouldn't have been inspired to do so," Hines said.

*Volunteer
Crisis
Counselors
answer calls
24 hours a
day, 365 days
a year.*

Hines began to write the book in 1998 as his thesis for his master's degree in English at Eastern Michigan University, and it is his first published novel. He has published several short stories and has a few other novels submitted for publication (mostly in the science fiction and fantasy genres). He also has begun to work on a sequel to "Goldfish Dreams".

"Goldfish Dreams" is available at most local bookstores as well as from online booksellers such as Amazon.com and Barnes & Noble. Hines will be doing a book signing at Schuler's Books on Alpine Avenue in Grand Rapids on October 23 at 7 p.m.

More information about Jim Hines and "Goldfish Dreams" (including an excerpt) can be found at his website: www.sff.net/people/jchines.

Honor your family and friends with a gift to The Listening Ear

Is there someone special that you would like to remember or thank?

Honor them with a gift to The Listening Ear.

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In Honor/Memory of _____

Please send a card of acknowledgement to:

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Interested in supporting "I'm All Ears"?

Your small advertisement could do just that! Contact the Listening Ear's business office at (517)337-1728 for information regarding sponsorship and advertising. You can reach out to over 1, 500 Listening Ear supporters and enable the Ear to continue reaching out as well.



www.farhatandstory.com

Suicide is the third leading cause of death among males and females between the ages of 15 and 24.

Source: 2001

National Vital Statistics Report

Rape on a Record Decline?

The latest numbers have come out and show that rape has continued its record decline. According to the latest numbers from the 2002 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which was just released by the US Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics, there were 247,730 rapes and sexual assaults perpetrated against those 12 and over. This is a slight decline over 2001 in which there were 248,250 and a prodigious decline from 1993 where there were 485,000 rapes and attempted assaults.

To coincide with the decline, it is reported that the number of reported rapes and attempted assaults to the authorities has made a dramatic increase. In 1999 only 30% of rapes and sexual assaults were reported to the police while in 2002, 53% of rapes and sexual assault was reported to the police.

These numbers are an impressive reduction in the amount of sexual violence perpetrated in our society. Maybe this is because of the increased publicity in the last few years. The thing that these numbers do not represent is who rape is on the decline for. And, is the stigma for reporting or coming forward and saying you were raped any less?

Maybe the numbers are decreasing because stranger rape is on a decline. You are much more likely to be raped today by someone you know. 70% of rapes are committed by someone you know according to the 2002 NCVS, while the numbers for the 2000 NCVS study reported that only 66% of survivors knew their assailants.

The color of rape is also quite discouraging. While there have been a decrease in the number of rapes, minorities of all races are still at least 10% more likely to become a victim of rape than white women. This is a trend that seems to remain stagnant. The variation goes from between 10% to 34% more likely to be raped, depending on what minority group one may be a part of. These are numbers that have not changed.

So, while we should rejoice in the overall decline of rape and sexual assault, there is still more work that needs to be done. We can leave no one behind in this fight. One should not be at more risk of such a nefarious crime just because one's skin is not white.

Tamika, Sexual Assault Counseling Coordinator

Wish List for The Ear

- Volunteers
- 2 Couches
- Laminator
- Conference Tables & Chairs
- Laptop Computer
- Building/Home
- Gift Cards/Certificates
- Bike Rack
- Vacuum

Items need to be in good condition. We are a 501(c)3 agency. Any and all donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Receipts are willingly provided. To make a donation, please contact our Office Manager at 337-1728.

The Listening Ear would like to thank the thousands of volunteers who have dedicated their time, energy, and money to our cause over the past 34 years.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month October 2003

Domestic Violence Awareness Month is nationally recognized to honor survivors, empower those currently experiencing it, and remember those who lost their battle against domestic violence. This is a time for our community to unite and join the struggle against this type of violence. **MSU Safe Place (campus)** and **End Violent Encounters (EVE, Inc. formerly known as CADA in Lansing)** invite you to join these activities:

October 10th: End Violent Encounters (Eve, Inc.) Silent Auction: *Changing Fortunes Silent and Live Auction*, 7-10pm at the Hannah Community Center in East Lansing. Please call Staci Garcia at 372-5976 ext. 11 for more Information.

October 14th: Candlelight Vigil: All are invited to join together for this annual event. The program will include speakers, musical performances, and time for survivors to share their stories, providing an opportunity to recognize survivors and those who have lost their lives due to domestic violence. Activities will be held in Old Town in Lansing from 5-9pm. The candlelight vigil will begin at 7:00pm. For additional information call Erica Schmittiel at 353-9999 x. 1 or Alyssa Baumann at 432-9570.

Oct. 27-31st: Domestic Violence Conference: *Training Communities to Take Action and Respond Effectively*, four all-day repeated sessions, free to Ingham county residents before registration deadline of 9/26/03, \$25 late registration fee after that; open to any individual or professional encountering domestic violence victims or batterers. For more information call Cheri Ballor at 483-4653.

Silent Silhouettes and Healing Hearts Project: The *Silent Silhouettes* are statues representing women and children who have been killed due to domestic violence; the *Healing Hearts* are wooden hearts decorated by survivors and supporters. These projects can be displayed on the MSU campus and in the greater Lansing area throughout the month of October and other times all year around. For more information call 355-1100 ext. 2.

Domestic Violence Videos: Available to the MSU campus, Residence Hall staff can arrange to show movies in their hall to help students learn more about this issue. Movies available include: *What's Love Got to Do With It, The Color Purple, the Burning Bed, Fried Green Tomatoes, and Once Were Warriors*. If you want these shown in your hall have Mentors or other Hall Staff contact Alyssa Baumann at 432-9570 or baumann9@msu.edu.

Alyssa, Board Chair

Seasonal Affective Disorder

What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

For some people, the declining light in the fall can result in a form of a mood disorder that goes beyond simple winter blahs. This form of depression, known as Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), affects approximately half a million people each year. It is caused by a biochemical imbalance in the hypothalamus due to the shortening of daylight hours and the lack of sunlight in winter. For many people SAD is a seriously disabling illness, preventing them from functioning normally without continuous medical treatment.

What are the symptoms?

- Increased sadness, hopelessness, crying or irritability
- Change in appetite (especially a craving for sweets or carbohydrates)
- Weight gain
- Reduction in energy level and sex drive
- Change in sleep/wake patterns (especially a tendency to oversleep)
- Avoidance of social situations
- Decreased concentration and creativity
- Difficulty completing tasks

Most sufferers show signs of a weakened immune system during the winter and are more vulnerable to infections and other illnesses.

SAD symptoms disappear in spring, either suddenly with a short period (e.g.,

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counseling &
referral services**



four weeks) of hypomania or hyperactivity, or gradually, depending on the intensity of sunlight in the spring and early summer.

How can SAD be treated?

As with any depressive disorder, the treatment of SAD should be undertaken under the guidance of a qualified health professional. Exposure to bright light for around 30 minutes each morning, using a high intensity "light box," can be very helpful for some individuals. Simply increasing exposure to daylight, exercising, eating healthy foods, decreasing stress and being with supportive, "comfortable" individuals can be highly therapeutic.

What can you do if you think you have SAD?

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill suggests learning as much as you can about SAD. If your symptoms are mild, that is, if they don't interfere too much with your daily living, one option might be trying light therapy as described above or experiment with adjusting the light in your surroundings with bright lamps. If depressive symptoms are severe enough to significantly affect day-to-day functioning, a mental health professional qualified to treat SAD may be able to provide information about treatment options. The websites listed below also offer additional information and resources about SAD.

Information from:

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
<http://www.nami.org/home>

The National Organization for Seasonal Affective Disorder (NOSAD)
<http://www.nosad.org>

Seasonal Affective Disorder Association
<http://www.sada.org.uk/index.htm>



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If you are interested in joining The Listening Ear, Please call (517) 337-1717!

“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED PEOPLE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD. INDEED, IT IS THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.”

—MARGARET MEAD

From time to time the Listening Ear may share addresses of supporters with other community service organizations. If you do not want your address to be given to another organization please call us at 337-1728.

The Listening Ear Crisis Intervention Center extends our thanks to the community, individuals, and businesses that allow us to continue to serve as a helpful, supportive presence to those in need.