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Attempted rape being investigated

By THERESA HOWARD

The attempted rape of a 20-year-old State University College at Cortland woman is under investigation by the Cortland City Police Department.

According to information released by the department, the incident, which took place early Saturday morning, occurred "in the alley way behind the Veterans of Foreign Wars' building on Main Street."

The victim, who asked not to be identified, said she was cutting through the lighted parking lot by herself when "(he) grabbed me from behind around my face."

"(I) was forced into a dark area beyond the parking lot," she said. The woman added that there was a lot of people around the downtown area because the bars were just closing so she didn't expect anything to happen.

She had been "hanging out with friends" earlier in the evening and when her friends decided to stop by a bar, she opted to go home.

According to the information released by police, "When the victim screamed the suspect ran from the area before the rape could take place."

The victim, however, said she had convinced the suspect to return to her house. There were "two things going on in (my) mind," she said, to "get him arrested or (to) get away."

The victim said it was almost like "I was outside of myself." "I wasn't thinking," she said, "I don't know how I dealt with it I just started talking."

"Physically there was nothing I could do" so "I had to convince him he could trust me and that I wasn't going to run away."

According to the information released by police, the suspect "forced the victim into the bushes and attempted to rape her." She had to cooperate, she said, to some degree in order for her to get him to walk toward her house.

Standing 5' 2", she said he "carried me part of the time." They walked hand in hand, she said, through the parking lot behind Marine Midland Bank until she saw three college men to whom she "ran and screamed help." They didn't help, she said, "they wouldn't help me." As she was yelling to these men, she said, the suspect fled.

As the victim went running toward her house she approached two women and a man. One woman, she said, "walked me to my house" and then she called the police.

Knowing her roommate and roommate's boyfriend were home, she said she thought she'd be able to get him to the house to have him arrested.

"I had to convince him he could trust me and that I wasn't going to run away."

Attempted rape victim

Sgt. Kenneth Buggs, who is heading the investigation on the case, said he doesn't feel this case is related to the incidences that have been occurring since last spring.

Last week Buggs reported that a number of females have been the victim of a 'peeping tom' who has entered into the houses of nearly 15 women.

The suspect from Saturday's incident is described by police as a white male, 5' 10", slender, dark hair with a beard and mustache.

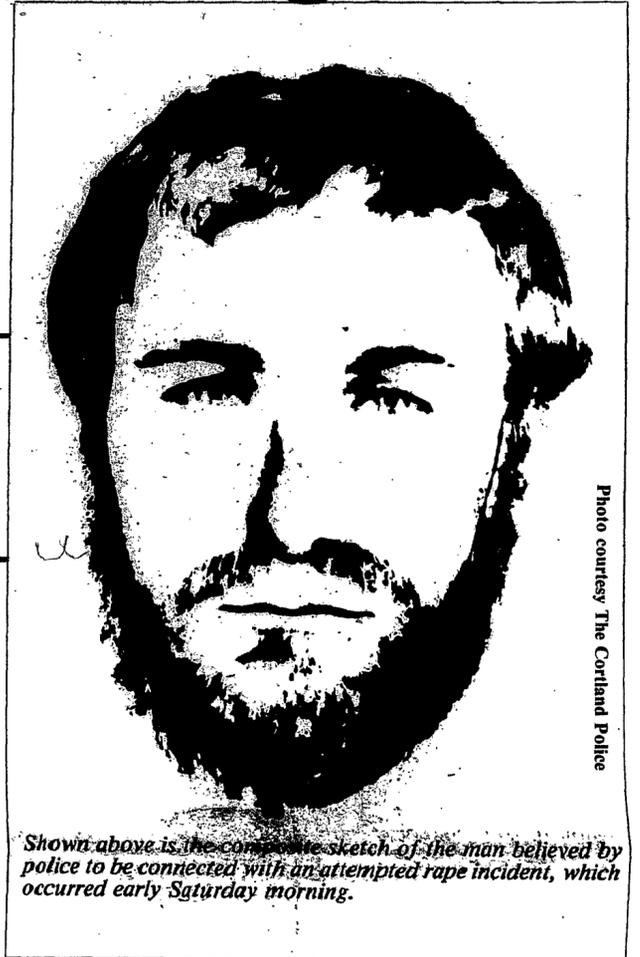


Photo courtesy: The Cortland Police

Shown above is the composite sketch of the man believed by police to be connected with an attempted rape incident, which occurred early Saturday morning.

Vandalism a major campus problem

By MATTHEW DITOMMASSO

Although the weather was not much of a problem at State University College at Cortland this past weekend, it was raining-lounge chairs in a certain area of the campus.

According to Wendy Walsh, associate director of Residence Life, six lounge chairs were thrown from the sixth floor of Clark Hall the evening of Sept. 26.

This is but one of the many vandalous acts that occur regularly at SUCC. Peter Lalla, assistant director of Public Safety said, based on past statistics and current information, there will be approximately 150 acts of vandalism reported between the beginning of the school year and the end of September. Most vandalism has taken or will take place in the residence hall areas, Lalla added.

Other types of vandalism that happen frequently on campus are window damage, knocking out light poles, damage and destruction of exit signs, damage of elevators and the breaking of locks, Lalla said.

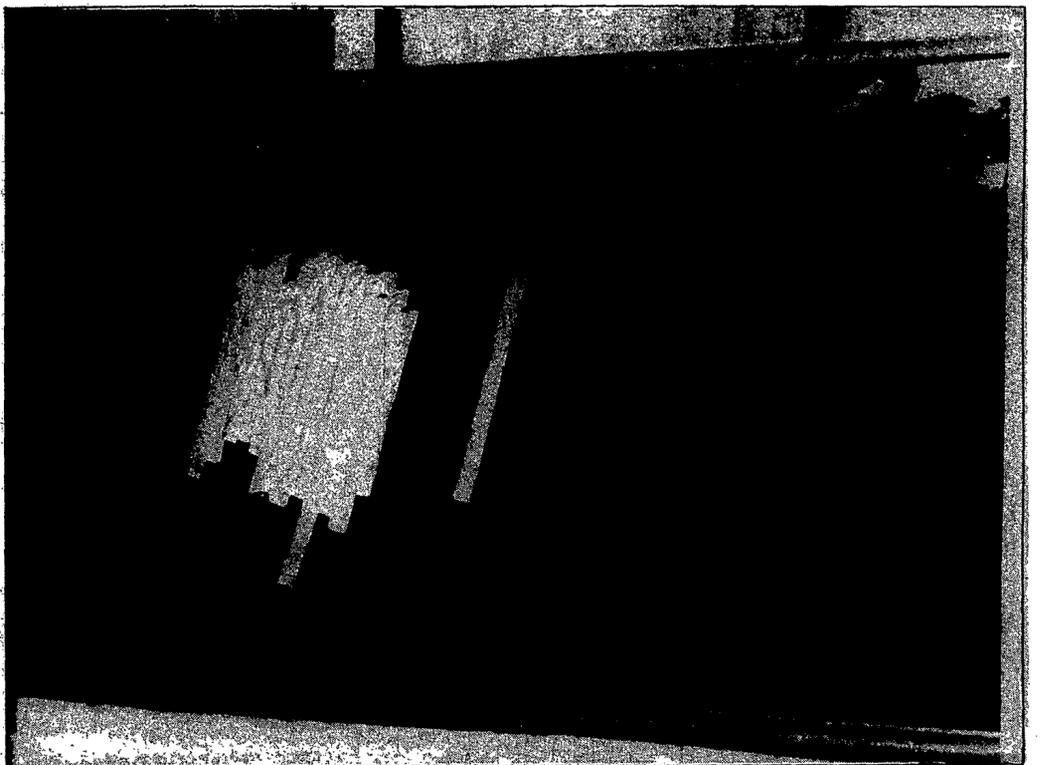
Vandalism occurs mostly outdoors in the spring and fall, and mostly indoors in the winter months, he said.

Walsh said she feels the destruction of exit signs and locks are probably the worst types of vandalism that can occur in a residence hall because it jeopardizes the safety of the students.

The exit signs are there by law and are necessary to ensure a safe exit from a building in an emergency situation, she said. Locks are also there for student protection.

Vandalism is usually committed by students who are under the influence of alcohol, Walsh said. She said she thinks that SUCC has been very liberal with its alcohol policy and if vandalism starts to get out of hand, administration may turn SUCC into a 'dry' campus.

According to Carol DiGregoria, assistant director of student affairs and judicial coordinator, the severity of punishment for a vandal depends on the vandal's prior history, his attitude, and if the crime can be proven as premeditated.



Jill Stealey/The Press

A million strips of tape won't fix the vandalism problem on campus

The most extreme punishment a vandal can receive is a suspension or a dismissal, she said. If the offense is not as serious, DiGregoria said, the offender may be banned from campus, restricted from using the building he vandalized (unless he has class there), or he is subjected to educational or community sanctions.

The maximum sentence for a suspect proven guilty of vandalism, which is classified as criminal

mischief, a class A misdemeanor in the penal law code, is one year in prison and/or as a thousand dollar fine, said Lalla. The perpetrator will also be referred to the Judicial Review Board.

All vandals who are found guilty will, of course, pay for the damage that is done, Lalla said. "For all the vandals who are not caught the cost of the damage will most probably be reflected by higher rates," said Lalla.