



Top: Women of all cultures got together for the "Take Back the Night" women's rights rally and march in the Spring of 1992 in Urbana, Illinois. Bottom images from assorted women's rights rallies. Bottom image is from a display of assorted scenes that can lead to acquaintance rape.



POLITICAL PHOTOGRAPHY





If photography can be used as an advertising medium, if photography can be used as an emotional medium in order to portray a feeling, it can be understood why photography as an art form in the recent years has become more political in nature.

When going through history, art reflected what was important to people at the

time. This can be seen through religious works, portraits of kings and queens to last through the ages, landscapes of new places, and now photography in reflecting mass markets and political issues. Questioning religion, documenting strife in inner cities, making sexism more apparent through a visual medium - these are examples of how photography reflects what concerns today's society.

And for me, photography and sexism went hand in hand. As I grew I realized how rampant sexism was in our culture, in so many different ways and on so many different levels. Blonde jokes. Harassing phone calls. Cat calls from strangers on the street. Advertising which objectifies women. Harassment in the workplace. Pornography. Wife beatings. Acquaintance and stranger rape.

I could too you that statistics show that 1 out of four women will be raped by the time they left college - and one out of three women would be raped in their life time. I could tell you about how women are taught as children to be more "feminine", and less argumentative, less willing to fight the man who is raised to be "masculine", who is taught to win at games, to think of sex as a competition where the goal is to "score", to "get some". I could go on and on about women are degraded in society, about how this society, the way it works today, perpetuates crimes like this.

But people don't want to hear me talk. They want to see some pretty pictures. This is how people learn to combine the two. People, for the most part, don't want to listen to a person get on their soap box and chant facts. But to be able to slip a viewpoint into artwork, like photography, makes the point a lot more digestible - and possibly a lot stronger, because it's more visual and less expected.



A display of imagery about rapes often occurring with liquor involved in familiar settings like parties appeared in an art display and were laid out in a women's movement rally.