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Some thoughts

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Cover Page Footnote
TRIGGER WARNING: Rape; sexual assault. This piece has been published anonymously upon its authors request.

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Dear reader,

When you read, please don’t feel bad for me. I don’t want your pity. Just take in what is said. Thank you.

One in three. According to the Department of Justice, one in three Native American women have been raped. Native American women also have twice the national average rate for sexual assault. And if you think this shit doesn’t happen to Native American and Indigenous women and non-binary folks on Dartmouth’s campus, you’re fucking wrong.

My freshman year was hard. But my problems became increasingly worse on February 4th. I still remember that date. I still remember everything that happened like it was just yesterday. I remember waking up that morning in the Native American House and it was pitch black. I remember someone touching me and hovering over me. I remember thinking it was a nightmare. I remember wondering when it would be over. I remember, after a long time, finally standing up and running upstairs. I remember going to my friends’ room that early morning — tip toeing to not wake them up — and then laying on the floor. I remember Googling: “what is sexual assault,” and “what is rape.”

For a long time, I didn’t understand what happened to me. I felt ashamed. None of that was my fucking fault, but I felt like it was. I was terrified of the man who violated me and seeing him around campus, but I didn’t report him because I wanted to forget about it. I really thought I could just forget about it.

But I never forgot. I never will forget. I remember everything that happened like it was just yesterday.

And I’m not the only one. A lot of Indigenous female and non-binary Dartmouth students have stories like this. Of sexual violence happening to them on Dartmouth’s campus, by Dartmouth students.

And what is Dartmouth doing about it? Nothing. When I tried to file a no-contact order through Dartmouth’s Title IX so my perpetrator would stop approaching me at the Hop, I had to email the Title IX coordinator three times for a response.

She missed our initial meeting.

How can Dartmouth become a safer space for marginalized people, such as Indigenous women and non-binary individuals? I wish I knew.

So, remember this story. Remember that stories like this happen on campus and are never told. Remember that one in three Native American women have been raped. Remember that Dartmouth as an institution has a responsibility to protect Indigenous women and non-binary individuals. We should hold them to it.

Sincerely,

An angry Native American female Dartmouth student