

Statement of Tobey, Survivor
Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues, March 31, 2004

I am an officer in the U. S. Air Force. About fourteen months ago, I was date raped by another officer.

At first, I was in shock or denial about what had occurred. I, finally, told my commander about the rape three weeks later.

Before telling my commanders, I called OSI, Office of Special Investigations, anonymously, to ask if I even had anything to come forward with. They told me that I had a case and to make a report.

I told my Colonel the next day and was taken off of my job.

Another two weeks passed, five weeks after the rape, I went in to speak to OSI. The agent quickly found out who I was when I admitted to being the anonymous caller. This agent said he spoke to another agent and since I had used one word in describing what happened, I did not have a case.

I went on to ask, "Well, what if this happened...?" This agent then stated that he did not know what happened.

Basically, the office that is supposed to investigate made up their own minds on what occurred without getting more than a snippet of information from an anonymous phone call. I was turned away.

After complaining to my Colonel, OSI's reaction quickly changed. They couldn't wait to talk to me.

Around the same time, five weeks after the rape, I went to JAG, Judge Advocate General, to see if there was anything to what I said happened. A Lieutenant Colonel at JAG agreed that a crime had been committed and wanted me to go back to OSI.

I went back to OSI to tell them what occurred. I offered them my apartment, the crime scene, and they did not want it.

I later moved, gave away furniture associated with the crime, and tried to forget.

Approximately six or seven weeks later, OSI called me into their office. They told me that the alleged offender denied anything even happened. They now, magically, wanted to look at my apartment. I didn't live there anymore. But, I had offered before. I asked them if they wanted to speak to my old neighbors. It apparently did not occur to them.

Shortly, after this meeting, OSI told me my case was closed and unfounded.

Later, about another six weeks or so, JAG called me in. The Lieutenant Colonel said he read the OSI report, there wasn't enough to go to trial, and my case was still open, but not with OSI. He went on to tell me that if he were a defense attorney, he would tell me, "I gave the offender mixed signals and that 'no' was not enough."

Well, I didn't just say "no." I also said, "I don't want to do this yet," and I tried to physically hold my underwear. This date rape occurred on the fourth date!

I contacted the victim advocate on base only to be asked if anything like this had happened to me before, because I reacted so strongly to a rape. I tried working with this advocate to get a story in the base newspaper anonymously. To this day, it has never appeared.

The Lieutenant Colonel at JAG said "quit blaming yourself." Why do I have to blame myself when the base does it for me?

I am highly critical of JAG and OSI because they are supposed to "help," not blame. They claim that they won't turn anyone away again. I cannot be certain of this, nor do I trust that it will not happen to another victim or survivor.

Currently, my offender is still on base unpunished.

I have lost my primary job in the Air Force and have to be reclassified. It took me 13 months to get through tech school and waiting for a security clearance. I got to perform my job for one year.

I am being punished for a rape. What else if the military going to take from me?