

We did an interview at one point that didn't end up getting published. However, the interviewer had no problem with us publishing what we had on the website. Here it is:

Q: I imagine, as in the case of Aspen Gardens, that once the attacks were publicized, the grip of fear on Garneau (or at least on some of the residents), was overwhelming. Has this fear dissipated over time or does a vein of it still run through the community? Has The Sisterhood helped waylay the fear or has it helped foster it by keeping the attacks front and centre?

A: A natural response when we hear about rape in the community is fear. I think our role has partially been to give a voice to those people in the community that feel that fear, as well as to take our fear and turn it into positive action and solidarity. It's common to feel that nothing can be done but the truth is we can work on these issues on so many levels. In many of our posters and articles we are encouraging all people to unite in action, and find a way to take a stand against rape culture. This might involve attending a seminar on sexual assault, volunteering at or donating to a sexual assault centre, learning what consent is and what is not, writing letters, getting involved with "Take Back the Night" rallies, learning how to support a person who has experienced sexual violence, organizing with the women in your community, starting a poster campaign, or whatever feels right for you.

Sexual assault is so often a topic that is only talked about "behind closed doors". We're hoping to start changing that, to open a dialogue, and let survivors and women in general know that they are not alone in what they're going through... we think there is comfort and power in that.

Q: What has been the overall response to the Sisterhood in the community of Garneau? I have heard various criticisms from other sources, mostly regarding your choice to remain anonymous and the so-called vigilante nature of the group.

A: Our choice to remain anonymous is a political one. The Sisterhood can be anyone, and in fact, the message we want to get across to the communities affected is that the sisterhood is all of us. This means that there is no such thing as an isolated attack on an individual woman. When a sister is raped, it is a rape of the sisterhood.

I am always surprised when we get criticism. What we're doing is speaking out against violence and opening a dialogue about sexual assault. It's hard to understand what people find so terrible about that. I think people don't want to hear about sexual assault - it's still a taboo topic, but the reality is that 1 in 4 Canadian women and 1 in 8 Canadian men will experience sexual assault in their lifetime. I think it's time we started talking about it.

Overall, we've received countless supportive emails regarding what we do and the message we're trying to put forth. It's an unbelievable feeling to know that there are other people out there equally outraged by what has happened. The people in this community are uniting.

Q: How do you determine whether you are "successful" or not

A: The poster campaign is about shaping the space we live in or having a hand in defining our public spaces. Garneau is a community full of feminist women and when we walk down the street we wanted

to be able to see and feel that. It's also about defining where we can get knowledge - in Garneau it exists on street lamps, on fire hydrants, and at bus terminals.

I think one of the main things we're trying to do is open a dialogue about sexual assault. Our intent is to combat common "rape myths" and help provide a voice for the women in this community. I think we've done that :)