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Brown University students say they were given date-rape drug

By **Matt Rocheleau**

| GLOBE CORRESPONDENT | OCTOBER 28, 2014



COMMENTS

Two Brown University students told authorities they believe they were given drinks laced with a so-called date rape drug at a fraternity party this month, and one of the students said she was sexually assaulted later that night.

The university has suspended the fraternity that hosted the party inside college dormitory, according to an e-mail sent to the Brown community Friday by Margaret Klawunn, vice president for campus life and student services, and Russell Carey, executive vice president for planning and policy.

Brown officials are also investigating the reports and are reviewing the school's policies for alcohol service at campus events, the e-mail said.

The Providence university warned that those found responsible for sexual assault or the use of date-rape drugs would be

expelled and could face criminal prosecution.

The two students told campus officials they were given alcoholic punch at a fraternity party they attended in Sears House on Oct. 17. The e-mail said they both experienced symptoms consistent with the consumption of date-rape drugs: "a rapid onset of intoxication out of proportion to what they may have had to drink, and reported memory loss for a significant period of time."

"Members of the Brown community should be alert to the possibility that date rape drugs are being placed in drinks at social gatherings and should take steps to protect themselves and other students," the e-mail said.

The message mentioned several drugs linked to such assaults, including Rohypnol, GHB, and Ketamine, but it said alcohol is the most common date-rape drug.

In a [letter to the editor](#) to the campus newspaper, The Brown Daily Herald, members of the Phi Kappa Psi fraternity said their organization has been suspended "for hosting an unregistered event with alcohol present."

But the group said it was confident that none of its members "engaged in or perpetrated such atrocious and criminal behavior."

"We, the Brothers of Phi Kappa Psi, would like to state that we in no way condone, allow or affiliate with the use of any manifestation of violence, especially gender-based and sexual violence, but rather universally and unequivocally condemn them and their use in anything related to our fraternity," the fraternity's letter added.

Campus officials asked that anyone with information about the use of date-rape drugs or about sexual assaults to contact campus police Sergeant John Carvalho at 401-863-3322.

Amid increased reports of sexual violence on college campuses nationwide, the Brown campus has grappled with the issue in recent months.

In February, two Brown University football players were accused of raping a Providence College student in a campus dorm room. A grand jury in August declined to indict the accused students. A lawyer for the alleged victim has vowed to take legal action.

In April, a Brown student alleged publicly that she had been sexually assaulted and choked by another student. The woman said he was found responsible by the school and given a one-year suspension, which she said was too lenient, prompting her to file a federal complaint against the school. The accused student has denied that he choked her and said he believed the sex was consensual.

In July, the federal Education Department launched an investigation into Brown's handling of sexual assault

cases. The university is one of 85 colleges nationally, including 14 in New England, facing such an investigation.

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