

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

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BC prof, SEAS student pricked *Police term Broadway attacks racial*

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Two Columbia affiliates have reported being victimized in the series of bizarre attacks that occurred on Broadway between 95th and 110th streets last week.

Over 20 women, ranging in age from 14 to 50, have reported being stabbed with unidentified sharp objects between Tuesday and Friday nights after being surrounded by groups of six to 10 young women.

Barnard Assistant Professor of English Timea Szell told Spectator

last night that she was scratched by an unidentified sharp object at about 8:30 p.m. Friday while walking down Broadway between 95th and 96th streets.

A first-year female student in the School of Engineering and Applied Sciences (SEAS) was stabbed last week with a sharp object while on Broadway, but did not report it at the time because she thought it was an isolated incident, according to Columbia Security Sergeant John J.

Scalossi.

The student, whose name has been withheld, reported the incident to Columbia Security yesterday when she realized that her attack was similar to others reported.

Police think that the attacks may be bias-related since 22 of the 23 victims were white women and have described their assailants as black youths.

Scalossi indicated that the Columbia student was also white, saying, "This incident continues with the bias pattern."

There have been no reports of similar incidents occurring since Friday, according to Officer Fred Weiner of the New York Police Department's public information office.

The 26th Police Precinct still has no information on the attackers or the weapons used.

According to Szell, after two black girls between the ages of 14 and 18 walked past her and a friend Friday, she suddenly felt a sharp, stinging sensation on her back.

"I turned to them and said, 'What happened? Why did you do that to me?'" Szell said.

According to Szell, they then confronted her, one saying, "Are you talking to me, white bitch? I did nothing to you."

Szell said she found a two-inch long gash on her back, but did not report anything to the police until she found out Saturday that others had reported similar incidents.

The sharp object was probably not a syringe because a syringe could not penetrate the three layers of clothing she was wearing and leave a deep scratch, according to Szell.

The police did not seem to know what the instrument was, Szell said.

The girls did not try to steal anything from her, she said, adding that, “[the attack] seemed to be entirely arbitrary.”

Szell said that although the incident was upsetting, she has not let it scare her and has continued walking in the area since the attack.

“The whole thing is really sad. I can’t find a reason for it. It speaks to the sad racial tension in the city,” Szell said.

None of the weapons have been recovered, but police fear that the victims were pricked by syringes infected with the AIDS virus.

As a precaution against any possible diseases with which the object used in the attack could have been contaminated, the SEAS student received an inoculation from University Health Services yesterday, Scacalossi said.

A spokesperson from Health Services said late yesterday that none of the personnel present in the office knew what type of inoculation the student had received.

Columbia Security has reported the incident to the 26th Police Precinct, Scacalossi said.