

# 'Jane Doe' set as speaker

After being sexually assaulted, she sued the Toronto police for not warning of a serial rapist.

BY KELLY LOVEROCK  
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A Toronto woman who was sexually assaulted by a serial rapist and who later sued police for failing to warn women about him will tell her story tonight in London.

The woman, well-known by the pseudonym Jane Doe, is appearing as part of an anniversary speakers' series focusing on "powerful women who are finding their voices in the system," said Barb MacQuarrie of the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children at the University of Western Ontario.

The agency, which is marking its 10th anniversary, is co-host for the speech with Women's Community House, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Doe won a civil lawsuit against Toronto police in 1998 for its failure to warn her and other women about a serial rapist in her neighbourhood.

As the fifth victim of the sexual offender, dubbed the "balcony

rapist" for targeting women who lived alone in balcony apartments, Doe learned that police had neglected to issue public warnings or posters alerting women to the predator in their neighbourhood.

Despite a list of commonalities between the assaults, police believed releasing the information would cause women to become hysterical.

The judge in the case found the police investigation irresponsible and grossly negligent.

MacQuarrie believes Doe's case had an impact on the way police handle sexual violence but she said the root of the problem extends beyond policing.

"It's about the whole criminal justice system and the way women who are raped get treated in that system. Police are just the front-line responders. But the problems go much, much deeper than that," MacQuarrie said.

"I think (Doe's) case did a lot to illustrate how women are re-victimized in that system."

Marilyn Waring, who was elected a member of New Zealand's parliament at 22 and is the author of *If Women Counted*, is also a featured series speaker.

Doe's speech is set to begin at 7 p.m. at the Wolf Auditorium in the Central Library at 251 Dundas St. Admission is free.