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# Turns Out, Yeardeley Love Couldn't Have Gotten a Restraining Order If She Wanted To

Though Yeardeley Love never filed a restraining order against him, it's clear that George Huguely, charged with first-degree murder in his former girlfriend's death, had a violent past. He had been Tasered by a female police officer in 2008, after threatening her in a drunken rage. He had to be separated from Love at a party, and allegedly **attacked a sleeping teammate**, leaving his face bruised, after hearing that the player had kissed Love. He'd been charged with underage alcohol possession, reckless driving, and in 2008, police were summoned by the 22-year-old's father after the two got into a heated argument aboard a fishing boat and Huguely tried to swim the quarter mile to shore.

In the aftermath of Love's death—she was discovered by her roommates on May 3, lying in bed, bruised, with a pool of blood on her pillow—there has been ongoing discussion over what could have prevented the tragedy. The University of Virginia, from where the two students would have graduated this month, has come under fire for not picking up on Huguely's record sooner. The school, meanwhile, has questioned how they could have known—as state law doesn't require a school to be notified of a student's criminal behavior. Critics have questioned the role of privilege, and ego, and even lacrosse, in the beating, and examined Huguely's connection to the all-boys Landon prep school, where five members of the Duke lacrosse team embroiled in earlier scandal also graduated. (Charges against those students were later dropped, and all were exonerated.)

The tragedy has also brought new light to dating violence on college campuses, where as many as one in four female students experience sexual assault. But perhaps the most disturbing new revelation is the fact that, despite Huguely's violent past, Love couldn't have filed for a restraining order against him even if she wanted to. Virginia is one of eight states that excludes people in dating relationships—in other words, unmarried couples or partners—from getting protective restraining orders, and for the past three years, the state has failed an **annual assessment** of domestic-violence-protection laws. Presented by **Break the Cycle**, a national nonprofit that works to end domestic violence, the **State Law Report Card** assesses how easy, or difficult, it is for teens seeking legal protection from abuse. Writing for **the Huffington Post**, the organization's executive director, Marjorie Gilberg, put it this way: "Many of the blatant behaviors and warning signs that could have been leveraged for protection were not available to Love." "Laws are slow to change, and in this case, the laws are simply not keeping pace with the realities of dating violence," Gilberg told NEWSWEEK. **Virginia's law**, she added, also fails to protect victims of stalking, harassment, or property damage.



So while UVA president John Casteen met with Virginia's governor this week, asking him to **change state law** so college officials would be notified when students were arrested, maybe the gov should take a quick look at the abuse laws already on the books.

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May 12, 2010

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