

# Rape Is An Issue For Everyone

By Cindy S. Bridges  
Editor

Rape. Shatter your misconceptions. Rape is not sex; rape is not making love. Rape is, however, a deliberate act of physical, emotional, and psychological violence by one person against another. Many of the attitudes, beliefs, and mistaken ideas about rape have existed for centuries. It is time to separate the myths from the facts.

Rape myths are not founded in facts. Many rape myths originate and are perpetuated by socialization processes that specify sex-role behaviors and attitudes towards women. Society conveys to rape victims that they are responsible for the assault on their person.

Webster's dictionary defines rape as "a sexual intercourse with a woman by a man without her consent and chiefly by force or deception" and "an outrageous violation." Rape is fundamentally a crime of violence and is not motivated by sexual desire. Rapists utilize sexual violence to dominate, to express anger, and to feel powerful.

What do you think rape is? Something that happens to a woman walking alone at night down a deserted street? Something that only happens to "bad" girls or girls who "ask for it"? It only happens to young, beautiful girls who wear miniskirts, right? Rapists are strangers. Victims enjoy rape. "No" really means "yes." These are all myths about the serious crime against humanity—rape.

The fact is, rape can happen at any place, at any time, and to anyone. It is not limited to dimly lit streets and promiscuous girls. Victims have ranged in age from 2 months to 97 years. It can happen in your own home, in your car, in a parking lot, in a public building... the list goes on.

Rapists, don't forget, may look and act

like "normal" men. There is no such thing as a "typical" rapist. A rapist may be somebody's father, brother, friend, colleague, roommate, or fellow student. There is no way to "tell" if someone is a rapist until he commits an act of rape.

Rape is a lot of things: forcing, pressuring, coercing, deceiving, or intimidating a person into a sexual act. Rape is an abuse of power, an act of violence, a violation of trust. Rape is a word that has the power to instill fear into the minds of all women who hear it.

Before you finish reading this article, another woman will be raped. One out of every three American women will be sexually assaulted in her lifetime. According to the Ms. Magazine Study on Sexual Assault and Rape, rape is considered to be America's "national shame." The United States has the world's highest rape rate of the countries that publish such statistics. It is four times higher than Germany, 13 times higher than England, and 20 times higher than Japan.

Somewhere in America, a woman is raped every two minutes, according to the U.S. Department of Justice. This means 30 rapes are committed every hour, 720 rapes each day, 5,040 rapes every week, 21,600 rapes every month, and 262,800 rapes each year.

One of the most startling aspects of sex crimes is how many go unreported. The statistics listed above only reflect the rapes that were reported to the police. The most common reasons given by women for not reporting these crimes are the belief that it is a private or personal matter, they fear reprisal from the assailant, and that the police will not do anything about it anyway.

Be aware. The National Rape Victim Center reports that one out of every four college women have either been raped or



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Photo by Mary Hill

suffered attempted rape. In a study of college students, 35% of men indicated some likelihood that they would commit a violent rape of a woman who had fended off an advance if they were assured of getting away with it. One in 12 male students surveyed had committed acts that met the

gal definition of rape. 75% of male students and 55% of female students involved in acquaintance rape had been drinking or using drugs.

You probably know someone who has been a victim of sexual assault. Rape is an issue for everyone. Don't ignore the facts.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT: HOW AWARE ARE YOU?

1. Most rapes happen outside and at night.  
T or F
2. Rape happens to people of all ages, races, educational levels, religions, sexual orientations, and physical descriptions.  
T or F
3. Rapes are usually committed by strangers.  
T or F
4. About 10-20% of all sexual assaults are reported.  
T or F
5. Rape is motivated by sudden uncontrollable sexual urges.  
T or F
6. Rapists may look normal and cannot be easily identified.  
T or F
7. Persons who do not resist their attackers secretly want to be raped.  
T or F
8. Victims may initially fight the rape, but often end up enjoying it.  
T or F
9. A person can not charge their spouse or date with rape because by consenting to be with them, he/she has consented to intercourse.  
T or F
10. The way a person dresses and behaves socially can invite rape.  
T or F
11. Most people who fight back physically get away from their attackers.  
T or F
12. A person can usually talk a rapist out of the attack by telling them, he/she has a STD or is pregnant, etc.  
T or F
13. Adult women are the only targets of sexual assault.  
T or F
14. Rape affects men in many ways.  
T or F
15. People are often "paranoid" about being raped.  
T or F

Answers will be in the Nov. 22 issue!

## Crime Stoppers

On Oct. 18, 1999, Ms. Ann McGarrity reported that an individual(s) broke into her 1994 tan Ford Escort station wagon parked in the Honors Hall parking lot. The incident occurred between 11:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 15th and 10:20 a.m. Monday, Oct. 18th.

On Oct. 13, 1999 between the hours of 7:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m., it was discovered that an individual(s) vandalized the gate arm and traffic signal light at the North gate of the College.

On Sept. 21, 1999, unknown individual(s) set fire to a trash can

inside the downstairs men's bathroom inside the Student Union.

If anyone has information regarding these incidents, please contact Methodist College Crime Stoppers at 630-PATROL (7287).

A reward is offered to anyone who provides information that leads to the apprehension of the individual(s) who committed the crimes.

The identity of individuals providing information to Crime Stoppers is kept confidential.

We want your information, not your name.