

# Rape — beyond the myth

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*Pervert Park - what a peachful place for an evening job!*

*Candy was dressed in her jogging attire: a tight fitting v-neck t-shirt, satin adidas shorts, her hoop earrings dangling amidst her long blond hair which flowed behind her in the breeze.*

*It was nearing midnight when she stopped at a park bench, sheltered from the light by a grove of trees. Beginning her exercises, Candy flexed her elegant legs. Bending to touch her toes, she noticed a strange man watching her from a distance. Suddenly he advanced towards her, his pace quickening. She felt a thrilling sensation filling her as he eyed her voluptuous body.*

*In minutes he had her pinned to the ground, she squirmed helplessly but was forced to submit under his strong masculine grip. Her scream pierced the silent evening as she experienced a feeling of fear and delight.*

This classic situation of rape is a purely deceptive myth. Along with it go many other gross misconceptions. For instance, it is commonly believed that the rapist is a stranger. In truth, the rapist is often an acquaintance or friend of the victim.

Surely no one can believe the myth that says a rapist can be recognized by his appearance. For example, he could be that middle-aged father of four, who drives to work at the insurance company in his wood-panelled stationwagon every morning at nine o'clock.

Although strolling through a dark alley at night is not a wise idea, the majority of rapes are not limited to this type of setting. In fact, many actually occur in the back seat of cars, where the assailant awaits the victim's arrival in order to catch her off guard. A large number of rapes often occur in the home as well.

We are also led to believe in the myth that says women lead men on by their

style of dress and behaviour. Candy was a prime example of this. Unfortunately, it is not that simple. Rape is an act of violence, not seduction.

In the latest report, statistics have proven that these myths bear no resemblance whatsoever to the truth. Anyone, anywhere, anytime is a potential victim of rape. Absolutely no one is exempt. Here are the facts:

**ANYONE..**

-55 per cent of rape victims fall between the ages of 15 and 30.

(However the Kingston Rape Center knows of victims as young as one year old and as old as 82)

-4 per cent of rape victims in Kingston are students.

-11 per cent of rape victims are male.

-44 per cent of victims previously knew their assailant.

**ANYWHERE...**

-50 per cent of rapes occur in the victim's or offender's home.

-Rapes have occurred on the Queen's campus.

**ANYTIME...**

-a 65 year old woman raped at 8:30 a.m. while mailing a letter at the corner of her street.

-30 year old woman raped at 6 a.m. on way to work by a jogger.

-22 year old salesman raped on way home from work at 4 p.m.

-nine year old child raped by babysitter in early evening.

What happens to people who commit such horrifying crimes, and how are they punished? Surprisingly enough, often they are not. In a set of statistics released recently, it was revealed that only three per cent of Kingston rape incidents were taken to court during 1979. Of these a trifling few ended in convictions.

Last year in Kingston an estimated 60 per cent of rapes went unreported. The psychological factor plays a major part in preventing the victim from relaying the incident to the police. Often the victim is reticent to press charges, fearing the embarrassment of a police investigation and its effect on family members and

close friends. However, even in cases that do not undergo police investigation, the victim of rape can often be permanently injured by other psychological effects. Many will never respond sexually again, others cannot face the thought of being alone, some are paralyzed in their future encounters by a persistent fear of all men. Nightmares, physical sickness, and suicide are other shocking dimensions.

In a growing awareness of the occurrence of sexual assault here on campus, various organizations have been established to con-

front the problem. The Kingston Rape Crisis Centre and The Queen's Women Centre are available to help anyone who has experienced sexual harassment of any sort, and would like to discuss it or gather information on the subject. Both organizations report a disturbing lack of response.

The issue of rape has not been completely ignored. A possible solution has been developed by the boys in Brokington Residence, who have set up, on their own initiative a free escort service to accompany girls about campus, day or night.

Yet another service, the

Wendo Self Defense Course for Women offered at the Queen's Phys-Ed Centre, has fostered a new self confidence among women by teaching them tactics to fight off aggressors in any situation.

Clearly there has been progress to dispel the myths associated with rape. No longer are we apt to believe that the stranger who lurks in the park awaiting a vulnerable female is the only situation of which we must be wary. The onus falls on the individual to act responsibly. Be aware of the problem, for ignorance is an invitation to rape.

## How to avoid rape

- Don't go without clothes, that encourages men.
- Don't go with clothes-any clothes encourage some men.
- Don't go out alone at night, that encourages men.
- Don't go out alone at any time, any situation encourages some men.
- Don't go out with a female friend, some men are encouraged by numbers.
- Don't go out with a male friend, some male friends

- are capable of rape.
- or you may meet a rapist who will assault your friend before staring on you.
- Don't stay at home, intruders and relatives are both potential rapists.
- Avoid childhood, some rapist are turned on by the very young.
- Avoid old age, some rapists inflict themselves on aged women.
- Don't have neighbors, they often rape women.

- Don't have a father, grandfather, uncle or brother, these are the relatives who most often rape young women.
- Don't marry.
- rape is legal within marriage.
- To be quite sure, don't exist.

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