



Empowering Survivors of Rape and Abuse

ARTICLE 2

THE UGLY TRUTH ABOUT RAPE

When I started with our 16 day campaign, sending out my mails on each of the 16 days to introduce our topics, I had a few people asking to be removed from my mailing list. One of the problems in our society is that people do not want to hear about the bad things which is happening to others – **it is time we all stand up and make our voices heard. Hiding from the truth is not going to help anyone. The truth about rape is indeed ugly!**

What is rape?

According to Wikipedia: “Rape is a type of sexual assault initiated by one or more persons against another person without that person’s consent. The act may be carried out by physical force, or where the person is under threat or manipulation, or with a person who is incapable of valid consent.”

Rape is a sadistic crime and has nothing to do with desire, IT IS ABOUT POWER AND CONTROL – it can happen to anyone women, men, children, babies and the elderly – regardless of race, sexual orientation, culture or background.

No one asks to be raped – it is devastating for the victims leaving them traumatized and humiliated. It is not the victim’s fault, the rapist decided to rape so he/she is to blame.

CONSENT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RAPE AND SEX

Myths and truths about rape

What is a rape myth: “It is a prejudicial, stereotyped, or false belief about rape, rape victims, and rapists”

One of the big problems we face in our society is myths and stereotypes about rape. These false beliefs have serious effects on the community, on victims not getting healing and justice and allowing rapists to get away with the crime they committed. It is therefore important to know the difference between a myth and the truth and to reject the myths to enable victims to get healing and justice.

These are:

MYTH	TRUTH
A woman who has been drinking and is drugged asked to be raped	If there was no consent, it is rape! The law states that consent must be fully and freely given by someone with the capability to do so. If incapacitated due to alcohol, the person is not able to consent.
A woman wearing provocative clothing asked to be raped	The sight of a woman's body and what she is wearing does not create desire or lust to the rapist. Rape is about anger, hatred, power and control – so nothing to do with what she was wearing!
Rapists are always strangers	In most cases the rapists was known to the victim. Rape Crisis reports that 10% of cases it is a stranger and 90% someone known to the victim.
Rape cannot happen if you are married or in a sexual relationship	Even in a relationship, you have the right to say no. If after saying no, if sex is forced, it is rape.
If a person consented before it is ok to do it again.	One cannot presume that it will always be ok if it was the first time. Consent must be given EVERY TIME!
Sex workers cannot be raped	If there is no consent – it is rape. Everyone has the right to say “no”, even a sex worker.
Woman can prevent rape if she tries hard enough	Men are stronger than women, and if a weapon is used or she is threatened, she has no power to stop it.
Respectable women do not get raped	It can happen to anyone!
Boys and men can't be raped	Boys and men DO get raped
All perpetrators are men	Although the majority of cases are males, females are also perpetrators of sexual violence
A women is not really raped if she did not fight back	As 85% of rapists in South Africa is armed with a gun or a knife, the focus is on survival and not fighting back. Shock of the attack can also leave the victim feeling paralyzed.
Rape only happens outside in the dark – so women should not go out alone at night	It happens everywhere and at any time of day or night – in your own home, place of work, or places you might have felt safe at before.
Only young attractive girls are raped	Rape happens to everyone – men, women, children from all walks of life. Perceived attractiveness has nothing to do with it.
Women lie about rape to get revenge on a man.	Rape Crisis reports that 98% of reported cases are true. Due to the stigma attached to rape and the shame victims often feel, it makes it difficult for women to report.

Sex with a baby (virgin) will cure HIV/Aids	This is not true. THERE IS NO CURE FOR AIDS!
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The effects of myths:

The power in rape myths lie in their utility to protect us from the uncomfortable reality, extent and truths about victims and perpetrators. If you understand the truth you will know that you or your loved ones can fall victim to this crime – most people prefer not to think about this or avoid the issue. These myths therefore serve the purpose of explaining why rape victims deserve to be raped and reaffirms an individual’s false sense of security that they are somehow immune to rape. This leads to people not believing the victim and blaming the victim.

These myths also allows perpetrators to justify their behaviour.

It suggest to women that they can control not being a victim by always doing the good and the right things. If it then does happen, the victim will not report or tell family and friends due to feelings of guilt and shame – resulting in no healing for the victim.

The more these myths are believed the harder it will be to do something about this crime in our country.

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THE UGLY TRUTH ABOUT RAPE.....

RAPE IS A SADISTIC CRIME – IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH DESIRE!

WHAT YOU THINK YOU KNOW... IS NOT THE TRUTH!

- **Rape can happen to everyone** – women, men, children, babies, the elderly – regardless of race, sexual orientation, culture and background
- **No one asks to be raped!**
- **Rape has a devastating effect on its victims**
- **IT’S A SERIOUS CRIME!!**
- **YOU CAN BE RAPED BY A STRANGER OR SOMEONE YOU TRUST**
- **Rape is about POWER and control, not sex**
- **Rape is a crime of POWER, not passion**
- **Rape is ABUSE OF YOUR HUMAN RIGHTS and it is against the law**

CONSENT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RAPE AND SEX

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***IF YOU REQUIRE FURTHER INFORMATION, OR WOULD LIKE TO SUPPORT THE EPIC FOUNDATION, CONTACT:
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Also view our website for more information: www.epicfoundation.org.za