

# RAPE

## WHAT IS RAPE ?

In South African law rape is only called rape when a man forces his penis into a woman's vagina against her will. This means that if a man forces his penis into the mouth or anus of a woman, this is not seen as rape in South African law.

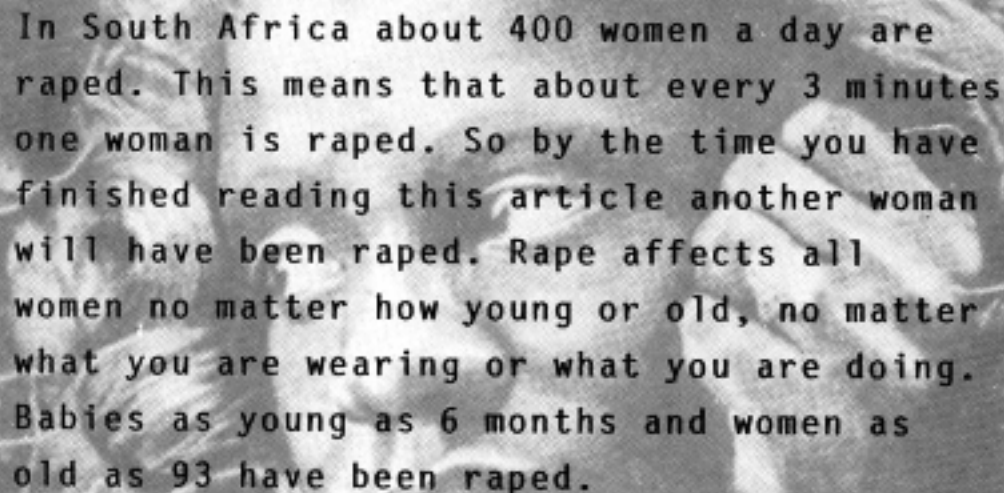
We believe that if a man sexually assaults a woman in any way this is rape.

The law also says that a man can't rape his wife because

he is allowed to have sex with her whenever he likes - no matter what she feels. We believe that if a man has sex with his wife against her will, he has raped her.

## WHY DOES RAPE HAPPEN?

Men do not rape for sex. They do not choose to rape the woman because she is "sexy". He may want to prove his manliness. He may want to hurt or humiliate someone he sees as less powerful



In South Africa about 400 women a day are raped. This means that about every 3 minutes one woman is raped. So by the time you have finished reading this article another woman will have been raped. Rape affects all women no matter how young or old, no matter what you are wearing or what you are doing. Babies as young as 6 months and women as old as 93 have been raped.

Together we must fight rape and try to put an end to it. We must start feeling angry toward the men who rape us and stop blaming ourselves for it.

than himself and this is why he will choose a woman to rape. These men who rape are often married or have steady girlfriends.

From the time that we are small, boys are taught to be strong and to think that they are always in charge, and girls are taught to let men be in charge of them.

As long as this is the case, rape will keep on happening.

When a woman is raped by a gang, these men are usually

showing off to each other. When soldiers and policemen rape women they are using their power to control and terrorize people.

## WHERE AND WHEN DOES RAPE HAPPEN ?

Rape can happen in any place at any time. Most rapes happen in someone's home.

## IF YOU ARE RAPED...

You may not want to report the rape to the police but if you do decide to report it then you must do so as soon as you can. You can only get a legal abortion if you have reported the rape.

If you decided to report the rape:

1. Do not wash or change your clothes because you will need to be seen by the district surgeon.  
• Take some other clothes to change into because the police may want to keep your clothes for evidence.
2. As soon as you can, tell a friend what happened so that later your friend can also tell the police how you looked and felt after the rape.
3. Do not take any alcohol or drugs before going to see the police or doctor.



Graphic from Spare Rib

4. Ask a friend, or someone from Rape Crisis to go with you to report the rape and stay with you the whole time.
5. At the police station you will have to make a statement and be examined by the district surgeon  
Remember that:-

\*The District Surgeon will not treat you and so you should go to the hospital or to a doctor for treatment and for medicine to prevent VD.

\*You may have to go with the police to the place where you were raped. Take your friend too.

\*You must ask the person who takes your statement to read it back to you. Get a copy of it so that you can remember what happened in case you have to go to court.

\*You can ask to speak to a policewoman and and to be in a separate room when you give your statement.

## WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT RAPE ?

It is every woman's right to walk around without the fear of being attacked and raped. But as long as the society we live in remains such a violent



**HANDS OFF ME  
NOT A TOY!**



society and men continue to believe that they can take out all their frustrations and anger on women or prove their manliness or power by raping women, we must do what we can to stop rape.

Take care of yourself when you have to walk around by yourself by:-

- \* trying to walk with other people, or near others even if you don't know them;
- \* carrying a simple weapon, like a bunch of keys or a deodorant spray to spray in the eyes of your attacker;
- \* walking strongly and knowing what is going on around you;
- \* trying to find a safe place quickly if you are being followed.

As women every one of us has the chance of being raped. Many of us have already been raped. We must not keep quiet about rape. In our organisations we must talk about rape and support our sisters who have been raped. We must help or call someone else to help when we hear another woman scream. And if we know of a man at work or in our community who has behaved in a threatening way, we must warn other women about him. It's time we started feeling angry that we get raped and stop blaming ourselves, after all it is men who rape us.

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This article was written for SPEAK by Rape Crisis.

## **RAPE CRISIS**

Rape Crisis will help any person who has been raped. You can phone at any time of the day or night. Our number is 232323 (at lifeline) or 295123 (at Autopage).

We will also come and talk to any group which wants to know more about rape.

We are always pleased to meet people who want to stop rape so if you are interested please contact us. We especially need Zulu speaking women to help us in our work.

Our address is P.O. Box 37584 Overport.

## **SIGNIFICANT JUDGEMENT**

Last year four men raped Ms Goitseone, after dragging her from her car and chasing her boyfriend away. After gang-raping her, at least two of the men participated in putting her in the boot of the car and setting it alight. She was burnt alive - a horrifying event that can only happen in a society where men have more power than women; where violence is the order of the day; and where one race is seen to be superior to another. In this case the rapists and murderers were white and their crime was against a black woman. What is important about this case is the sentence that the judge pronounced - THE DEATH PENALTY FOR ALL FOUR.