



## Rape: How is it Still Allowed?

How would you feel if every time you left a building past dark, you had to check your surroundings for a follower? How would you feel if you knew how to disarm and disable a person in three different ways using only your car keys? How would you feel if you were constantly aware of what you were wearing, because it could mean life or death? Finally, how would you feel if there wasn't a single thing you could do about it? Every hour, 78 rapes happen worldwide. Only 36% of rapes are reported (National Institute of Justice). I ask you, how do you feel?

Most statutes define rape as nonconsensual oral, anal, or vaginal penetration of the victim by body parts or objects using force, threats of bodily harm, or by taking advantage of a victim who is incapacitated or otherwise incapable of giving consent (National Institute of Justice). However, there are many different types of sexual harassment that can include a wide range of unwanted acts toward the victim. It is getting to the point that sexual harassment in the workplace is actually becoming somewhat of a social norm. While some may say that women use their sexuality to get raises and bonuses at work, most of the time, the sexual advances are unwelcomed and uncomfortable.

Now, some may be thinking, "well, not all men rape women." So, why is this such a problem? You're absolutely right. Not all men rape. Laura Pedro writes, "Women are told not to walk home alone because of male predators in society." While there are many cases of rapes that happen from a random attack, most of the time, it's not. Of the 17.6% survivors of rape or attempted rape, 64% of the women said that their attacker was a boyfriend, spouse, date or other trusted male figure (Sexual Violence). Not all men are the type to do this. However, yes, all women are targets. Yes, all women are taught by a young age that they could be picked up by someone who wants to hurt or kill them. Yes, all women are taught to throw out their drinks after they've walked away from them in fear of the date rape drug. Yes, all women are targets, throughout the entirety of their lives. Yes, all women.

Another topic is the fact that some women just don't cover up enough, or that they don't actually say the word "No." I ask you, since when did the clothes that women wear give the consent that she doesn't actually speak herself? There is absolutely no article of clothing in the world that can justify taking away someone's dignity in raping them. "Prevention for women is important, but it is men's actions that need to change," Pedro says. It is necessary for parents not only to teach their daughters how to avoid rape, but to teach their sons not to rape. The more times that this heinous crime is excused, the more we are making it seem as if it's not a big deal. The fact is, if men wouldn't rape, there would be absolutely no need to teach women how to avoid being raped.

Most see rape as something without consent, and it is. However, it goes beyond that. Rape is an act of violence, more so than it is a sexual act. It's more likely to be brought on by anger and anti-social rage than it is by a need for sex. The perpetrator is using rape to vent his violent urges in the most dehumanizing way possible. Rape is something that happens every day, every hour, every minute. How can we as human beings allow this to become so



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commonplace? How can we expect to raise women of power in a society when they are scared to walk home at night? How can we allow this to go on? We can't. We shouldn't. We won't.