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Rape:

Tulsa Women Speak Out

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Mary is a 27-year-old mother who recently separated from her husband John. John showed up very drunk at Mary's apartment one night. He pleaded with Mary to let him in so he could talk to her and make things right again. Mary refused to let him in. John pleaded and pleaded and finally told Mary that he would kill himself if she did not let him in. Mary reluctantly opened the door. John started screaming at her, knocked her to the floor, and forced Mary to have sexual intercourse with him.



Betty is a 47-year-old housewife. She returned to her home after a shopping trip. She entered her home and carried her packages into the bedroom. As she entered her bedroom she saw two strange men. She screamed and tried to run. One of the men grabbed her and put a knife to her throat. He threw Betty on the bed, cut her cheek with the knife, and told her if she did not give him and his friend sex he would kill her.



Nancy is a 16-year-old high school junior. She went to a party where they were serving liquor. Bill, a senior at Nancy's school, offered her a drink. When Nancy finished her drink, Bill offered her another, and another, and another. Nancy eventually became very drunk and sleepy. Bill offered to take her outside to get some air. Bill led Nancy to the backyard and told her she should sit down. Bill started to touch Nancy's body. Nancy said "don't" but she was too drunk to resist. Bill pushed himself onto her and forced Nancy to have sexual intercourse.

Introduction

These scenes of sexual violence and rape are familiar to most Americans. Turn on the television, buy a ticket to the movies, browse through the book, magazine, or newsstands, and chances are you will come across scenes of a woman being sexually assaulted. Although most Americans experience rape vicariously through the silver screen, there are significant numbers of American women who have had and will have the misfortune to experience rape in the real world - in their homes, in their cars, in their offices, and on their streets.

National crime statistics show that the number of reported rapes in this country has risen steadily over the past 10 years. In fact, the Bureau of Justice Statistics National Crime Survey shows that between 1990 and 1991 there was a greater increase in the number of reported rapes than in any other type of violent crime.

There has also been a growing awareness among law enforcement officials and rape victim advocacy groups that many more rapes occur each day in this country than are reported to the police. National

surveys to determine the percentage of rapes that are reported out of all those that occur offer a range of estimates that vary between 10%¹ and 60%². This means that in the best case scenario only 6 in 10 women who are raped ever report their rape to the police, and that rapes occur nearly twice as frequently in our communities than official counts indicate. National crime statistics showed 102,560 victims of reported rape in 1990. Consequently, even by the most conservative estimate, nearly one-quarter of a million Americans were probably forcibly raped during that year.

On the other hand, the worst case scenario suggests that only about 2 in 10 women who are raped ever report their rape to the police, and that rapes occur more than 5 times more frequently than documented. By this estimate, more than half a million Americans were forcibly raped during 1990 alone.

It is important to recognize that whichever of these estimates best approximates the truth, they are both pointing to the same kind of reality: rape is one of America's most hidden crimes and at least several hundred thousand women are forcibly raped in America each year.

The purpose of this study is to learn more about one of America's most hidden crimes. Who are the victims of rape? What are the circumstances surrounding rape? What happens to victims during an assault? Why do victims decide to report or not report their rapes? What kind of experiences do victims have who report rape to the police? Moreover, because women are the most likely victims of rape, it is also important to learn more about what women in general think and feel about the threat of rape. How fearful are women about the possibility of being raped? Has fear of being raped forced women to change their everyday behavior? Do women know how to protect themselves from being raped? How do most women think rapists should be punished? What do the most likely victims of rape think society should do to prevent rape from happening?

The answers to these questions are crucial to America's efforts to prevent future rapes from occurring. In an effort to find these answers, the Tulsa Institute of Behavioral Sciences in collaboration with the Tulsa Police Department's Sex Crimes Unit, the Tulsa Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program, Tulsa's District Attorney's Office, and the Tulsa Psychiatric Center invited 1,000 women living in "America's most typical city" to speak out about rape.



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Rape: Tulsa Women Speak Out

Executive Summary

Purpose

Try to imagine every person who lives in the city of Dallas, America's 8th largest, being forcibly raped. As crazy as this thought may seem, official national crime statistics show that the number of people forcibly raped in this country between 1982 and 1992 is approximately equivalent to the current population of Dallas.

As if the thought of 1,000,000 people being raped isn't disturbing enough, America's law enforcement officials openly recognize that many more rapes occur each day in this country than are actually reported to the police. In fact, a recent national survey has produced an estimate for rape in America that would place the actual number of people raped in this country during the past decade as roughly equivalent to the combined current populations of Los Angeles, Chicago, and Houston.

Because crimes involving sexual violence are under-reported, rape, along with child molestation, and domestic violence are considered by most authorities to be among America's most hidden crimes. How hidden is the crime of rape in American communities? Why don't more women report being raped to the police?

The purpose of this study is to learn more about one of America's most hidden crimes. Who are the victims of rape? What are the circumstances typically surrounding rape? What happens to victims during an assault? Why do victims decide to report or not report their rapes to the police? What kinds of experiences do victims have when they do report rape to the police? How has rape affected the lives of women, whether they have been

raped or not? Are most women prepared to defend themselves against the threat of sexual violence? What do the most likely victims of rape think society should do to prevent rape from happening?

The answers to these questions are crucial to America's efforts to prevent future rapes from happening. In an effort to find these answers, the Tulsa Institute of Behavioral Sciences in collaboration with the Tulsa Police Department's Sex Crimes Unit, the Tulsa Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program, Tulsa's District Attorney's Office, and the Tulsa Psychiatric Center invited 1,000 women living in "America's most typical city" to speak out about rape.

Method

During a two week period in the Fall of 1992, a representative sample of 980 adult Tulsa women completed a survey about how rape and the possibility of rape has affected them. The 330 item self-administered survey charts three different response tracks in terms of whether a woman has never been raped, has been raped and reported it to the police, or has been raped and never reported the rape to the police. In addition, all respondents are surveyed about: 1) how rape in the community has affected their lives; 2) their knowledge and opinions about rape; and 3) what they think can be done to reduce the incidence of rape. To encourage truthful responding, participation in the study was voluntary, confidential, and completely anonymous.

Main Findings

Results of this study can be summarized in 14 main findings.

1) "Rape is a common occurrence"

1 in 3 women in the community report that they have been forcibly raped at least once in their lives. Moreover, 1 in 2 of these victims say they have been raped more than once. In addition to rape, 1 in 3 women reported that they were sexually molested as children, usually by a family member or relative. Overall, nearly 1 in 2 women in the community reported that they have experienced some form of sexual abuse during their lifetime.

2) "Most victims of rape are in their teens and 20's"

7 in 10 women who were raped were younger than 20 years old when they were first raped. An additional 2 in 10 victims were first raped between the ages of 20 and 30.

3) "Most victims are raped by people they know"

8 in 10 women who were raped were assaulted by someone whom they knew. Nearly 4 in 10 were raped by a current or former husband or boyfriend; 3 in 10 by a friend, casual acquaintance, or other non-relative; and 1 in 10 by a family member or relative. Results also show that 1 in 10 were raped by a total stranger they had never seen before and an additional 1 in 10 were raped by a stranger whom they had just met prior to the assault.

4) "Rape is violent and most victims try to resist"

Victim accounts show that 3 in 4 men used physical force to rape their victims. Results also show that 9 in 10 women actively resisted their attacker by pleading, screaming, shouting, striking, and/or trying to escape. Only 1 in 10 passively complied usually because they were being raped by

someone they knew and trusted, they were too drunk, or they were too young at the time to resist.

5) "Most victims do not report rape to the police"

Less than 2 in 10 women who were forcibly raped ever reported their rape to the police. Results show that of the 8 in 10 who did not report, most said it was because *they were too embarrassed, they felt partly responsible, or they did not feel there was enough evidence for their report to lead to anything*. Results also show that 2 in 5 of the women who did not report their rape regretted their decision later in life. On the other hand, most women who reported their rape said it was because *they wanted their rapist punished, and they were afraid that the person who raped them would rape someone else*. Three in four of the women who reported their rape said they were glad they had decided to make a report.

6) "Some women are less likely to report rape to the police than others"

Women who are educated, affluent, employed, and raped by people whom they know are the least likely to report being raped. Victim accounts also indicate that some kinds of rapes are less likely to be reported than others. Date rapes, rapes happening after the victim meets her assailant at a bar or party, rapes occurring after the victim is invited to the assailant's home, and rapes occurring while the victim and assailant are living together are the least likely rapes to be reported to the police.

7) "Most women do not have a medical exam after they have been raped"

Only 1 in 5 rape victims had a medical exam to collect forensic evidence and test for sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, AIDS, HIV, or possible internal injuries. Moreover, results show that 1 in 4 of the women who did have a post-rape medical exam did not tell the examining medical staff they had been raped.

8) "Rape is virtually an unpunished crime"

A rapist was arrested in less than 1 in 10 of all rapes that occurred. Victim accounts also indicate that rapists received some form of actual punishment in only 2% of all rapes that occurred.

9) "Most victims experience significant mental and emotional distress as a result of being raped, and few victims received psychological counseling to help them manage their distress"

7 in 10 women who were raped experienced considerable post-rape distress including nervousness, depression, detachment and estrangement from others, difficulty sleeping, and sexual dysfunction. Victim accounts also show that 2 in 10 victims tried to commit suicide as a result of being raped, and 1 in 10 became pregnant. Even though most victims experienced mental and emotional distress, only 1 in 5 received psychological counseling. The two most prevalent reasons for not seeking counseling were that many victims wanted to deny or forget their rape experience, and many did not know about the benefits of counseling or the particulars of how to get counseling.

10) "Rape has long-term physical and mental health consequences"

Women who were raped are almost 5 times more likely to currently experience poor mental health including lower self-esteem and dissatisfaction with life than women who were never raped. Comparisons also show that rape victims are 3 times more likely to currently experience poor physical health than women who were never raped. Moreover, these poorer health status findings were consistent even among women who were raped more than 10 years ago.

11) "Rape has had a significant impact even on the lives of women who have never been raped"

1 in 2 never-raped women hear or read about rape in the media at least a couple times a week, and 1 in 4 think about the possibility of being raped on a regular basis. Results also show that 9 in 10 women who have never been raped have altered their lifestyles because they fear rape. In addition, 1 in 2 never-raped women say they are fearful about being a woman and angry that they have to worry about rape.

12) "Most women who have never been raped have unrealistic expectations about how they would respond to being raped"

Unlike rape victims, 7 in 10 women who were never raped believe that if they were raped it would be by a stranger rather than by someone they know. More than 9 in 10 women who were never raped believe they would report their rape to the police. Only 4 in 10 never-raped women believe that embarrassment and self-blame about their rape would prevent them from reporting it to the police. In addition, 9 in 10 never-raped women also believe they would seek psychological counseling if they were raped.

13) "Most women in the community are unprepared to protect themselves against rape"

Only 1 in 3 women in the community have ever attended a rape prevention or self-defense program. Only 1 in 6 think they know a lot about how to protect themselves from rape, and only 1 in 20 think they could defend themselves during an actual assault. Almost all women want to learn more about rape prevention and self-defense, yet only 1 in 5 definitely plan to attend a rape prevention program this year.

14) **"Most women in the community believe that harsher punishments for men convicted of rape and more rape awareness education are the most effective ways society can prevent rape"**

More than 9 in 10 women believe society could do things to reduce the incidence of rape. Nine in 10 think prosecuting everyone charged with rape, giving out harsher penalties for rape including castration, life-imprisonment, and capital punishment for second-time offenders, and teaching rape awareness to young girls and boys are potentially the most effective solutions for preventing rape. Moreover, 1 in 2 women think rape awareness education should be taught in elementary school.

Conclusions

Rape is a common occurrence. Most victims are defenseless young females who are raped and violated by people whom they know and often trust. Women and girls who are raped usually suffer extreme mental and emotional pain as a result of their assault which often lasts for years. Although thousands of American women and girls are raped everyday, few ever report their rapes to the police. Most do not report their rape because they are embarrassed, afraid others will find out, and believe they will be stigmatized or otherwise punished for their victimization.

As a result of not reporting rape, men who rape women rarely experience consequences for the devastation they bring to a usually young and innocent female life. Without a stiff price to pay, there is little to deter men from raping women except a woman's own ability to protect and defend herself. Unfortunately, the majority of women and girls who are the primary targets of rape do not know how to protect and defend themselves from sexual assault.

A society that allows rape and other forms of sexual violence to remain hidden and unpunished, and allows the potential

victims of rape to remain defenseless, is a society that tacitly condones sexual violence as an acceptable transaction of everyday life.

Is America such a society? Apparently the answer is yes. Does America have to remain a society in which sexual violence is a part of the fabric of everyday life? The answer is no. America can change, but to do so will require a monumental commitment on the part of the citizenry and government of this country to alter that part of the fabric of American life that promotes sexual violence as an acceptable way for men and women to behave toward one another. If America has the will and commitment to make this change, the strategies for change are straightforward: *education* and *consequences*.

The fact that most rapes involve men who believe they are entitled to use physical force to have what they believe are sexual relations with women or girls who have already said "no" indicates that sexual violence is often a product of how men in our society have been socialized to relate to women. Apparently many men have been conditioned to believe that females are objects for their gratification, and that sex and violence are one and the same thing. Similarly, the fact that 1/3rd of the women who are raped choose not to report their rape to the police because they don't want their rapist to get into trouble, and that most don't report because they feel partly responsible for their victimization indicates that sexual violence is also a product of how women in our society are socialized to relate to men. Apparently many women have been conditioned to be victims.

That many American men and women maintain these kinds of attitudes should not be surprising given the history of male and female relations in the world and the frequency with which sex and violence are coupled in our national media. The fact that most rape victims and victimizers are young people in their teens and twenties shows that the attitudes and beliefs that make rape acceptable are learned at an early age.

If society is to make rape truly unacceptable, then young people (both girls and boys) must be taught what rape is, what happens to victims of sexual assault, and how to avoid situations that often turn into sexual violence. Moreover, according to the majority of women who participated in this study, rape awareness education should begin in elementary school.

Unfortunately, most schools, churches, and other institutions that educate young people do not provide rape prevention information. This is often because of a belief in the myth that rape is about sex and therefore, an inappropriate topic for young people.

What this myth fails to recognize is that rape is not about sex. Rape is about violence and violation. Educating young people that rape is a crime and unacceptable under any circumstance, and teaching them about how to avoid rape is the only way American communities have of protecting their children. Until rape awareness education is routinely taught to young people, it will be impossible to alter the fabric of American life that allows sexual violence to occur.

The second strategy to reduce rape is to make rape a "punishable" crime. When less than 10% of the rapes that occur end in a rapist facing consequences for his assault, there is little to deter that person from raping again. To make rape a punishable crime, several things will have to happen.

First, women must be educated and encouraged to report rape whenever and wherever it occurs. Unless victims report sexual assault, there can be no punishment for rape. This education must include information about: 1) the barriers that prevent women from reporting rape, 2) how to preserve the evidence of sexual assault, and 3) the legal options and support services available to victims of rape. Until this kind of education and encouragement is provided to all women in this society, irrespective of age and social status, rape will continue to be a mostly hidden and unpunished crime.

If more victims report rape, learn how to preserve evidence, and cooperate throughout the investigative process, then the next phase in making rape a punishable crime, the prosecution of rape, should be significantly enhanced. Prosecutors can only prosecute rape when there is sufficient evidence to build a case and when they are working with a determined and reliable plaintiff. If and when these conditions become the rule rather than the exception, then rape will become a prosecutable crime.

The final thing that must happen to make rape a punishable crime is that men who are convicted of raping women must receive harsher punishments for their crime than they are currently receiving. Putting a man who is convicted of rape on probation, or keeping him in prison for 2 or 3 years before placing him in a pre-release program, serves little purpose. These kinds of punishments do not send a message that rape is a serious and unacceptable crime, nor do they keep men who rape women off the streets so that they cannot rape again.

Two-thirds of the men who were arrested for rape in this community last year had prior criminal records, many of which involved arrests and convictions for sex crimes. This fact alone should tell us that current sentencing structures are not an effective deterrent to rape. Moreover, the fact that 96% of the women in this community believe that harsher punishments for rapists would be the most effective way to prevent rape should tell us that there is a sizeable public desire for changing the way our penal systems handle criminals convicted of sexual assault. Unfortunately, state and federal governments do not seem to be responding to these facts. Prisons are overcrowded and taxpayers are reluctant to build new ones.... and more than a thousand teenage girls are raped in America everyday. Does America have the will to stop rape or is sexual violence too much a part of the fabric of American life?



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We want to offer a very special thanks to Helenmarie Zachritz who directs Tulsa's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program and each of the nurses who volunteer their time and energies to help rape victims and gather evidence to prosecute rapists. Our work with Ms. Zachritz during this project has left us convinced that programs like SANE are an absolute necessity for effectively fighting rape in America's communities.

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Dr. Jill Novacek & Dr. Robert Raskin



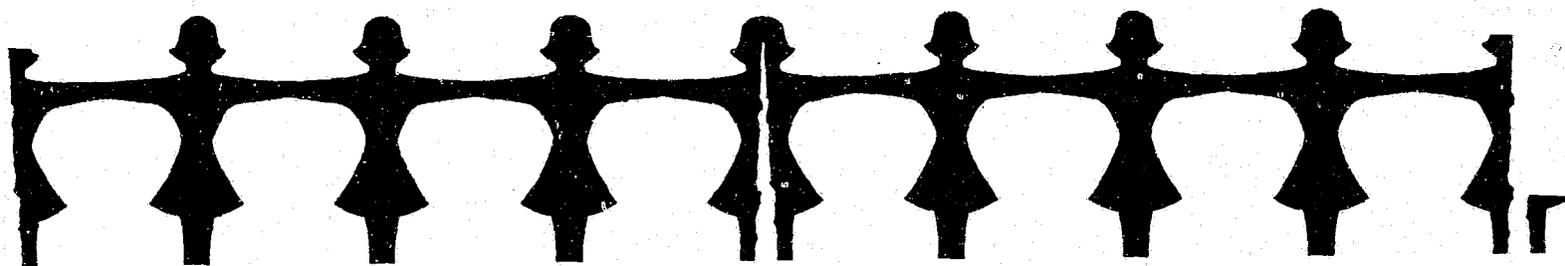
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I. Background



- * Who Did the Study?
- * The Method
- * The Procedure
- * The Statistical Analyses
- * Demographic Description of Survey Participants

Rape: Tulsa Women Speak Out

I. Background

A. Who Did the Study?

1. The Sponsors

a. Tulsa Police Department Sex Crimes Unit

The Tulsa Police Department Sex Crimes Unit has eight detectives and a Unit manager who are responsible for investigating rapes, sexual assaults, forcible sodomies, peeping toms, and sexual child abuse. The TPD Sex Crimes Unit is a well-educated and experienced group of officers. All nine members are college graduates with an average of 15 years of law enforcement experience, and an average of three years of specific experience in investigating sex crimes. Moreover, prior to joining the unit each officer receives one month of intensive training in sex crimes investigation. Once in the unit the detectives continuously update their expertise by attending national sex crime related seminars and training schools.

In 1992, the Sex Crimes Unit investigated 388 rapes, 391 lewd molestations, and 154 sexual assaults. This means each detective was responsible for investigating about 120 sex crimes - about one new case every other day.

b. Tulsa Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program (SANE)

Tulsa's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program, SANE, which was initiated in 1991 by the Tulsa Police Department, uses trained forensic nurses to collect evidence from rape victims. The program is coordinated through TPD's Sex Crimes Unit and the Mayor's Office, and is a multidisciplinary effort among seven different organizations in Tulsa: the Police Department; Call Rape; Hillcrest Medical Center; University of Oklahoma, College of Medicine; the District Attorney's Office; the Victim/Witness Center; and the Tulsa City-County Health Department. The coordinator is a member of the Mayor's staff which assures the program high visibility and community support.

To date, SANE nurses have completed about 400 rape exams. In recognition of this accomplishment, the Tulsa Police Department Forensic Chemist recently reported a vast improvement in the quality of the forensic evidence collected in cases where victims had a SANE exam. Tulsa District Attorney David Moss has also recognized the contributions of SANE nurses by designating them as expert witnesses in the prosecution of rape. In addition, the Tulsa SANE program received a U. S. Justice Department Award for Public Service in 1991.

2. The Funders

a. Tulsa District Attorney's Office

Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the District Attorney's Drug Forfeiture Fund. The District Attorney's Office has been a strong supporter of the investigators of the Tulsa Police Department Sex Crimes Unit and their efforts to encourage victims to report sexual assault.

b. Tulsa Psychiatric Center

Funding was also provided by a matching grant from the Tulsa Psychiatric Center (TPC). TPC is a nonprofit charitable organization that provides funding for community-based research and human service delivery programs that improve life in Tulsa. For over 20 years, TPC has been Tulsa's largest private contributor of mental health care services to the indigent through its support of Parkside Hospital and The Haven. In addition, TPC has also funded significant research on Tulsa's homeless, the severe and persistently mentally ill, and school dropouts. TPC supported this project in order to help Tulsa's law enforcement agencies obtain information that will assist the community in fighting sexual violence.

3. The Community Partners

At its best, community research must represent a community partnership in which different organizations representing different community interests join together to find answers to the same questions. Tulsa is fortunate to have many organizations that are truly concerned about the occurrence of rape in their city. Among the many organizations that expressed interest in this study, the following are community partners that directly participated in implementing this research.

- * Call Rape
- * Church of the Restoration
- * Citizen's Crime Commission
- * Indian Health Care Resource Center
- * Junior League of Tulsa
- * Parkside Homeless Mental Health Outreach Clinic
- * Project Get Together
- * Public Service Company of Oklahoma
- * The Williams Companies
- * Tulsa City-County Health Department
- * Tulsa Metropolitan Ministries Resident Services Program
- * University Center at Tulsa
- * University of Tulsa - Sororities
- * University of Tulsa - Women's Resource Center

4. The Researchers: Tulsa Institute of Behavioral Sciences

The Tulsa Institute of Behavioral Sciences (TIBS) is a nonprofit organization specializing in community research, development, program evaluation, and education. TIBS uses science and technology to examine community problems and guide community efforts to improve quality of life. TIBS has conducted extensive research on homelessness, at-risk youth, teenage substance use, mental health services, and the plight of the severely and persistently mentally ill.

B. The Method

1. The TIBS Community Rape Survey

The *TIBS Community Rape Survey* is a 330 item self-administered questionnaire that charts 3 different response tracks in terms of whether a woman has never been raped, has been raped and reported the rape to the police, or has been raped and never reported the rape to the police. In addition to surveying each respondent's personal experience of rape, all respondents are surveyed about: 1) how rape in the community has affected their lives; 2) their knowledge and opinions about rape; and 3) what they think can be done to reduce the incidence of rape and help rape victims. The TIBS Community Rape survey takes between 15 and 30 minutes to complete depending on the respondent's personal experience with rape.

C. The Procedure

During a two week time period, 14 community partner organizations administered a specified number of surveys to women connected with their organizations. The community partners have access to a variety of women who represent different segments of Tulsa's adult female population. Potential survey participants included employees, volunteers, customers, clients, and students of the community partner organizations.

Surveys were administered in waiting rooms, organizational meetings, at work sites, and in dormitories. Some sponsors verbally read instructions aloud and handed out surveys, others set up tables in their reception rooms with posted instructions inviting women to participate, while others sent notices inviting women to participate.

Instructions invited women to participate in a city-wide survey examining how rape and the possibility of being raped affects women who live in the Tulsa area. They were told the survey was voluntary, confidential, and completely anonymous, and would take 15 to 30 minutes to complete. To ensure confidentiality, participants were instructed to seal completed surveys in the attached envelopes and deposit them in designated survey collection boxes.

D. The Statistical Analyses

The SPSS statistical package was used for all statistical analyses of survey responses. Data were subjected to a variety of inferential analyses including chi-square, T-tests, ANOVA, Pearson correlation, point-biserial correlation, and multiple regression. All of the statistical differences or relationships reported are significant at least the $p < .05$ level of probability.

E. Demographic Description of Survey Participants

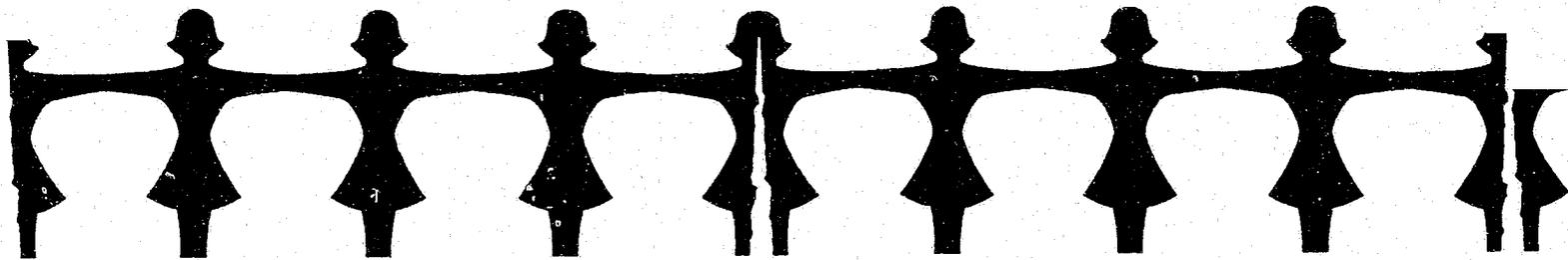
Of the 1,025 surveys administered and collected, 980 were completed correctly. Forty-five of the surveys (4%) were either incomplete or completed incorrectly. Following is a demographic description of the 980 Tulsa women who participated in the survey.

Age:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6% Under 20 years old 25% Between 20 and 29 years old 36% Between 30 and 39 years old 22% Between 40 and 49 years old 11% 50 years old or older
Race:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% White 11% Black 9% American Indian 1% Asian 1% Hispanic
Marital Status:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 57% Married/living with significant other 43% Single (39% Divorced)
Children:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% Have at least one child currently living at home
Education:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6% Never completed high school 13% High school graduate/GED 45% Some college 26% College graduate 10% Graduate school
Employment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% Full-time employment 11% Part-time employment 21% Not employed
Household Income:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 19% Poor (\leq \$11,999) 17% Low-middle income (\$12,000 - \$24,999) 30% High-middle income (\$25,000 - \$49,999) 34% Upper income (\geq \$50,000)
Residency:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% Have lived in Tulsa area for more than 10 years

[Figure 1]

Comparing sample demographics with Tulsa's 1990 census data shows that the women who participated in this study are for the most part representative of Tulsa's adult female population. However, American Indian women, women in their 30's, women who have been divorced, women who are employed in a full-time job, women who have some college experience, and women from upper income households are somewhat over-represented in this sample. Conversely, women over the age of 50, women with a high school education or less, and women who live in lower-middle income households are somewhat under-represented in this sample. In summary, the model or average woman in this sample is a white female in her 30's, married or living with a significant other, has at least one child living at home, has attended some college, is employed at a full-time job, and lives in a household with a family income of over \$50,000. This description is very similar to the 1990 census description of the model adult woman who lives in Tulsa.

II. Tulsa Women and Sexual Abuse



- * **Tulsa Women and Rape**
- * **Tulsa Women and Child Molestation**
- * **Tulsa Women and Overall Sexual Abuse**
- * **Chapter Summary**

II. Tulsa Women and Sexual Abuse

A. Tulsa Women and Rape

Although the word "rape" refers to an act of sexual violence, it often has different connotations for different people. Consequently, to make sure all respondents had the same understanding of what was meant by the word rape, they were supplied with a definition of rape drawn from *Oklahoma Statute Title 21* that legally defines rape as a criminal act. Following is the definition that women were asked to respond to:

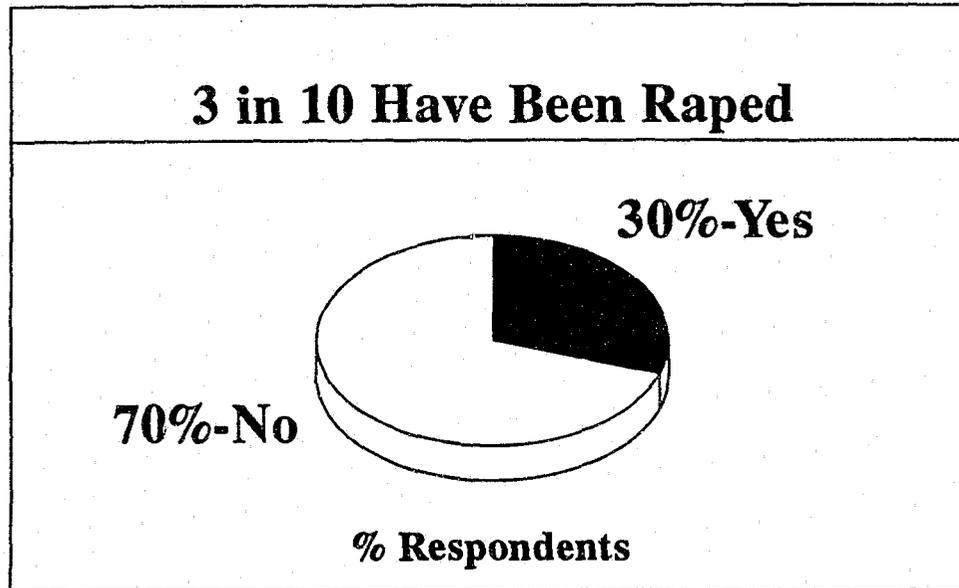
FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY, RAPE IS DEFINED AS:

"An event that occurred without the woman's consent, involved the use of force or threat of force, and involved sexual penetration of the victim's vagina, mouth, or rectum.

By sexual penetration, we mean having a male put a penis in your vagina, anus, or mouth, or having a person penetrate your vagina or anus with mouth, tongue, fingers, or other objects.

By force, we mean a person pushing you down and getting on top of you, using a weapon, threatening to hurt you or people close to you, or having sexual relations with you when you are unconscious or too incapacitated to give your consent."

1. How Many Tulsa Women Have Ever Been Raped?



[Figure 2]

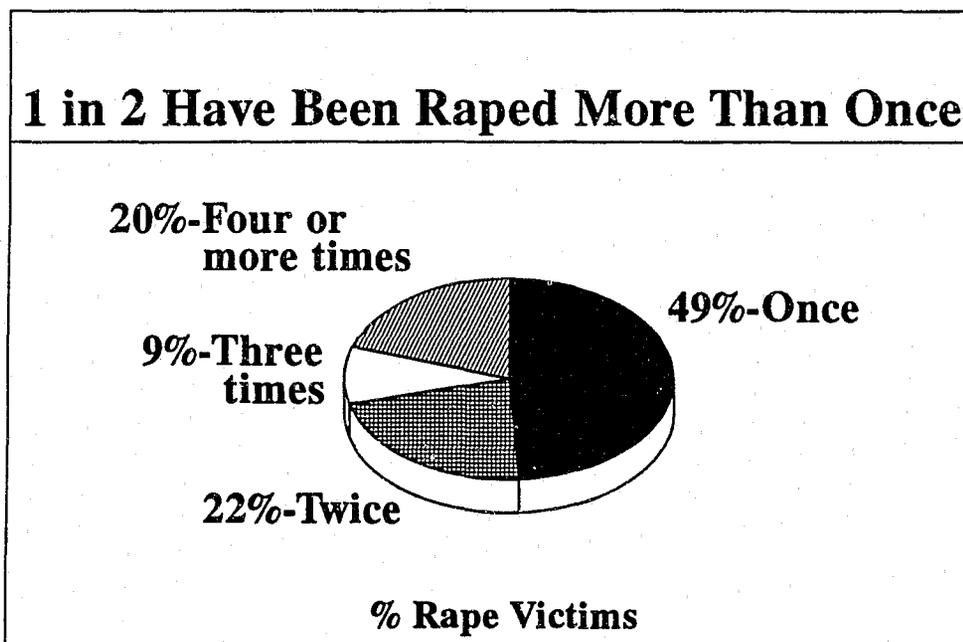
Results show that 30% of the women who responded to the survey stated they were raped at least once during their lifetime. Although most of the rape victims are White (74%), demographic analyses of the 294 rape victims show that 41% of the Black women, 37% of the American Indian women, and 27% of the White women have been raped. These figures indicate that Black and American Indian women who live in Tulsa are significantly more likely to have experienced a rape sometime in their lives than are White women who live in Tulsa. Comparing these figures with the racial distribution of Tulsa women in general clearly indicates that minority women are significantly overrepresented among Tulsa rape victims, and are therefore more at risk to experience a rape in the future. In addition, an examination of the current ages of rape victims shows that younger adult women are more likely to say they have been raped than are older women. This trend may suggest that there has been an increase in either the incidence of rape or the labeling of certain experiences as rape.

Demographic analyses also show that women who are less educated are more likely to say they have been raped. Similarly, women who are living on less than \$12,000 a year are more likely to say they have experienced a rape (55%) than are women living on lower-middle incomes (36%), upper-middle incomes (26%), and upper incomes (17%). Although a significant number of women from all income levels experience rape, these figures indicate that less affluent females are more at risk to experience rape.

In summary, demographic analyses of Tulsa rape victims suggest that minority women, young women, less educated women, and low income women are especially vulnerable to experience rape. Given these risk factors, rape prevention education and support services should be targeted to these especially vulnerable populations.

2. How Many Times Have They Experienced Rape?

Results have shown that 1 in 3 women who were surveyed reported they were raped at least once in their lives. The National Women's Study *Rape in America* reports that nearly half of the nation's rape victims have experienced more than one rape during the course of their lives. Figure 3 shows a similar finding in that 1 in 2 of Tulsa rape victims report they have experienced more than one rape.



[Figure 3]

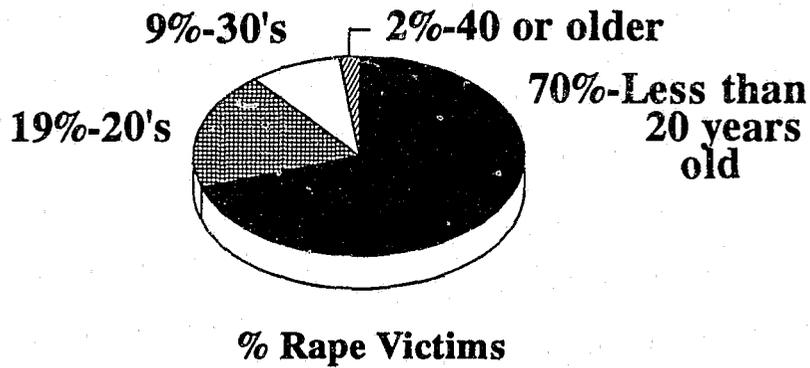
These results indicate that women who experience rape are especially vulnerable to experiencing rape again. Reasons for why rape victims often experience multiple rape assaults will be examined in a later chapter describing circumstances that surround rape.

Demographic analyses of victims of multiple rapes show that minority women (Black 69% vs. American Indian 59% vs. White 45%) and women who live in poverty (poor 63% vs. middle 45% vs. upper income 41%) are significantly more likely to report they have been victims of more than one rape.

It is important to note that the 51% figure found for rape victims who were raped more than once is similar to the 39% figure reported in the *National Women's Study*.

3. How Old Were They When They Were First Raped?

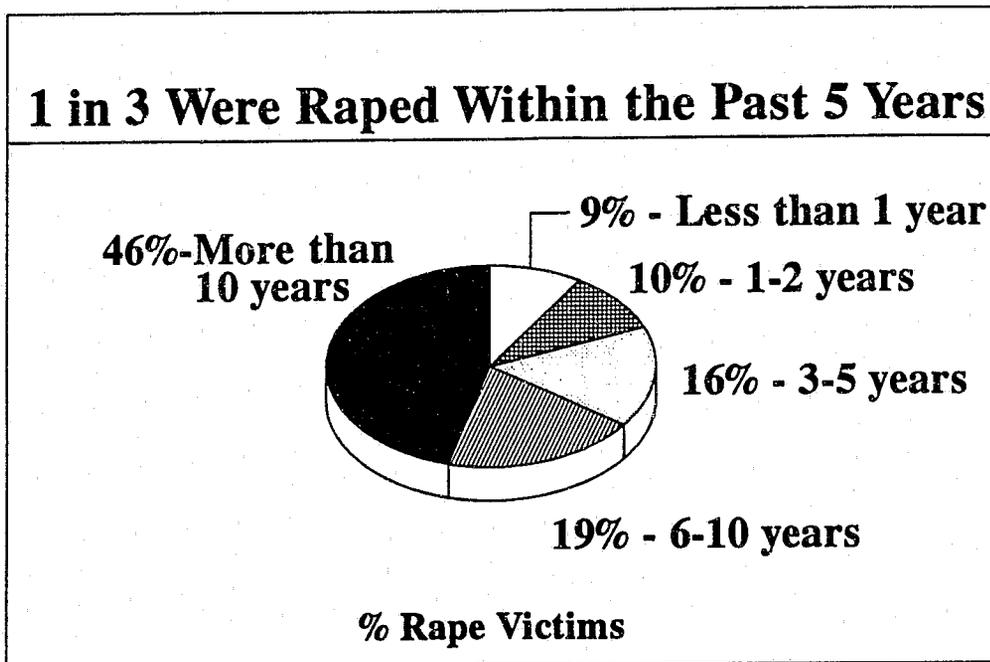
7 in 10 Were Younger Than 20 Years of Age



[Figure 4]

Tulsa rape victims were also asked how old they were when they were first raped. Figure 4 shows that 7 in 10 victims were younger than 20 years of age when they were first raped. This figure is also very similar to the 62% figure reported for rape victims under 18 years of age in the *National Women's Study*. The convergence of these results corroborates the apparent fact that most of the people who are forcibly raped in this country are teenagers and young girls.

4. How Long Ago Were They Last Raped?

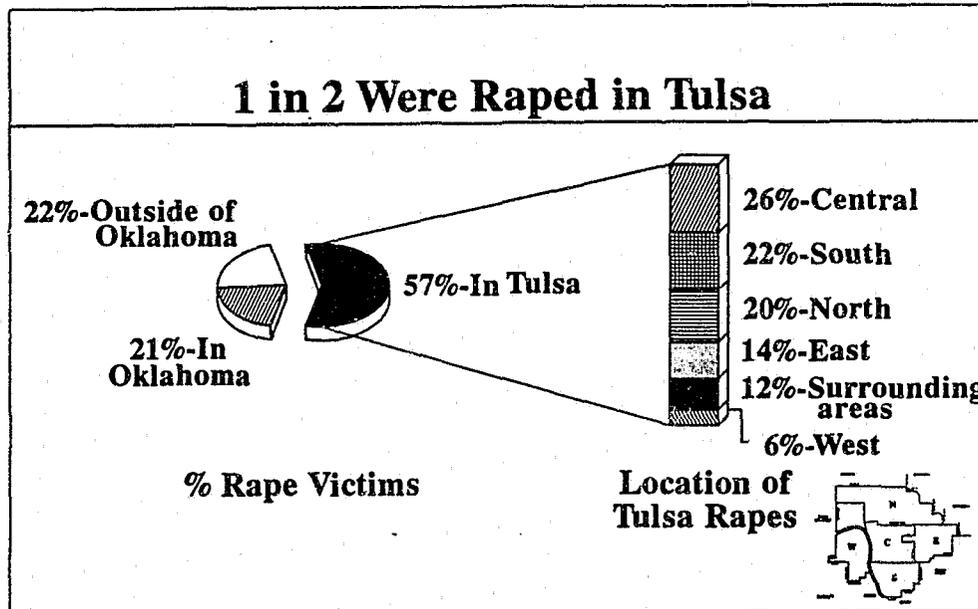


[Figure 5]

Figure 5 shows how long ago victims reported their last rape occurred. Results show that about half of the victims said their rape occurred more than 10 years ago; however, about 1 in 5 victims (19%) report they were last raped within the past two years.

Demographic analyses of when the victims' last rape occurred show that American Indian women (36%) are twice as likely to have been raped within the past two years than are White (19%) or Black (12%) women. Women living in poverty are also the most likely to have been raped during the past two years.

5. Where Were They Last Raped?



[Figure 6]

Rape victims were also asked to indicate the geographic location where their last rape took place: 6 in 10 victims were last raped in Tulsa, 2 in 10 in another part of Oklahoma, and 2 in 10 outside of the state. Of the victims last raped in Tulsa, most were raped in either Central, South, or North Tulsa, and the fewest were raped in West Tulsa.

Knowing the percentage of women raped within the past year and knowing the percentage of victims raped in Tulsa enables us to generate an estimate of the number of women who were the victims of rape in the city of Tulsa during the past 12 months. Overall, 1.9% of the rape victims reported they were raped in Tulsa during the past year. Extrapolating that rate of rape onto Tulsa's 147,000 adult females indicates that about 2,800 women were victims of rape in Tulsa last year. Tulsa Police Department records indicate that 388 rapes were reported last year. This would mean that only about 14% of the Tulsa women who were victims of rape last year reported their assault to the police. It is important to note that this 14% estimated reporting rate is almost the same as the 16% reporting rate described in the *National Women's Study*.

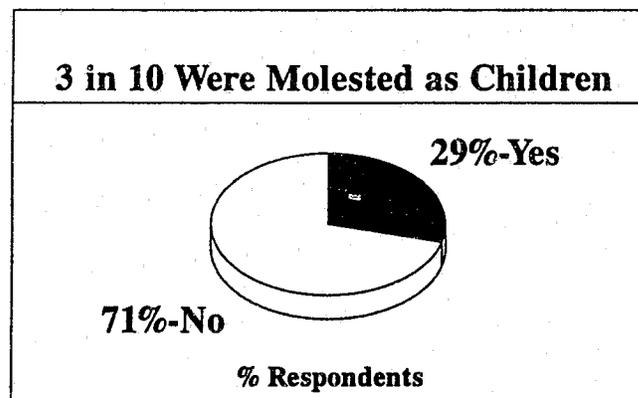
B. Tulsa Women and Child Molestation

In addition to rape, another sex crime that appears to be occurring more and more frequently is child molestation or sexual child abuse. To learn more about the lifetime prevalency of child molestation among Tulsa women, respondents were given the following definition of child molestation and then asked whether they have ever been molested.

**FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY,
CHILD MOLESTATION IS DEFINED AS:**

"When a person who is at least 3 years older than a child under 14 years of age who for the purpose of sexual gratification, forces, persuades, or entices the child to observe or engage in sexual acts or the touching or looking upon of private body parts."

1. How Many Tulsa Women Were Sexually Molested as Children?

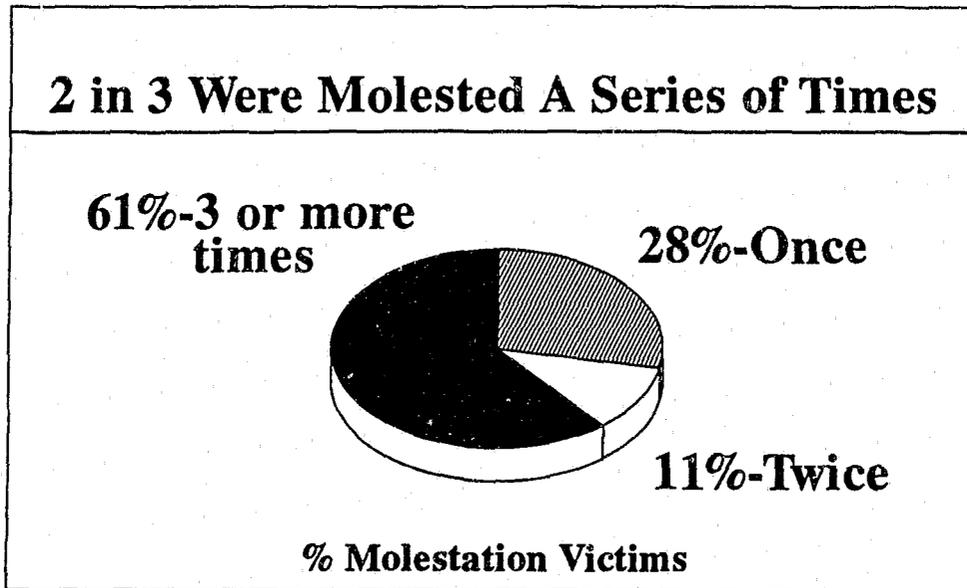


[Figure 7]

Figure 7 shows that 3 in 10 of the women who completed the survey report they were sexually molested as children.

Demographic analyses show that there are no racial differences among victims of child molestation. Whites, Blacks, American Indians, and other minorities were equally likely to have experienced sexual child abuse. However, there were differences found in victim's current educational attainment and household income level. Women who are less educated and who live on household incomes under \$12,000 are significantly more likely to say they were molested as children than women with higher education and income levels.

2. How Many Times Did They Experience Molestation?

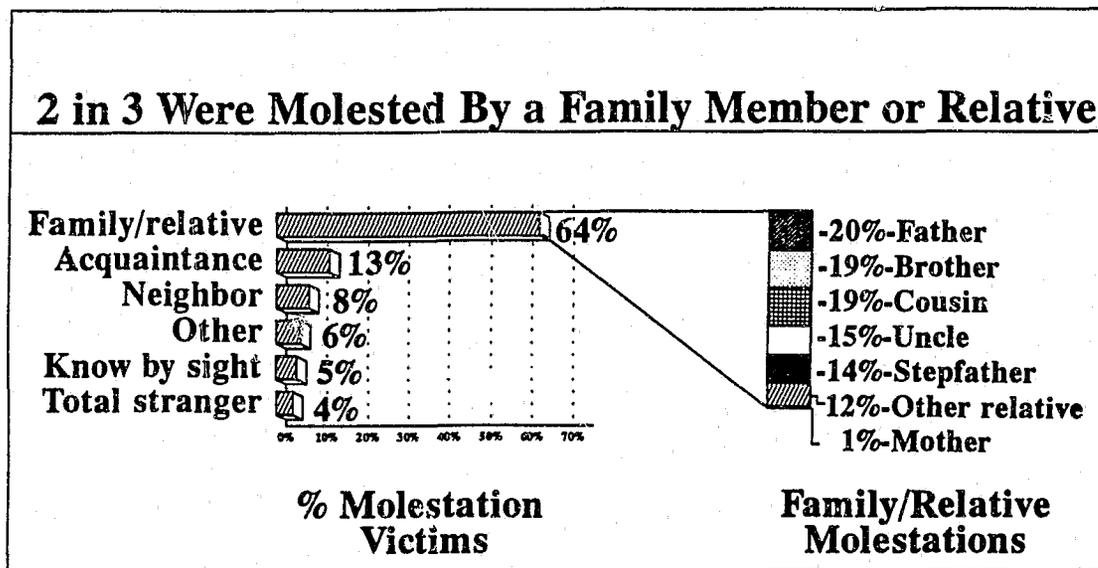


[Figure 8]

Figure 8 shows that when child molestation occurs, it is usually not an isolated instance. In fact, 2 in 3 of the women who were molested as children say they were molested a series of times. In addition, analyses also show that 19% of the molestation victims had been molested by more than one person: 13% were molested by two different assailants and 6% by three different assailants. Demographic comparisons show that women with less education and lower incomes are more likely to have been molested by more than one person.

These figures suggest that child molestation as defined in the Oklahoma state statutes is a common occurrence among women, and that most women who have experienced sexual abuse as a child experienced it on a series of occasions.

3. Who Molested Them?

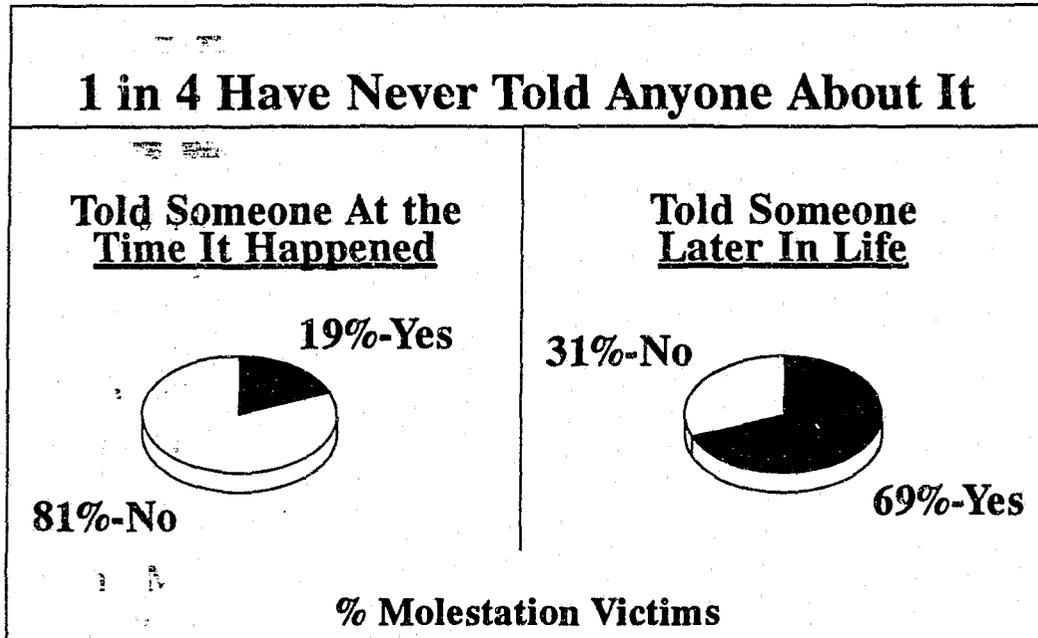


[Figure 9]

Figure 9 shows that 2/3rds of the women who were sexually abused as children were abused by a family member or relative. Moreover, an additional 1 in 5 women were molested by someone they knew well such as a neighbor or acquaintance. Only 9% of the victims were molested by someone they did not know well or by a total stranger. It is clear that American families are not the safe haven for many female children they are supposed to be.

Racial comparisons show that American Indian women are more likely to have been molested by their fathers, Black women by people they only knew by sight, and White women by their brothers.

4. Did They Tell Anyone They Were Molested?



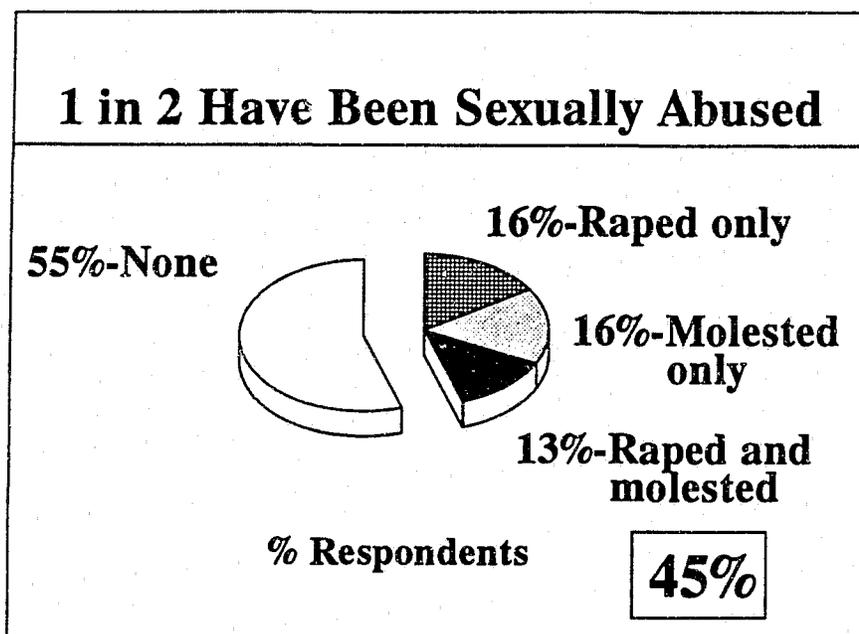
[Figure 10]

Do women who have experienced sexual abuse as a child ever tell anyone about it? Figure 10 shows that the vast majority (81%) of these women did not tell anyone about it when it happened to them as children. On the other hand, most of the victims (69%) did tell someone about their abuse at some point later in their lives. Overall, analyses show that 1 in 4 of the molestation victims have never told anybody about their experience.

C. Tulsa Women and Overall Sexual Abuse

1. How Many Tulsa Women Have Ever Experienced Some Form of Sexual Abuse?

Results show that significant numbers of Tulsa women claim to have experienced rape and/or child molestation. Figure 11 shows the percentage of respondents who experienced one or both of these two forms of sexual abuse.

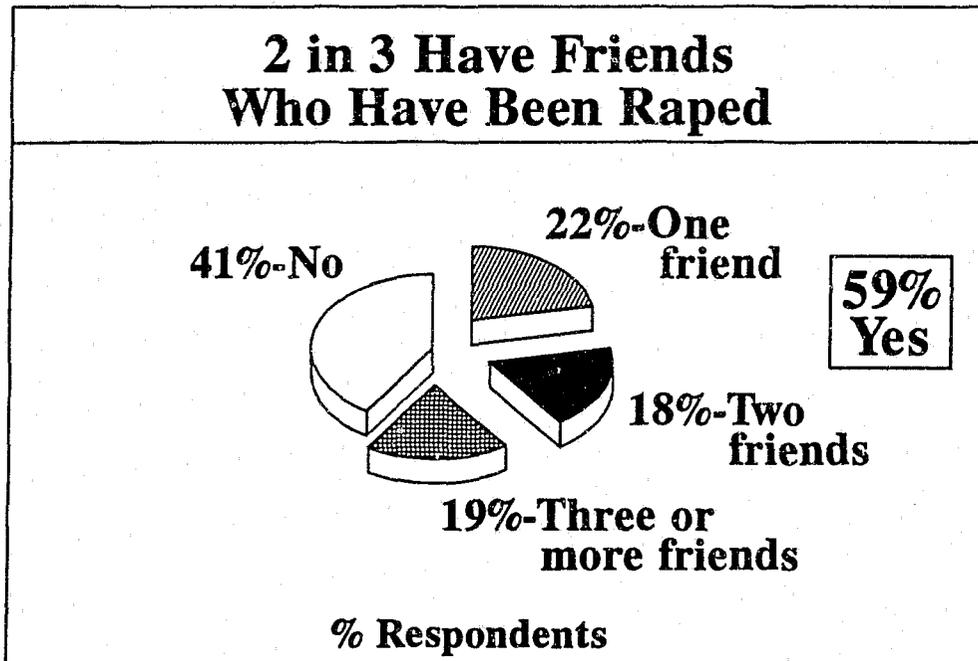


[Figure 11]

Results show that nearly 1 in 2 of the nearly 1,000 women who responded to this survey experienced some form of sexual abuse sometime in their lives. Moreover, 1 in 10 of the women surveyed (13%) reported they were molested as children and also raped as adults.

Analyses examining the women who have experienced both molestation and rape show they are twice as likely to be of minorities (21% American Indian and 19% Black vs. 11% White); live in poverty (32% < \$12,000 vs. 15% \$12,000-\$25,000; 9% \$26,000-\$50,000; and 6% > \$50,000); and have dropped out of school (31% vs. 12% high school graduates).

2. How Many Tulsa Women Have Personal Friends or Acquaintances Who Have Been Raped?



[Figure 12]

Results show that 2 in 3 women have friends who have been raped. In fact, 2 in 5 women have 3 or more friends who have been raped. The finding that most women say they have at least one personal friend who has been the victim of rape is another indicator that rape is an all too common event in this society. It also indicates that most women in the community have been touched by rape even if they have never been sexually assaulted themselves. On the other hand, comparisons show that women who have been raped are also more likely to have friends who have been raped (80%) than women who have never been raped (51%).

D. Chapter Summary

Tulsa Women and Sexual Abuse



Main Findings



- * **3 in 10 Tulsa Women Have Been Raped**
- * **1 in 2 Rape Victims Have Been Raped More Than Once**
- * **7 in 10 Were Younger Than 20 Years Old When They Were First Raped**
- * **3 in 10 Tulsa Women Were Molested As Children**
- * **2 in 3 Molestation Victims Were Molested A Series Of Times**
- * **2 in 3 Molestation Victims Were Molested By A Family Member or Relative**
- * **Overall, 1 in 2 Have Been Sexually Abused**

The figures presented in this survey of a representative sample of nearly 1,000 Tulsa women are staggering. The probability that 1 in 2 Tulsa women have been the victims of sexual abuse, including 1 in 3 who have been raped, is simply a horrible picture to contemplate. So is the idea that an estimated 2,800 women were raped in Tulsa during this past year alone. Because these figures are so dramatic, it is important to compare them with figures derived from other national studies.

According to the figures presented in the *National Women's Study*, 13% or 1 in 8 women in their national sample reported they were raped sometime in their lives. The *National Women's Study* also reported that .7% of their national sample of 4,000 women said they were raped in 1990 alone. When projected onto U. S. census data, this one year rape rate means that approximately 683,000 American women were raped during the 12 months of 1990 alone. The estimates generated from this national survey on rape are only half as large as the prevalency rates found in this present study. Why the disparity and what does it mean?

To understand this disparity it is important to recognize that the *National Women's Study* was conducted through telephone interviews. Because respondents were called at their homes, this type of survey method does not allow for the complete anonymity of respondents. Because of the extremely personal nature of a telephone interview concerning rape and because of the inherent lack of anonymity associated with telephone interviews,

it is reasonable to believe that a certain proportion of the respondents who participated in the survey under-reported their experiences. Conversely, the present Tulsa rape survey was administered to respondents under conditions that assured them that their responses were *completely anonymous*.

In addition to these differences in response anonymity, it is important to recognize that telephone interviews can only be conducted with people who have telephones. There are millions of Americans, especially those among the lower socioeconomic strata, who do not have telephones. Consequently, there was a significant group of American women who were automatically excluded from the *National Women's Study*. Moreover, as poor people tend to experience higher criminal victimization rates than middle or upper income people, estimates generated from the *National Women's Study* were based on a sample that excluded those women who are probably most vulnerable to experiencing rape. On the other hand, in this Tulsa study of rape, survey participants included a representative sample of women who live in poverty, are homeless, and who do not have telephones. Given that the present study found that poor women are almost twice as likely to have experienced a rape as women from middle and upper income levels, this sampling difference alone could account for the difference in prevalence rates found in the two studies.

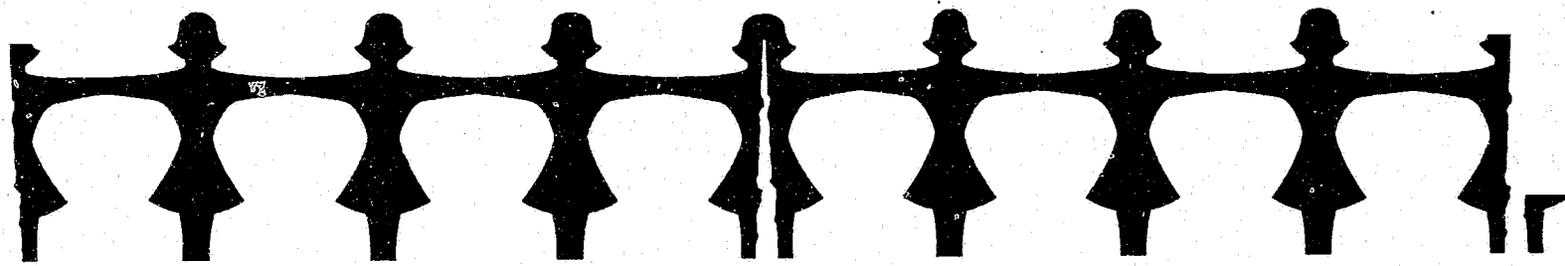
So what does the disparity between the two prevalence rates for rape really mean? From a realistic standpoint the answer is not much. All any survey can do is offer some objective approximation of reality. If the *National Women's Study* estimates that 1 in 8 American women have experienced a rape is regarded as a conservative estimate, and the present study estimate that 1 in 3 women have experienced a rape is regarded as a liberal estimate, then the true prevalence rate probably falls somewhere in-between. If the true number is that 1 in 4 American women have been raped, or 1 in 5, or 1 in 6, or 1 in 7, it still means that more than 12 million American women have been raped during their lifetime and that probably a million more women will be raped this year. Rather than being disparate, estimates from both studies converge on a very basic truth: *millions of American women have been raped*. Moreover, if one factors in the 1 in 3 women who have been sexually molested as children, the millions of women who have been victims of domestic violence, and the 10,000 or so women a year who are victims of homicide, one can only reasonably conclude that America is not a safe place to be a woman.

In addition to showing that an extraordinarily large number of Tulsa women have been the victims of rape, results from this survey also reveal several important risk factors that are associated with rape. For example, results clearly show that young women, especially teenage girls, are the principal targets of rape. Why is this so? One possible reason may be that young women are less worldly than older women. Consequently, they may be more trusting and lacking in judgment about the kinds of social situations they allow themselves to get involved in. It is also possible that rapists believe younger women will be less likely to report rape because they would be afraid of their parents' reactions or afraid of having to deal with the police. Whatever the reasons, it is clear that young women and girls are the individuals who most need rape prevention education if they are to learn how to avoid situations which increase the likelihood of being raped. Unfortunately, it is often this age range of females who are the least likely to have access to this kind of information.

Results also show that minority status, poverty, and a lack of formal education are also risk factors that significantly increase the likelihood that a woman will experience rape. Consequently, it is important that communities target rape prevention education and rape support programs to women who fall into these high risk categories. Public housing communities, homeless shelters, alternative schools for dropouts, and community assistance programs for the poor are all important sites where rape prevention and support programs could make a real difference.



III. Circumstances Surrounding Rapes of Tulsa Women



- * **Who Raped Them?**
- * **In What Settings and Under What Scenarios Did the Rapes Take Place?**
- * **How Many Rapes Involved Rapists Stalking Their Victims?**
- * **What Did Victims Do During Their Assaults?**
- * **What Did Rapists Do During the Assaults?**
- * **How Are Victim and Rapist Behaviors During an Assault Related?**
- * **Did the Rapes Involve Substance Use?**
- * **What Were Victims Most Concerned About After Being Raped?**
- * **Chapter Summary**

III. Circumstances Surrounding Rapes of Tulsa Women

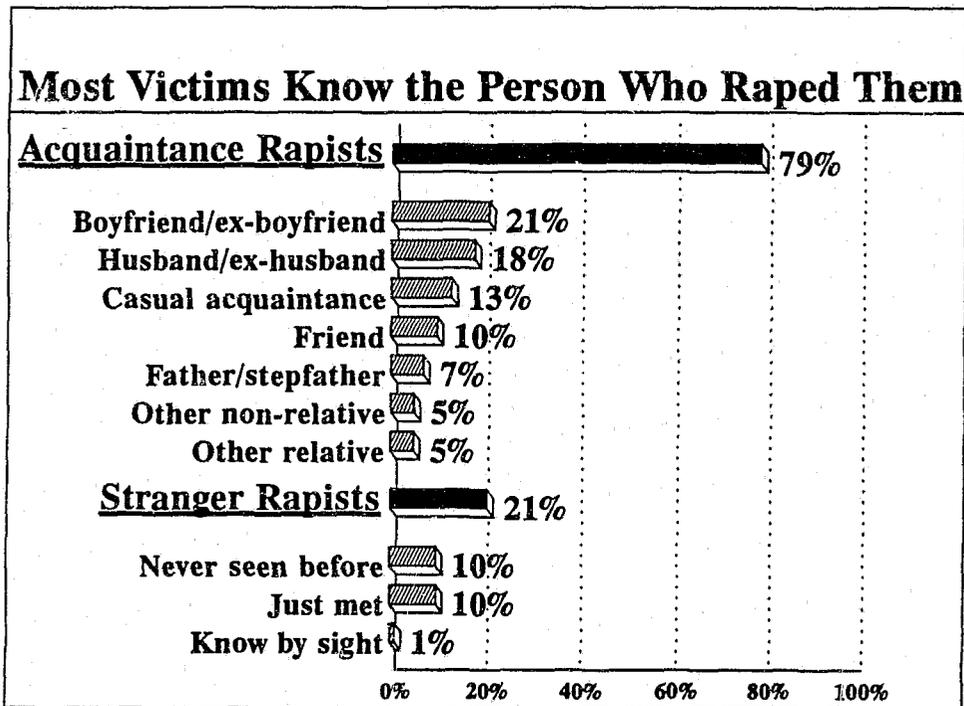
For rape prevention education to be effective more needs to be learned about the circumstances that surround rape. Who are the assailants who commit rape? In what settings and under what scenarios is rape most likely to occur? How do victims behave during a rape? How do assailants behave during a rape, and what are victims most concerned about after the assault? The answers to these and other questions regarding the nature of rape offer important information to potential rape victims.

A. Who Raped Them?

One of the most important factors involved in any case of rape is the relationship between the victim and the assailant. Does the victim know her assailant, and if yes, how well? The victim-assailant relationship is a defining characteristic of rape that plays a major role in how both victims and assailants behave before, during, and after an assault.

In general, the victim-assailant relationship is usually defined in terms of whether the victim is attacked by a stranger or an acquaintance. Overall, five categories of relationships make up this stranger-acquaintance continuum. Women can be raped by *total strangers* whom they have never seen before, by people they do not know well but who they *know by sight* or have *just met*, by *non-romantic acquaintances* including friends and neighbors, by *intimates* meaning current and former boyfriends and husbands, and by *family members*.

For the purpose of this report, rapes committed by total strangers, by someone the victim only knows by sight, or by someone she has just met are classified as "stranger rapes". Rapes committed by casual acquaintances, friends, boyfriends, husbands, family members, or relatives are classified as "acquaintance rapes". Although some classification systems identify people known by sight or people one has just met as acquaintances, we choose to classify these assailants as strangers because they are not known very well by the victim.



[Figure 13]

Figure 13 shows that 8 in 10 of the women who experienced a rape identified their assailant as someone they knew. Among acquaintance rapes, the most common assailants were intimates, meaning former and current husbands or boyfriends. In fact, nearly 4 in 10 of the women who were raped say they were assaulted by a former or current intimate. On the other hand, only 2 in 10 of the victims say they were raped by a stranger who they never saw before or who they had just met.

Overall, these results show that the vast majority of rapes are not committed by strangers who swoop down on their defenseless victims in the dead of night. In fact, when a woman is raped, the probability is 4 times greater that she is being assaulted by someone whom she knows well rather than by someone she has never seen before or by someone she has just met.

Looking at who commits rape by victim race shows no significant differences. In other words, there are no differences among White, Black, and American Indian women and the likelihood they will be raped by strangers or acquaintances. Analyses were also conducted comparing stranger and acquaintance rapes in terms of whether the rape was committed within the previous two years or more than two years ago. These analyses show no significant differences in the proportion of stranger and acquaintance rapes occurring within the past two years or more than two years ago.

It is again worth noting that the findings in this study regarding the relationships between rape victims and assailants converge with similar results reported in the *National Women's Study*. For example, this study of Tulsa women found that 79% of the rapes were committed by acquaintances of the victims and the *National Women's Study* found that 78% were committed by acquaintances. This convergence attests to the apparent fact that the vast majority of women raped in this country are raped by people they know.

B. In What Settings and Under What Scenarios Did the Rapes Take Place?

In addition to knowing who commits rape, it is also important to learn about where rapes occur and what kinds of general scenarios are associated with rape. By learning more about the situations in which rapes occur, potential victims can perhaps gain a better understanding of what constitutes a high risk situation. We begin by examining settings in which victims were assaulted.

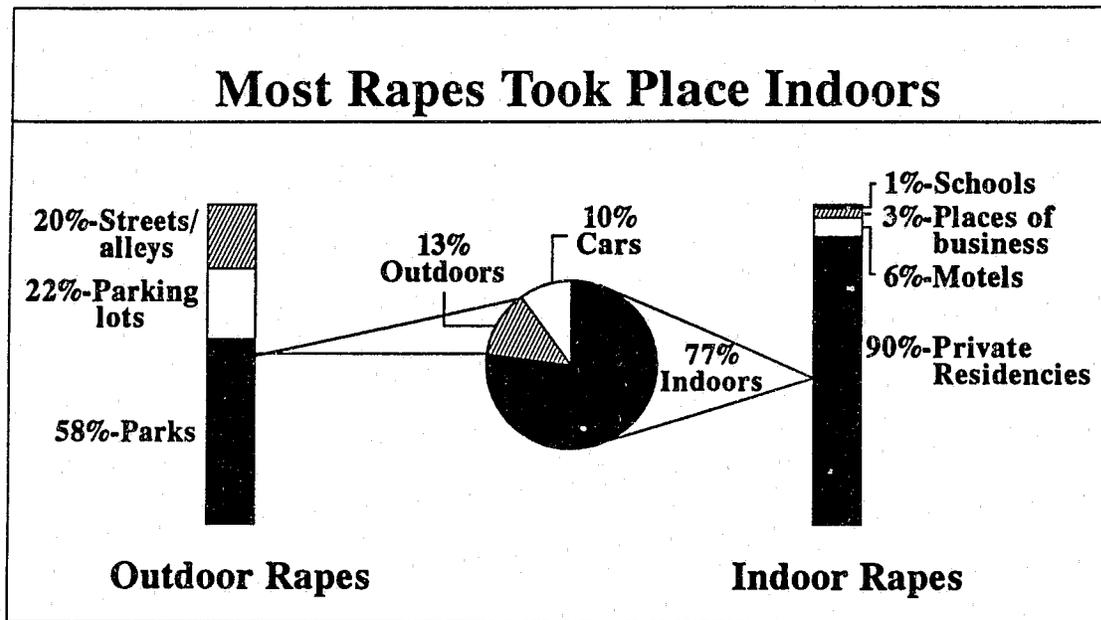
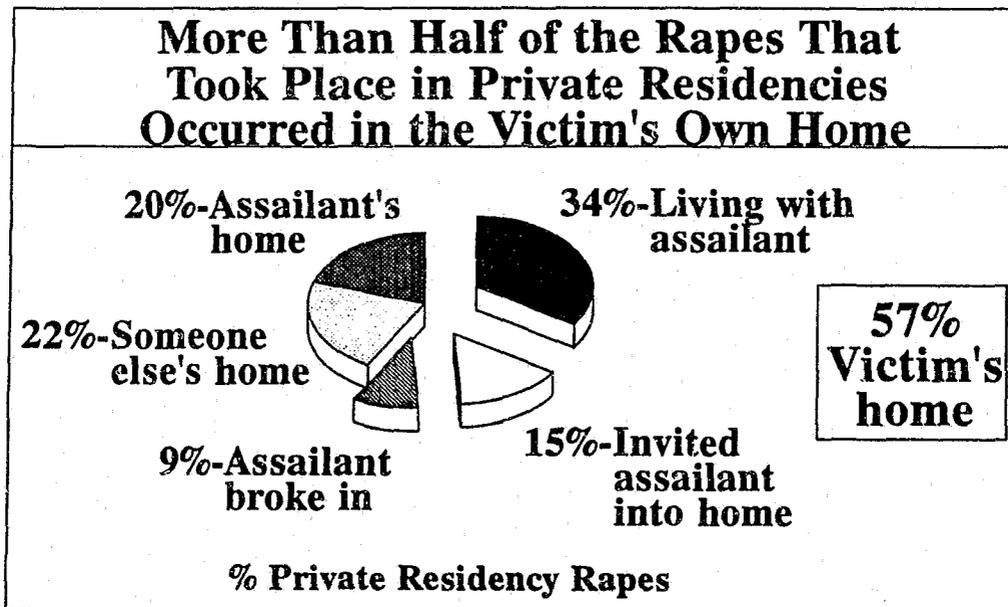


Figure 14 shows that 3 in 4 rape victims were assaulted in an indoor setting. Moreover, in 90% of those indoor settings the rape took place in a private residency. Only about 1 in 10 rapes took place in an outdoor setting with the most likely setting being a park or nature area. An additional 1 in 10 rapes took place while the victim was in cars or other type of motor vehicle.

1. Rapes That Took Place in Private Residencies

Because such a large number of rapes occurred in private residences, it is worth taking a closer look at the types of scenarios that are associated with rapes in private residency locations.



[Figure 15]

Among the rapes that took place in private residences, 1/3rd occurred in a residency in which the victim and assailant were living together at the time of the assault; whereas, 15% occurred after the victim invited an assailant into her own home, and 9% involved the assailant breaking into the victim's home. Overall, more than half of the rapes that took place in private residences occurred in the victim's own home. Figure 15 also shows that 20% of private residency rapes occurred in the assailant's home, and an additional 22% occurred in the home of some third party.

In terms of rapes that occurred in outdoor settings, it is significant to note that the most common scenarios involved victims walking or jogging alone in parks or on the streets (50%), victims assaulted in parking lots after shopping (14%), and victims taken to a park or nature area when they were on a date with their assailant (11%).

It is also worth noting that about half of the rapes that occurred in a car involved a victim who was on a date with her assailant (53%). On the other hand, 6% of car rapes involved a victim who was hitchhiking.

Overall, results from this study show that nearly twice as many rapes occurred in the victim's own home (40% of all of the rapes reported) than in outdoor settings and cars combined (23% of all of the rapes reported).

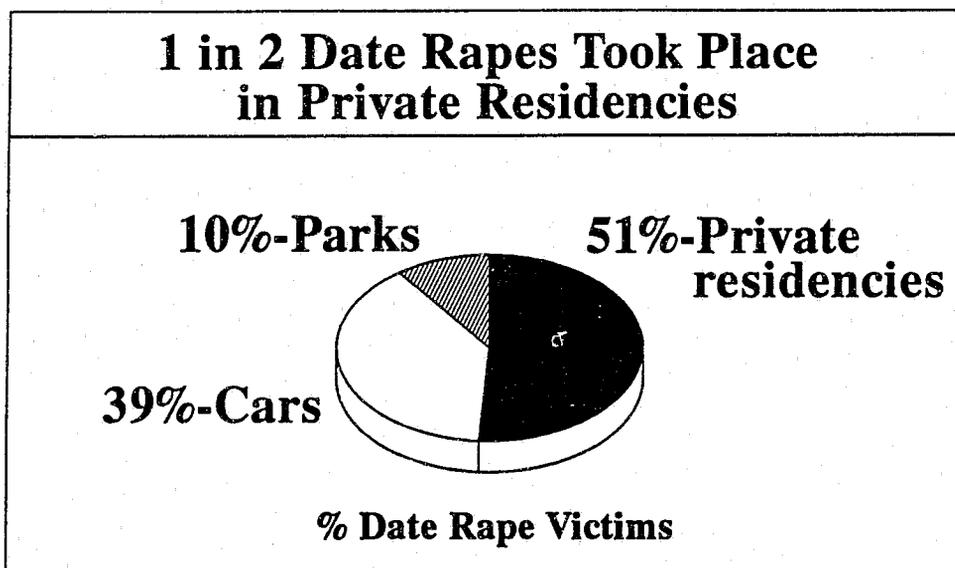
Race comparisons within rape settings show several differences. For example, Black women are less likely to be victims of car rapes than White or American Indian women (5% vs. 11% vs. 10%). On the other hand, American Indian women are 3 times more likely to be victims of rapes that occur in an outdoor setting than White or Black women (33% vs. 9% vs. 9%). American Indian women are also significantly less likely to be victims of an indoor rape than White or Black women (57% vs. 79% vs. 85%).

Comparing who the assailants are by rape settings shows that stranger rapes are 3 times more likely to have occurred outdoors than are acquaintance rapes (31% vs. 7%); whereas, acquaintance rapes are more likely to have occurred in an indoor setting than stranger rapes (85% vs. 53%). Analyzing these data even further, results show that most stranger rapes that occurred outdoors involved total strangers as opposed to assailants the victims had just met (57% vs. 7%). On the other hand, most stranger rapes that occurred in cars involved assailants whom the victim had just met at a bar or a party rather than total strangers (22% vs. 10%).

Comparing the settings in which rapes occurred and when those rapes occurred (within the past two years vs. more than two years ago) shows no significant differences.

2. Rapes That Occurred When Victims Were On Dates

Another type of rape scenario that people often hear about in the media is date rape. Results from this survey show that about 1 in 10 rape victims (14%) were assaulted while they were out on a date.



[Figure 16]

Figure 16 shows that about half of the date rapes occurred in private residences (51%), 39% occurred in cars, and 10% occurred in parks or other kinds of nature areas.

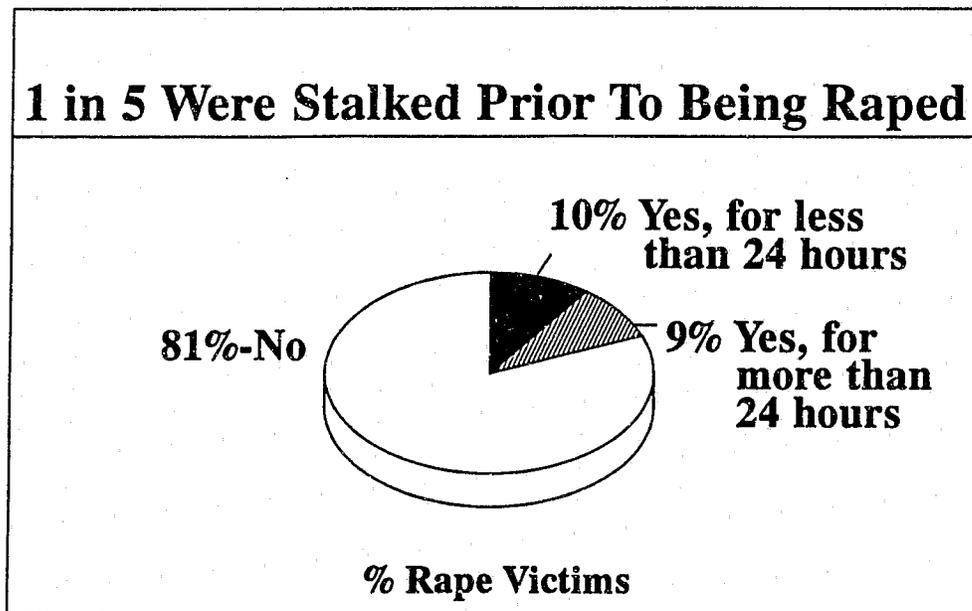
Analyses of victim's race and date rape show that Black women are significantly less likely to experience a date rape than White or American Indian women (7% vs. 15% vs. 17%).

An important variation of the date rape scenario is the "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" situation in which a victim meets a man at a bar or a party for the first time and leaves with him. Results show that 6% of the rapes occurred in this type of situation. Moreover, race comparisons reveal that White women are more likely to experience a rape after meeting their assailant at a party than Black or American Indian women (6% vs. 2% vs. 0%); whereas, American Indian women are more likely to experience a rape after meeting their assailant at a bar than White or Black women (7% vs. 1% vs. 2%).

Overall, if one combines date rapes with "Looking for Mr. Goodbar" rapes then approximately 20% of all rapes that occurred involved date rape types of situations.

C. How Many Rapes Involved Rapists Stalking Their Victims?

Another type of situation that is sometimes involved in rape is that of a rapist stalking his victim prior to the attack. From most victim accounts, being stalked is a very frightening experience because the victim is aware that she is prey and that something violent is going to happen to her sooner or later. How many rapes involved the stalking of victims?



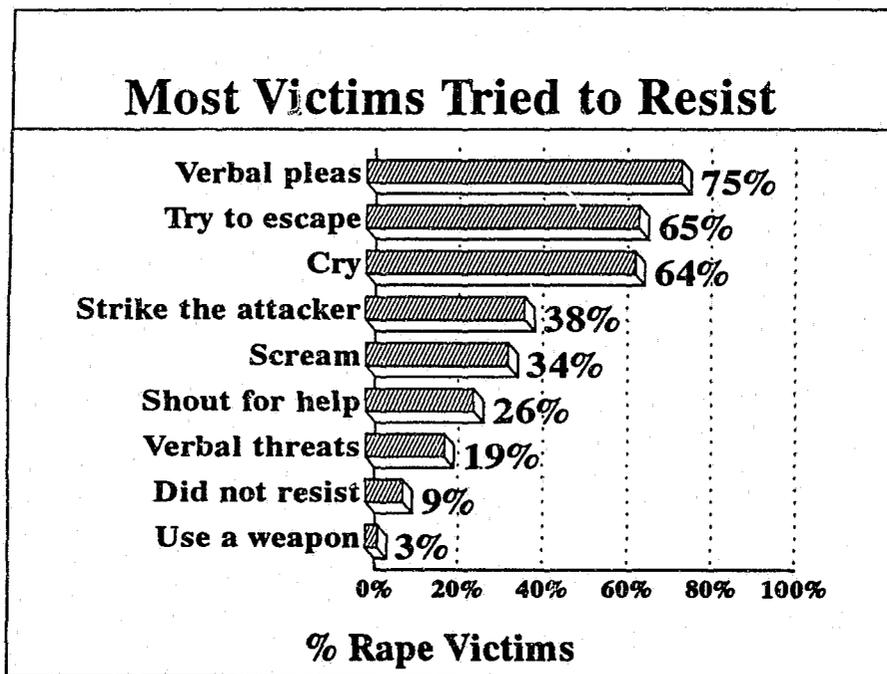
[Figure 17]

Figure 17 shows that 10% of the rapes that occurred involved a victim who was stalked by her assailant for a period of less than 24 hours, and an additional 9% of the rapes involved a victim who was stalked for longer than 24 hours. Overall, this means that about 2 in 10 completed rapes involved assailants who stalked their victims before they assaulted them.

Race comparisons of rapes that involved stalking show Black victims and American Indian victims are more likely to say they experienced stalking prior to their rape than White victims (36% vs. 27% vs. 15%). On the other hand, analyses of stalking rapes in terms of whether they happened within the past 2 years or more than 2 years ago show no significant differences. In other words, stalking was equally prevalent in rapes that were committed recently as it was in rapes that were committed more than 2 years ago. Analyses of stalking rapes in terms of whether assailants were strangers or acquaintances show that stranger rapes were twice as likely to have involved a rapist stalking his victim than were acquaintance rapes (34% vs. 15%). Examination of acquaintance rapes, however, reveals that victims raped by family members are twice as likely to feel they were stalked (25%) than victims raped by friends (13%) or current or former intimates (13%).

D. What Did Victims Do During Their Assaults?

Not all victims respond the same way to a rape assault. Some victims try to resist by using verbal pleas, some try to escape, and others cry, scream, or shout for help. Other victims resist more aggressively by striking their attacker, using a weapon to fend off their attacker, or threatening their attacker. Similarly, not all rapists behave the same way during an attack. Some rapists use physical force, violence, or a weapon to subdue their victims; while others use intimidation or threats of violence. Some rapists even use a more passive-aggressive approach to rape by persuading their victims to get drunk or high on drugs so they can render them helpless. Learning more about how victims behave during rape, how rapists behave during rape, and the relationships between victim and rapist behaviors represents important information for rape prevention and rape support programs.



[Figure 18]

Figure 18 shows that the most common behavior that victims engaged in to resist their rape was to make verbal pleas to the rapist to stop. The two other behaviors that most victims engaged in to resist were trying to escape and crying. Inspection of results shows that most victims (76%) engaged in more than one behavior to try and resist their assault: 18% engaged in two resistant behaviors such as pleading for the rapist to stop and trying to escape; 17% engaged in three resistant behaviors; and 41% engaged in four or more behaviors aimed at resisting the rape. It is clear from these results that the majority of women who were raped tried a number of different ways to stop their assault.

Race comparisons of victims' overall resistance during their rape show that American Indian and Black women tend to be more resistant during their assaults than are White women, especially in terms of threatening, striking, or trying to fend off their attacker with a weapon.

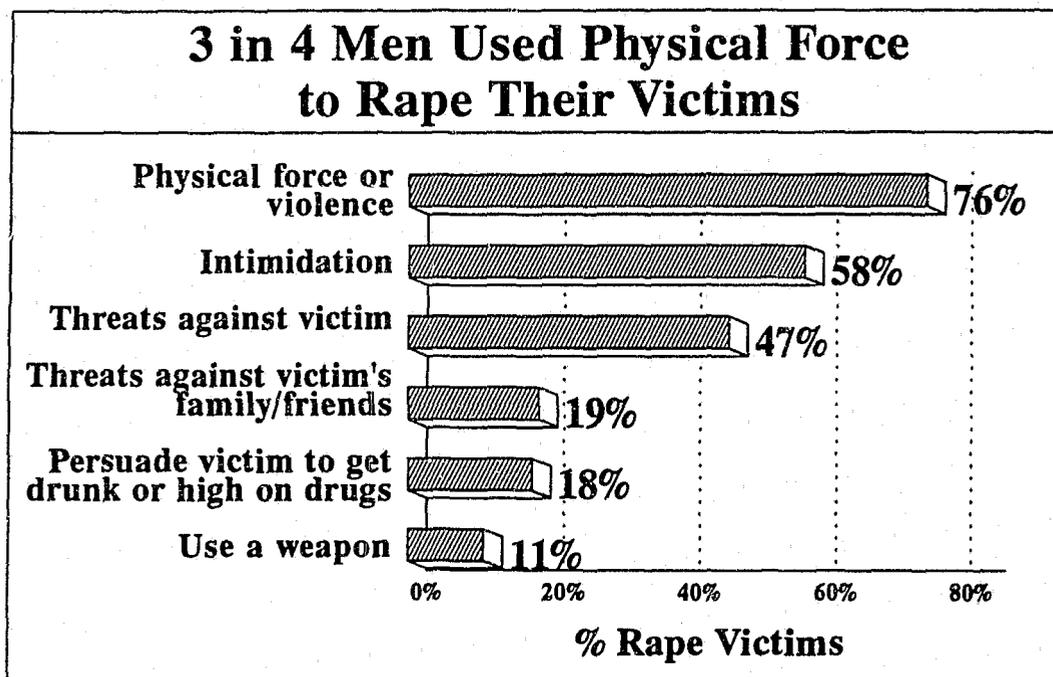
Further analyses of the number of resistant behaviors that victims engaged in during their assault and different circumstances surrounding rape reveal some interesting relationships. For example, results show that women who were raped in outdoor settings tended to be more resistant than women who were raped in indoor settings or cars. Results also show that victims who were stalked before their assault were more resistant during their assault than victims who were not stalked. This observation is consistent with the fact that women who are aware they are being stalked can anticipate their assault and prepare themselves to resist as best they can. On the other hand, victims who are attacked with no warning are often in a state of shock that the incident is happening to them and can only resist spontaneously. Another significant finding is that in rapes involving substance use, victims are more resistant when the assailant only is under the influence at the time than when the victim has been drinking or using drugs. Finally, comparisons of victim behaviors during date rape situations with non-date rape situations show that victims are less likely to resist a date rape by striking their attacker than in other kinds of rape situations.

A qualitative review of victim behaviors surveyed in Figure 18 suggests two different general types of reactions or strategies that summarize the different ways that victims try to resist. One of these strategies is a passive type of resistance which includes verbal pleas, crying, screaming, shouting for help, and trying to escape. The second category is a more aggressive type of resistance that includes threatening the assailant, striking the attacker, and trying to fend off the attacker with a weapon. Analyses of these two general types of strategies or reactions shows that 44% of the victims resisted their attack aggressively by either threatening, striking, or using a weapon to fend off the assault; whereas, 56% of the victims resisted by using only passive behaviors such as pleading, crying, or shouting. It is also interesting to note that among the women who aggressively resisted their attacker, 1 in 3 engaged in two or more aggressive behaviors, usually threatening the rapist and striking him.

Although the vast majority of rape victims actively resisted their assaults, inspection of Figure 18 shows that about 1 in 10 victims did not actively resist their attacker during their rape. Further examination of these victims shows that 80% of these "compliant" women were raped by acquaintances; 50% of them were under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs at the time of the assault; 60% felt partly responsible for being raped; and none of these victims reported their rape to the police. These results suggest that when a woman is raped and complies with her attacker, it is often because she is too drunk or high at the time and she is being raped by someone whom she knows and had previously trusted.

E. What Did Rapists Do During the Assaults?

Just as victims try a variety of ways to try to resist rape, rapists engage in a variety of behaviors in order to accomplish rape. Figure 19 shows how victims described the rapist's behaviors during the assault.



[Figure 19]

Figure 19 shows that 76% of the rape victims report that their rapist used physical force or violence to subdue them. The next most common behaviors that rapists used to violate their victims were intimidation and threats to hurt the victim if she did not comply. In addition, 1 in 10 rapists used a weapon such as a knife or a gun to force their victims to comply. These results clearly illustrate that more than anything else, *rape is a violent act*.

It is also noteworthy that in almost 2 in 10 of the rapes that occurred the rapist tried to persuade his victim to get drunk or high on drugs as a means of making his victim more compliant. Apparently this is a relatively frequent strategy that potential victims of rape need to be aware of. In fact, comparisons between date rapes and non-date rapes show that rapists are significantly more likely to try to persuade their victims to use alcohol and drugs during date rapes than other kinds of rape situations.

Analyses indicate that many rapists used more than one type of behavior to subdue their victims: 26% engaged in two types of behaviors to subdue their victims (usually physical force and the threat of further violence, or physical force and intimidation), and 38% tried to subdue their victims by engaging in three or more types of violent and threatening behaviors. These results illustrate that in most cases rape is not just a singular violent act. Rape usually involves a series of threatening and violent acts that are perpetrated against the victim over the course of the assault.

A qualitative inspection of rapist behaviors indicates that 5 of the 6 behaviors surveyed (all but persuasion to use substances) represent violence or the threat of violence. The more of these violent and threatening behaviors that rapists used during the assault, the more violent the rape was and the more violent the rapist was. Aggregating these 5 behaviors as a measure of *rapist violence*, we examined rapist violence in relation to victim's race, who committed the rape, the recency of the rape, and a variety of other circumstances that surround rape.

Comparisons between victim race and rapist violence show no significant differences. Comparisons of who committed the rapes and rapist violence show that the most violent rapists were either total strangers or intimates (meaning current and former husbands and boyfriends). Comparisons of when the rapes occurred and the violence of rapists show no differences between rapes that occurred within the past two years and rapes that occurred more than two years ago.

F. How Are Victim and Rapist Behaviors During an Assault Related?

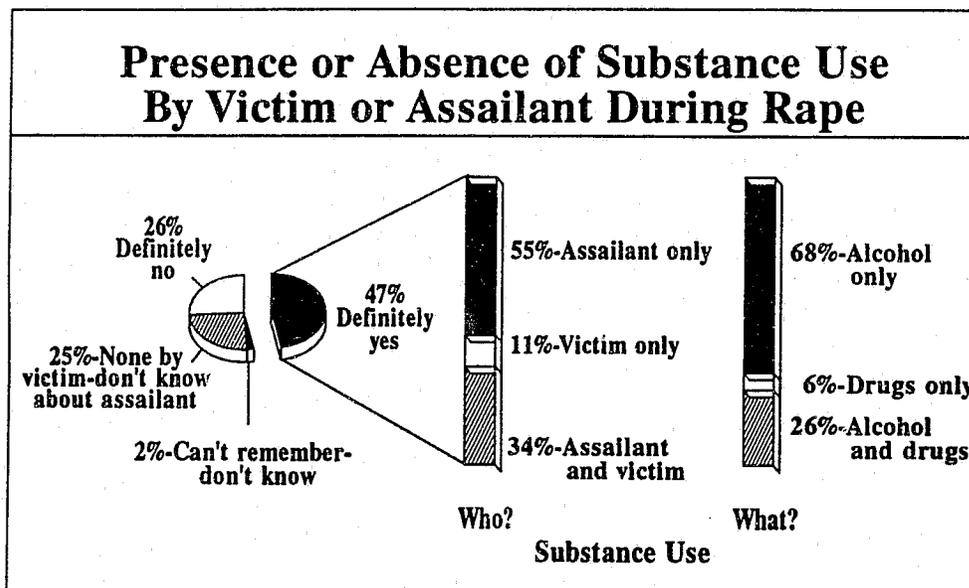
The crime of rape is a complex interaction that involves action and reaction between the victim and assailant. To learn more about the interactions between victims and assailants during the rape, victim and assailant behaviors were examined through correlational analyses. Results show that overall victim resistance is positively related with overall rapist violence. In other words, the more victims resisted, the more violently the rapists behaved; and conversely, the more violently rapists behaved, the more victims resisted.

Analyses of overall rapist violence and specific victim behaviors shows that rapist violence has the strongest relationship with victims trying to escape. In other words, in rapes where the victim tried to escape, rapists tended to be more violent, and in rapes where the rapist was more violent, the victims tried to escape. Rapist violence was also positively related to victims crying, screaming, shouting for help, and striking the rapist.

Analyses of overall victim resistance and specific rapist behaviors show a positive relationship between victim resistance and rapists using physical force and threats of violence during the attack. These results illustrate that victim resistance and rapist violence are related, and that to a large extent rape can be understood as a complex interplay of violence countered by resistance and resistance countered by more violence.

G. Did the Rapes Involve Substance Use?

Another circumstance that is sometimes involved in rape is the use of alcohol and/or drugs by the assailant, victim, or both at the time of the assault. As the use of alcohol and drugs is scientifically known to impair a person's judgement and weaken a person's impulse control, it is important to learn more about how often substance use plays a role in the incidence of rape.



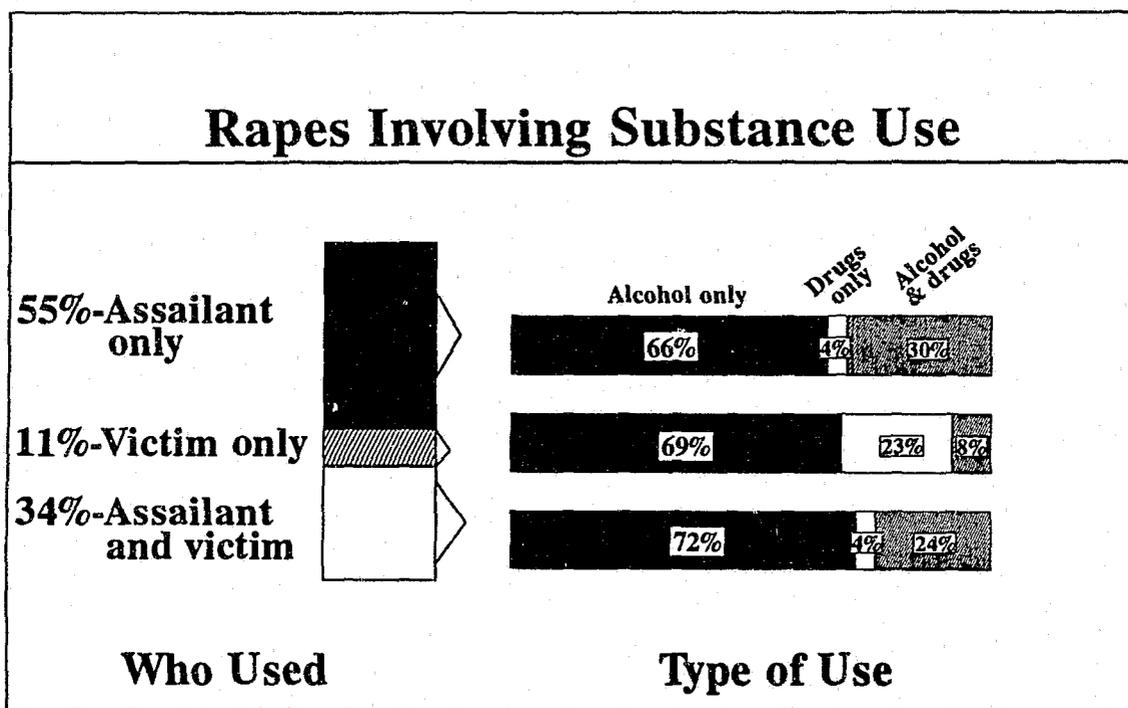
[Figure 20]

Figure 20 shows that according to victim reports alcohol and/or drug use was definitely involved in nearly half of the rapes that occurred. Conversely, in only 1/4th of the rapes could the victim say with certainty that neither she nor her assailant were under the influence of a substance at the time of her assault. It is clear from these results that substance use is a common scenario often associated with rape.

Figure 20 also presents a closer look at rapes involving substance use in terms of who was under the influence of a substance at the time of the rape and what substance(s) was being used. These results show that in most of the rapes involving substance use, only the assailant was under the influence (55%). Results also show that in only 11% of the rapes involving substance use was the victim only under the influence at the time of the assault; whereas, in 34% of these types of rapes both the victim and the assailant were using at the time of the assault. In evaluating these results, it is important to recognize that assailant use was definitely involved in 4 in 10 of all of the rapes that occurred (42%) and in 9 in 10 of the rapes that involved the use of substances (89%). On the other hand, victim use was definitely involved in 2 in 10 of all of the rapes that occurred (22%) and in nearly half (45%) of the rapes in which substance use was involved. Overall, these results suggest that assailants are about twice as likely to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs during a rape than are victims.

Figure 20 also shows that in 68% of the rapes involving substance use, alcohol was the only substance used at the time of the assault, and that in 26% of the rapes involving substance use, both alcohol and drugs were used at the time of the assault. In only 6% of the cases were drugs the only substance used at the time of the rape. Overall, alcohol was used in 44% of all of the rapes that occurred and in 94% of the rapes that involved the use of substances. Conversely, drugs were used in 17% of all of the rapes that occurred and in 36% of the rapes that involved the use of substances. These results suggest that alcohol is about 2 to 3 times more likely to be used during rape than are drugs.

Figure 20 further analyzes the relationship between rape and substance use by examining who was under the influence of substances at the time of the assault by the type of substances used at the time of the assault.



[Figure 21]

Inspection of Figure 21 shows that the patterns of substance use were very similar for rapes that occurred in which the assailant was the only one under the influence of a substance and for rapes in which the assailant and the victim were both under the influence of a substance. In both of these types of rape situations, there was considerable use of alcohol only and considerable use of both alcohol and drugs, but very little use of drugs only. On the other hand, the pattern of substance use for rapes in which the victim was the only one under the influence of a substance shows that there was considerably more use of drugs only and considerably less use of both drugs and alcohol.

Race comparisons among rapes involving substance use show no significant differences. In other words, neither White, Black, or American Indian women were more likely to be involved in a rape where substances were used. On the other hand, there was a significant difference in rapes involving substance use that occurred within the past two years as opposed to those that occurred more than two years ago. This difference shows that rapes which occurred in the past two years were twice as likely to involve substance use than those that occurred more than two years ago (78% vs. 39%).

Comparisons among rapes involving substance use and who committed those rapes also reveal some interesting differences which are presented in Figure 22.

Victim-Assailant Relationship	Alcohol and/or Drugs Used By...		
	Assailant Only	Victim Only	Assailant and Victim
Total Stranger	62%	15%	23%
Just met	19%	12%	69%
Friend	44%	11%	45%
Intimate	72%	7%	21%
Family member	80%	20%	0%

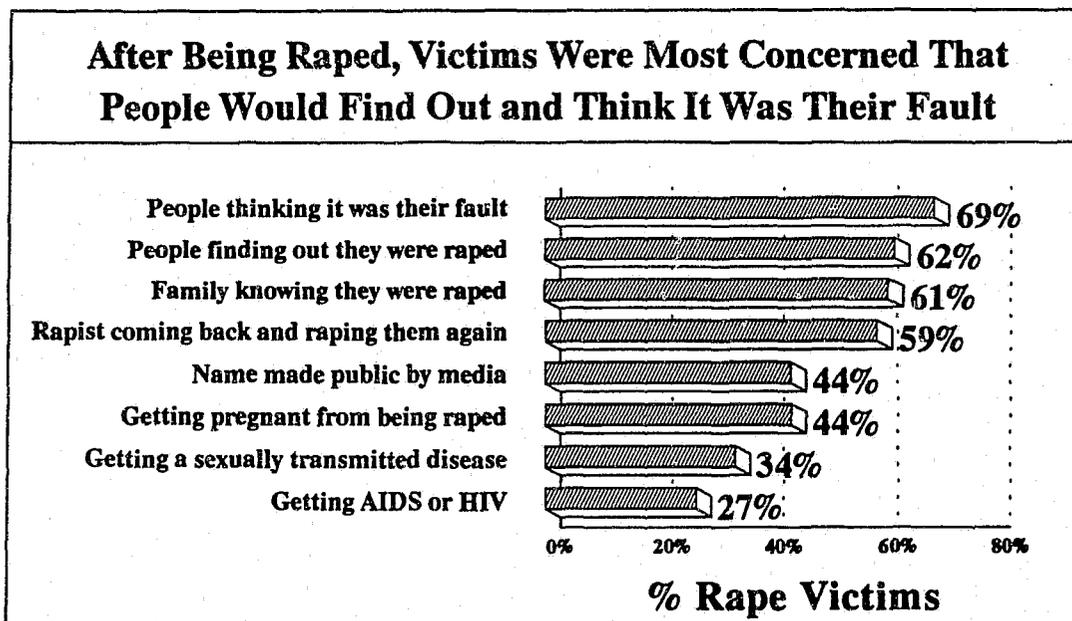
[Figure 22]

Figure 22 shows that family members, intimates (meaning current and former husbands and boyfriends) and strangers are the most likely to commit rapes where the assailant only is under the influence of a substance at the time; whereas, assailants the victim had just met and friends are the most likely to commit rapes where both the assailant and victim are under the influence at the time of the assault. It is also interesting to note that in the majority of rapes that involve both intimates and substance use, it is the intimate alone who was using substances at the time of the assault. It is also worth noting that in rapes involving substance use and assailants who are total strangers, there was a relatively high incidence of victims who were under the influence at the time the rape occurred. This finding is probably an indication that when women are out on the streets or home alone after they have been using substances they may engage in behaviors that increase their vulnerability to being assaulted by strangers. Such behaviors may include forgetting to lock one's door, or not paying attention to what is going on around one after leaving a bar or party alone.

Because the use of substances might play a role in how aggressive and violent rapists are during an assault, as well as how resistant victims are, rapists' overall aggression and victims' overall resistance were compared in rapes that definitely involved substance use and those that definitely did not involve substance use. Results show that the presence or absence of alcohol or drugs was unrelated to victim resistance or rapist aggression. On the other hand, when only those rapes in which substance use was definitely present were examined, the person who was using substances was related to rapist's overall aggression and victim's overall resistance during the rape. For example, when assailants were the only ones under the influence of substances, the rapes were more aggressive and violent than when both the victim and assailant were under the influence or when the victim only was under the influence. Results also show that when assailants only were using, victims put up more overall resistance than when victims only were using, or both victims and assailants were using.

H. What Were Victims Most Concerned About After Being Raped?

It is obvious that after a woman is sexually raped and violated that she probably has many concerns. These concerns may include fears about contracting AIDS, becoming pregnant, or others finding out. For rape prevention and support efforts to be effective, it is important to learn about the types of concerns that most victims have after they have been raped. Figure 23 shows the percent of rape victims who were somewhat or extremely concerned about the following.



[Figure 23]

Results show that the most common concern among rape victims was that people would think the rape was their fault. Two in three victims were also very concerned that their family and others would find out they had been raped, and that the rapist would come back to rape them again. Only 1/3rd were concerned about getting a sexually transmitted disease, and only 1/4th were worried about getting AIDS.

Analyses comparing victim concerns by when the rapes occurred show that women who were raped during the past two years were more likely to be concerned about getting a disease or AIDS than were victims who were raped more than two years ago.

Racial comparisons show that American Indian victims were significantly more concerned about others finding out, people thinking they were responsible, and getting a disease or AIDS than were White or Black victims. In addition, analyses examining differences among victims' concerns in relationship to who raped them reveal several interesting findings. For example, victims who were raped by strangers were more concerned about getting a disease or AIDS, or becoming pregnant; whereas, victims raped by acquaintances were more concerned about people finding out about their rape, their name being made public, and people thinking it was their fault. Finally, victims raped by family members were most concerned about the rapist coming back to rape them again. Additional analyses show that this concern is quite valid in that victims raped by family members are the most likely to have been raped on more than one occasion.

Finally, a good deal of convergence can be noted in the concerns of rape victims sampled in this study and the concerns of rape victims sampled in the *National Women's Study*. For example, both studies show that the three biggest concerns of rape victims are people thinking it was their fault (69% vs. 69%), and other people (62% vs. 68%) and family members (59% vs. 71%) finding out.

I. Chapter Summary

Circumstances Surrounding Rapes of Tulsa Women



Main Findings



- * **Most Victims Know The Person Who Raped Them**
- * **Most Rapes Took Place Indoors, Usually In The Victim's Own Home**
- * **Twenty Percent Of The Rapes Involved Date Rape Types Of Situations**
- * **1 In 5 Victims Were Stalked Prior To Being Raped**
- * **Most Victims Tried To Resist**
- * **3 In 4 Men Used Physical Force To Rape Their Victims**
- * **1 In 2 Rapes Involved The Use Of Substances**
- * **After Being Raped, Victims Were Most Concerned That People Would Find Out And Think It Was Their Fault**

Victim accounts of the circumstances surrounding their rapes and the behaviors that went on during their rapes illustrate several apparent realities about rape. The first of these realities is that rape almost always involves force and violence. Because rape is labeled as a "sexual" assault and usually involves the penetration of a women's vagina, many people think of rape as a sexual act. Rape is not a sexual act. Rape is an assault. It is about violence, violation, domination, and terror.

A second reality is that almost all victims actively and strenuously resist being raped. The all too prevalent myth that most rape victims wanted to be raped is exactly that - a myth. As these study results show, when victims do not actively resist, it is usually because they are drunk or high on substances, very young, or they are being assaulted by someone whom they are close to such as a father, brother, or husband.

A third reality about rape illustrated in this study is that rapist violence and aggression and victim resistance are positively related. In other words, as rapists get more violent, victims tend to resist more; and as victims resist more, rapists get more violent. This is an important fact about rape that women need to understand because it means that there are usually violent consequences involved when victims try to actively resist being raped. On the other hand, as the *Anatomy of Rape* study of Tulsa Police rape records illustrates, if victims do not actively resist, they will almost assuredly be penetrated, and in many cases multiple times.² In other words, women who are raped face very difficult choices in terms of how hard they try to resist, probable rapist retaliation against resistance, probability of successful escape, and the likelihood of being successfully penetrated. It is important that women understand the choices that they may have to make if they are ever sexually assaulted.

A fourth reality about rape is that most rapes are not committed by strangers. They are committed by a person whom the victim knows, and often by someone whom she knows well. It is important that women understand the reality of acquaintance rape. It is important they understand that most rapes involve a husband, ex-boyfriend, friend, brother, or even father who forces, coerces, or intimidates, a wife, girlfriend, sister, friend, or daughter to let him use her body. This is what most rape is and just because an acquaintance is doing the violating does not make it something other than an act of rape.

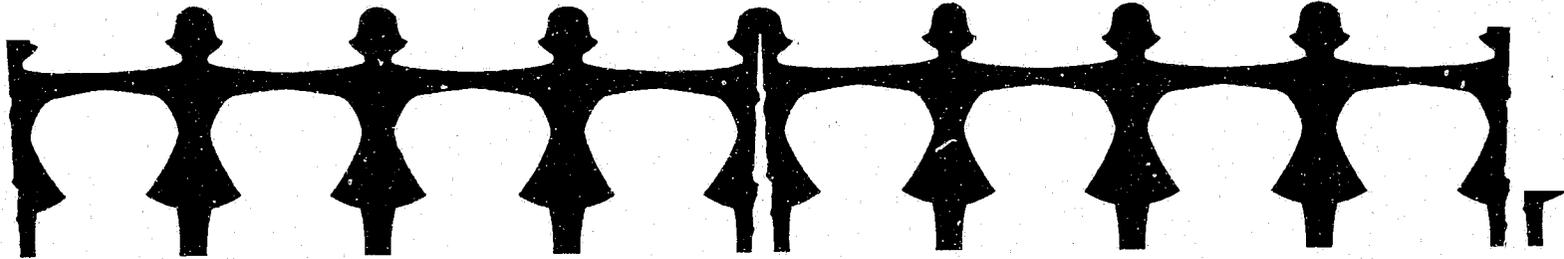
A fifth reality about rape shown in this chapter is that substance use, especially alcohol use, is involved in about half of the rapes that occur. Moreover, when substances are involved in rape, the rapes tend to be more violent. It is important that women understand that unless they are with someone whom they choose to be intimate with, being around men who are drunk or high on illegal drugs, or getting drunk or high themselves when they are around men can be and often is a risky situation.



2. Novacek, J., Raskin, R., Rybicki, S., Bahlinger, D., & Firth, L. (1993). *Anatomy of Rape*, Tulsa Institute of Behavioral Sciences. The *Anatomy of Rape* study involved systematic examination of information contained in police files of 608 rapes that were reported to the Tulsa Police Department between July 1990 and December 1991.

IV. Reporting and Not Reporting

Rape to the Police



- * **How Many Tulsa Women Reported Being Raped to the Police?**
- * **Not Reporting Rape to the Police**
- * **Reporting Rape to the Police**
- * **Chapter Summary**

IV. Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police

Rape and child molestation are believed by most authorities to be America's most hidden crimes. They are hidden crimes because only a small percentage of the victims who experience sexual assault ever report their assault to law enforcement officials. Because so few victims report sexual assault, it is difficult to ascertain the frequency with which sexual assault occurs in this country. With regard to rape, most authoritative estimates place victim reporting rates at somewhere between 10% and 50%. This means that somewhere between twice to ten times as many rapes occur each year than are reported to law enforcement officials.

There are serious consequences involved each time a rape victim fails to report her sexual assault to the police. The most obvious of these consequences is that the person who perpetrated the rape will not be apprehended, indicted, prosecuted, and incarcerated. In other words, the rapist will remain at large and be able to continue raping other victims. The idea that many un-convicted rapists rape more victims is supported by several scientific studies of convicted rapists. For example, in one recent study of 41 incarcerated serial rapists it was learned that each of these individuals successfully raped, on average, over 30 women and girls during their felonious careers.³ Moreover, in the *Anatomy of Rape* study it was found that 1 in 4 of the assailants who were arrested for rape during an 18 month time period had previous sex crime arrests.

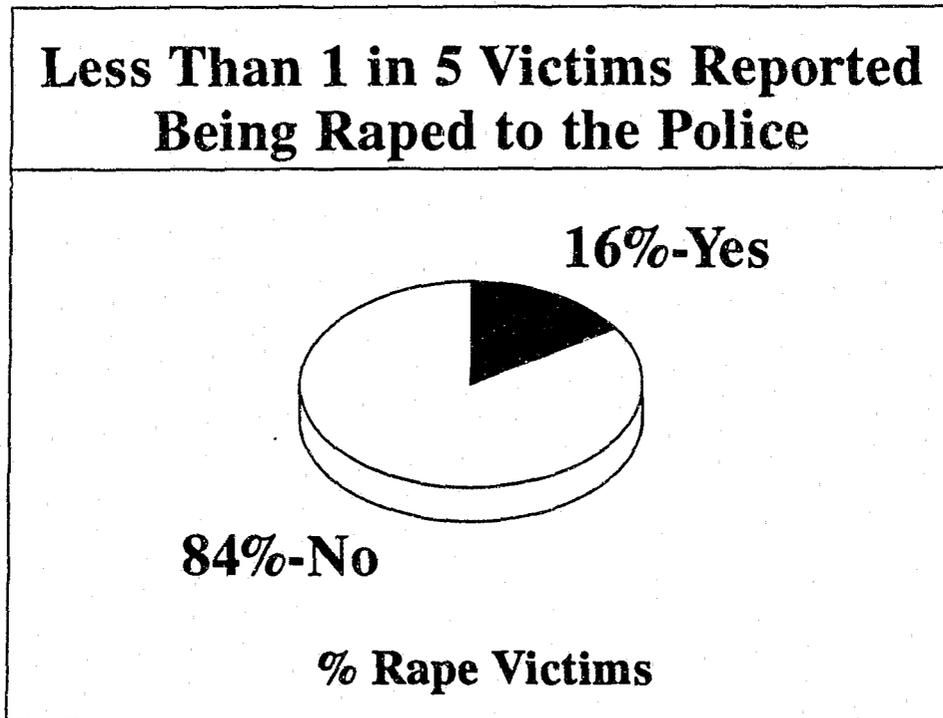
A second and equally serious consequence of not reporting rape is that rape remains a hidden crime. Because rape is a hidden crime, American communities fail to obtain a clear picture of the pervasiveness of rape. Consequently, communities do not recognize the magnitude of the problem that rape presents to their citizens, and they cannot develop public safety and education policies that effectively reduce the incidence of rape.

Another important consequence of not reporting rape is that many of the rapes that occur are never publicly labelled as rapes. For example, results from this study show that 20% of all rapes that occurred involved date rape types of situations, and that a preferred strategy of men who rape women on dates is to try to make them more compliant by persuading them to get high on alcohol or drugs. Unless these types of situations, in which men take women out on dates and ply them with liquor in order to have sex with their more or less unconscious bodies, are reported and labelled as rapes, it will be virtually impossible to change the attitudes of males who believe this kind of behavior is acceptable. The fact that all of the victims in this study were raped by men, and that most of these men were intimates, friends, and acquaintances, indicates that there are aggressive behaviors and attitudes that men find acceptable which contribute to rape. Unless these kinds of sexual assaults are reported and publicly acknowledged as rapes, the aggressive male attitudes and behaviors that drive rape will continue to be acceptable.

Given the importance of reporting rape to law enforcement officials, it is important to learn more about the experiences of victims who did and did not report their rapes. Information about the experiences of women who did and did not report rape may help future rape victims come forward and expose one of America's most hidden crimes.

3. Hazelwood, R. R., & Warren, J. *The Serial Rapist: His Characteristics and Victims*, FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, (Jan. 1989), 10-25.

A. How Many Tulsa Women Reported Being Raped to the Police?



[Figure 24]

Figure 24 shows that among the Tulsa women who experienced a rape, only 16% reported their rape to the police. There are two points to be made about this 16% reporting rate. First, earlier in this report a 14% reporting rate was estimated by comparing the number of 1992 Tulsa rapes that were officially reported to the police with an estimate of the total number of rapes occurring that year that was derived by projecting the percent of women surveyed who said they were raped during 1992 onto Tulsa's 1990 adult female census information. This 16% reporting rate found in this study was obtained directly by asking all of the women surveyed who were raped during their life whether they ever reported their rape to the police. Both of these reported rape estimates which were calculated by entirely different methods clearly converge.

Second, and more importantly, this 16% reporting rate is identical with the reporting rate found in the *National Women's Study*. The fact that the reporting rates in this study and the *National Women's Study* validate one another suggests a 16% reporting rate is the best and most accurate rate that is currently available. It also means that based on the best evidence available that at least 8 out of every 10 rapes that occur in this country are hidden crimes. Moreover, because these rapes are hidden crimes, they are also unpunishable crimes.

B. Not Reporting Rape to the Police

Rape is a violent violation of a woman's body, mind, and spirit. Victims' accounts of being raped portray a horrible and painful experience. Why then do so few victims report being raped to the police? Moreover, is not reporting their rape to the police a difficult decision for women to make? Is the decision to not report their rape a decision that most victims make alone, or do they seek out advice from family and friends? Once this decision is made, do victims eventually come to regret their failure to report?

Answers to these and other questions regarding the non-reporting of rape to the police are vital to the prevention of rape. Unless more can be learned about the barriers to reporting rape, the number of American women who are raped each year will continue to climb.

Results from this representative sample of nearly 1,000 Tulsa women show that 84% of the women who experienced a rape decided not to report their victimization to the police. The following results are based on the responses of the 247 rape victims who did not report their rapes.

1. Why Did They Not Report Being Raped to the Police?

When a woman has been raped and decides not to report the assault there must be a reason(s) behind that decision. To learn more about why victims do not report rape, non-reporting victims were asked about their reasons for keeping their rape hidden.

4 in 5 Were Too Embarrassed to Report Being Raped

- 80% Embarrassed about what had happened
- 61% Felt partly responsible
- 59% Not enough evidence and nothing would come of it
- 54% Did not realize they had been raped at the time it happened
- 46% Did not think police would be able to make an arrest
- 45% Too upset
- 43% Afraid attacker would get angry and rape them again
- 43% Afraid police would not believe them
- 43% Did not want media to find out their name
- 41% At the time, society expected women to remain silent
- 40% Afraid would have to testify in court
- 36% Too young at the time it happened
- 32% Did not want to get assailant in trouble
- 27% Did not think it was that important
- 24% Did not want to deal with male police officers
- 21% Did not want significant other to find out
- 19% Drunk or high when it happened
- 15% Someone close to them did not want them to report it
- 14% Attacker threatened to hurt family or friends
- 13% Significant other did not want them to report it

[Figure 25]

Results show that the most common reason for why victims did not report their rape to the police was *they were embarrassed about what had happened to them*. In fact, 8 in 10 of the non-reporting victims cited embarrassment as a reason for keeping their rape hidden from the police. Other common reasons for not reporting were that the victims *felt partly responsible for the rape*, they *did not believe that there was enough evidence* to substantiate their rape and that *nothing would come of it if they did report it*, and they *did not realize they had been raped at the time it happened*. It is important to add that victims who said they did not report their rape because they felt partly responsible were also asked why they felt partly responsible. The three most common answers to this question were that they felt "stupid" for trusting the man who raped them, they felt "dumb" for letting the rapist into their home, and they felt "guilty" because they had too much to drink at the time of the assault.

Another common reason for not reporting that needs further examination is that many of the non-reporting victims said they did not realize they been raped at the time it happened. How can a woman be raped and not know that she was raped? Further analyses of the data show that 55% of the women who said they did not realize they had been raped also said they were too young at the time of their rape to report it, 42% were raped by a husband or boyfriend, 22% said they were drunk or high when it happened, and 50% said they were raped more than 10 years ago which was a time in our society when date rape and acquaintance rape were not typically recognized as rape situations. In light of these results, the answer to the question of how can a woman be raped and not realize it at the time appears to be that she is either very young, she is drunk or very high, or she is not able to recognize (probably through a lack of rape education) that certain kinds of situations in which a woman is forced to have sex without her consent are in fact rapes.

Figure 25 also shows the least frequently cited reasons for not reporting rape to the police. These include having a significant other or family member not wanting them to report it, being afraid that their assailant would hurt their family or friends if they reported it, having been drunk or high at the time it happened, and not wanting a significant other to find out about it.

Inspection of Figure 25 also indicates that many of the non-reporting victims had more than one reason for not reporting their rape. Further analyses of the data show that 4% of the victims had two reasons for not reporting, 5% had 3 reasons, 8% had 4 reasons, and 70% had 5 or more reasons. On average, victims who did not report their rape gave 7 reasons for not reporting.

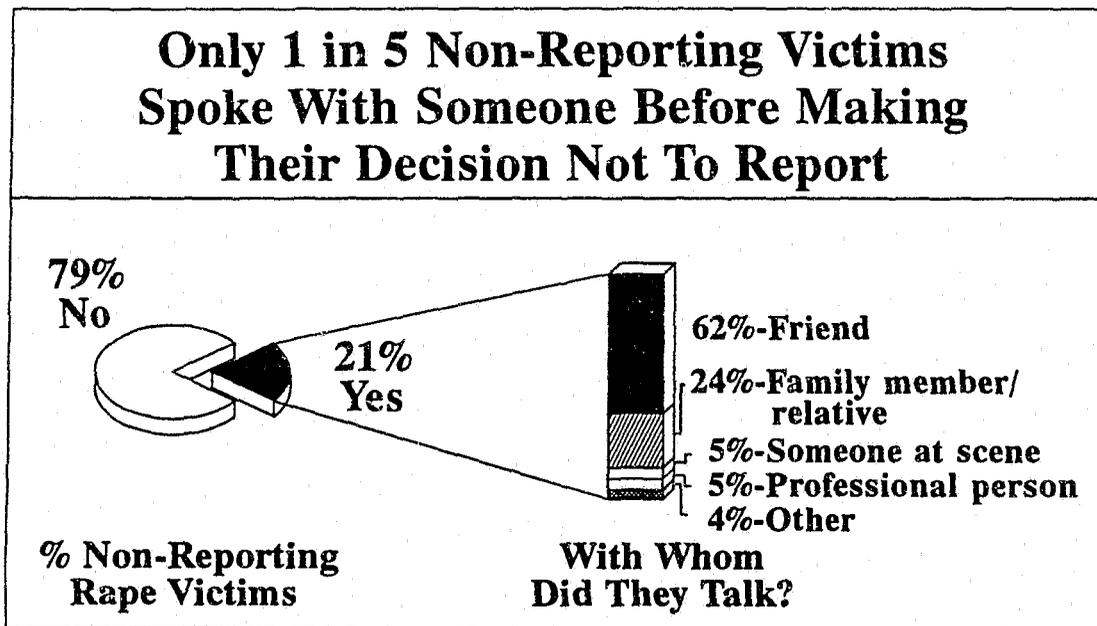
Racial comparisons show that American Indian victims are more likely to indicate they did not report being raped because they were too embarrassed and upset, they did not believe there was enough evidence, they did not think the police would believe them or be able to make an arrest, and they did not want their significant other or the media to find out about what had happened. It is also worth noting that American Indian victims had significantly greater numbers of reasons for not reporting than did White or Black victims. This suggests that American Indian women may be particularly resistant to reporting rape to the police and should be targeted for rape prevention and education programs.

Only two reasons for not reporting rape are related to income. Analyses show that poor and wealthy victims were more embarrassed about what had happened to them than were middle income victims. In addition, more affluent victims felt that at the time they were raped, society expected women to remain silent about being raped.

Finally, analyses show that who the rapist was made a difference in the reasons why victims did not report being raped to the police. For example, victims of stranger rapes are more likely to say they did not report being raped because they were drunk at the time it happened, they felt partly responsible, and they were afraid the police would not believe them. On the other hand, victims of acquaintance rapes were more likely to not report being raped because they did not want their significant other or family to find out about it, they were too young at the time it happened, they felt society expected women to remain silent about rape, and they were raped by someone who threatened to hurt their family or friends if they reported it.

2. Did They Talk to Anyone About Whether or Not They Should Report Being Raped to the Police?

In addition to the reasons that victims have for not reporting, another factor that might influence their decision not to report is whether or not they sought advice from someone else in making that decision. Figure 26 shows how many non-reporting victims spoke to someone else about whether or not they should report their rape.



[Figure 26]

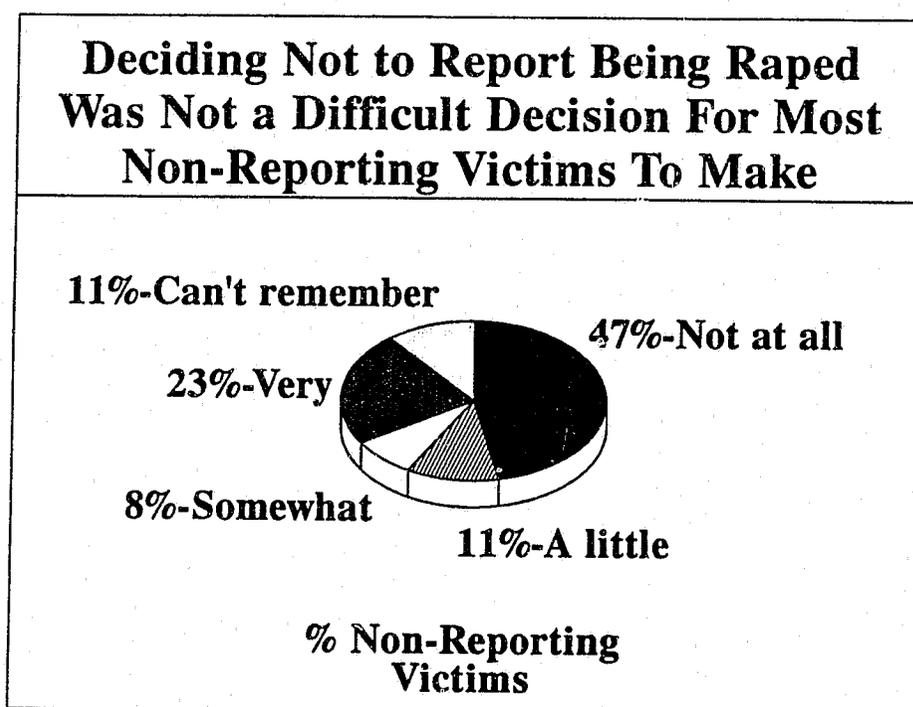
Results show that only 1 in 5 non-reporting victims spoke to anyone about reporting being raped to the police before they decided not to report it. Most of the women who did consult with someone talked with a friend, although 1 in 4 spoke with a family member or relative. These results clearly show that the vast majority of women who do not report rape make that decision without seeking the advice of anyone else.

Demographic comparisons show that income had no relationship to whether or not victims spoke with anyone before deciding not to report their rape to the police. On the other hand, analyses show that American Indian (43%) and Black (37%) victims were more likely to speak with someone before making their decision than were White victims (16%).

Finally, analyses reveal that women who were raped by strangers were more likely to speak with someone before making their decision not to report than were women who were raped by acquaintances. In particular, victims who were raped by someone they had just met were the most likely to talk with someone, usually a friend.

3. Was Deciding Not to Report Being Raped to the Police a Difficult Decision to Make?

Results have shown that victims who did not report being raped to the police usually had several reasons for not reporting and usually made their decision without seeking advice from others. Given these parameters in their decision making process, is the decision to not report being raped a difficult decision for victims to arrive at?



[Figure 27]

Results show that almost half of the women who did not report being raped to the police said their decision not to report the rape was not at all difficult to make. Only about 1 in 4 victims said they had a very difficult time deciding not to report their rape.

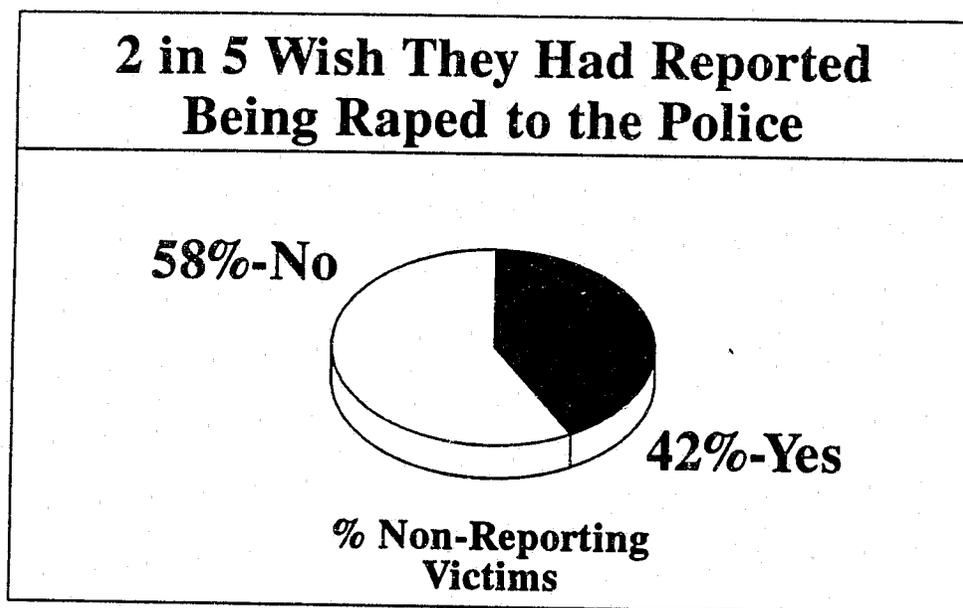
Demographic analyses show that Black women and less affluent victims had the most difficult time in deciding not to report being raped to the police. In addition, comparisons between stranger and acquaintance rapes show that women who were raped by total strangers or family members had the most difficult time reaching their decisions not to report their rapes. Because rapes committed by total strangers are the most likely to be reported (page 74), it makes sense that it is particularly difficult for victims of these types of rape to decide not to report their assault. Similarly, the added psychological trauma of having someone in one's own family violate them probably contributes to the difficulty victims of family rapes have in deciding not to report being raped to the police.

Overall, the findings that 8 in 10 women who have been raped did not report their rape to the police, and that half of these women found their decision not to report a relatively easy one to make are very significant barriers to rape prevention efforts. To learn more about factors that may influence the difficulty with which victims reach the decision not to report, we examined the data for relationships between victim's difficulty in deciding not to report, the reasons they gave for not reporting, and whether or not they sought advice before deciding not to report.

Results show that the difficulty victims had in deciding not to report rape was related to several of the reasons they gave for not reporting. For example, victims who had the most difficulty deciding not to report were most likely to say they did not report because: they were afraid the person who raped them would get angry and rape them again; they didn't want the media to find out their name and make their rape public; and they were afraid they would have to testify in court. It is important to note that victims who had the most difficult time reaching a decision not to report their rape were also the most likely to have sought advice from someone before making their decision. Apparently, when rape victims talk to others after their assault it makes it harder for them to decide not to report their rape to the police.

4. Do They Wish They Had Reported Being Raped to the Police?

The data suggests that not reporting rape to the police seems to have been a relatively easy decision for most non-reporting victims to make. Although it may have been a relatively easy decision to make at the time, do victims who made that decision regret it with the passage of time? In other words, how many victims who chose not to report their rape presently wish they had reported their rape to the police?



[Figure 28]

Results show 2 in 5 of the women who did not report their rape to the police currently wish they had; whereas, 3 in 5 of these victims do not wish they had reported it. Although these results suggest that most non-reporting victims do not regret their decision with the passage of time, almost an equal number of them do. There is an important message in these results for future rape victims who may have to make the decision of whether or not to report their rape to the police. The message is that if they choose not to report their rape, they may be one of the 2 in 5 who live to regret that decision.

Demographic analyses reveal racial and income differences in the victims of unreported rapes who wish they had reported it. Black victims (61%) of unreported rapes are twice as likely as White (39%) and American Indian (39%) victims to wish they had reported it. In addition, less affluent women are more likely to say they wish they had reported being raped. Finally, victims of stranger rapes who did not report it are more likely to indicate they wish they had reported it (57%) than are victims of unreported acquaintance rapes (38%). Further analyses of acquaintance rapes, however, reveals that victims of unreported family rapes are more likely to wish they had reported it (57%) than are victims of unreported rapes committed by friends (40%) or intimates (31%).

Finally, an examination of the difficulty that victims had in reaching their decision not to report their rape and whether they wish they had reported their rape shows that the more difficulty that victims had in deciding not to report, the more likely they are to wish they had reported their rape to the police.

C. Reporting Rape to the Police

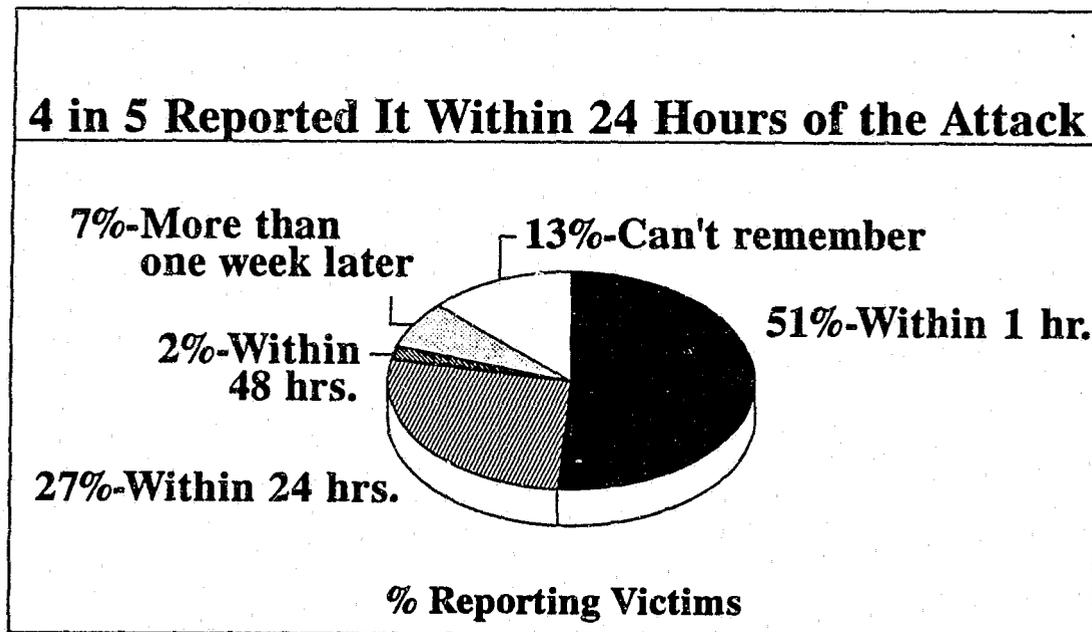
Only about 2 in 10 women who experience rape report their assault to the police. When a victim reports her rape to the police it means that she has decided to pursue her assailant in the hope of seeing him apprehended, indicted, prosecuted, and punished. Once a rape is reported and the so-called wheels of justice begin turning it can be a long, arduous, and even excruciating process for the victim. Reporting a rape means that the victim's sexual assault becomes open to public scrutiny. This scrutiny begins with the police officers who the victim first reports to and who will investigate her case. As her case proceeds, this scrutiny often extends to potential witnesses to the crime such as neighbors, friends, family members, or bystanders. If enough evidence can be gathered to substantiate the rape and point to a probable suspect, this public scrutiny extends to the District Attorney's Office. If the District Attorney's Office decides to prosecute the rape, the victim's sexual assault may end up in a court of law where it becomes open to the scrutiny of the general public. Moreover, at anytime in this process the media could become involved in which case the victim's sexual assault could appear in the newspapers or on television. In addition to opening her rape to public scrutiny, as the legal process unfolds the victim will have to repeat and relive her sexual assault over and over again, and at each telling, the veracity of her story (and often her very character) will be questioned. Previously this study has shown that the single most common reason for not reporting rape among victims who did not report it is they were embarrassed about what happened to them. No doubt victims who do report rape share this experience of embarrassment which is why having to endure the public scrutiny involved in reporting rape can be such an ordeal.

The fact that reporting rape to the police is a difficult experience is substantiated by the *Anatomy of Rape* study of Tulsa Police Department rape files. This study found that 79% of the rapes that are reported do not end in an arrest and in 52% of these cases the reason for non-arrest is that the victim dropped her case or stopped cooperating during the investigative process. Because it is so essential to rape prevention efforts that rape victims report their sexual assault to the police, and because so few do, it is important to learn more about what the reporting experience is like from those who have been through it.

Results from this representative sample of nearly 1,000 Tulsa women show that only 16% of the women who experienced a rape reported their victimization to the police. The following results are based on the responses of the 47 rape victims who did report their rapes.

1. How Long Did It Take Them to Report Being Raped to the Police?

Although reporting rape to the police is the "bottom line" for apprehending, indicting, prosecuting, and incarcerating rapists, it is also important that victims report their rapes immediately after the assault occurs. For example, in the *Anatomy of Rape* study a strong relationship was found between how long after a rape it was reported and whether or not an arrest was made. Specifically, rapes that were reported within 24 hours of the assault were much more likely to end in an arrest than rapes that were reported more than 24 hours after the assault. Moreover, when victims waited more than a week to report their assault, the probability that their rape ended in an arrest became extremely small. How long did the rape victims surveyed typically wait before reporting their sexual assaults to the police?



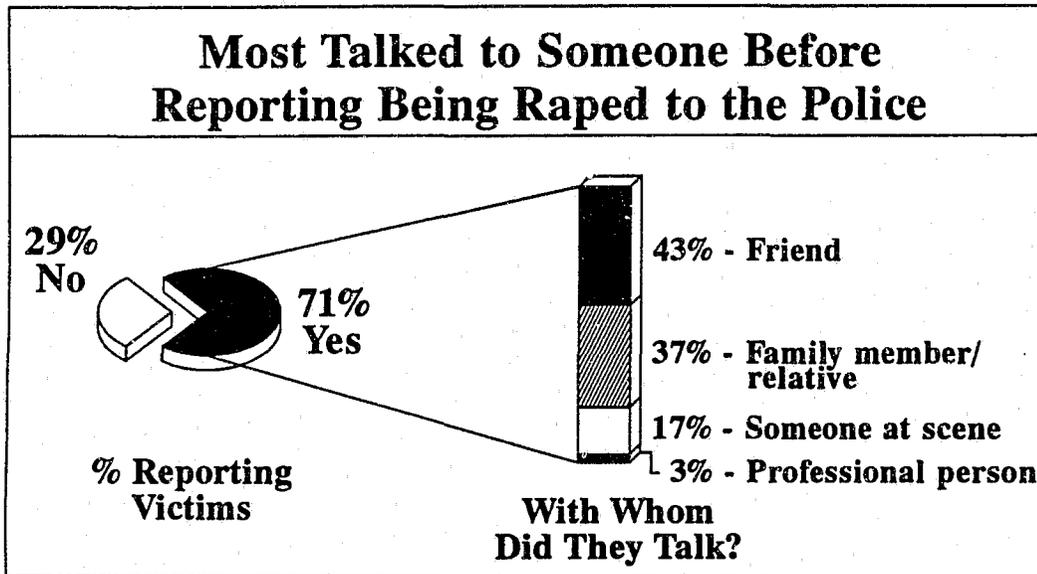
[Figure 29]

Figure 29 shows that 78% of the victims who reported their rapes did so within 24 hours of the attack. Moreover, the majority of these women say they reported their rape within an hour of the assault. These results show that most women who decided to report their rape to the police made and followed through with their decision within a few hours after their assault.

In summary, out of all of the rapes that occurred, 84% were not reported, 12% were reported within 24 hours of the rape, and 4% were reported more than 24 hours after the rape. These reporting percentages are exactly the same as those found in the *National Women's Study*.

2. Did They Talk to Anyone About Being Raped Before Reporting It to the Police?

Results from this study have shown that most women who decide not to report their rape make that decision without seeking advice from anyone else. Do victims who decide to report their rape make their decision alone or do they seek advice from others?

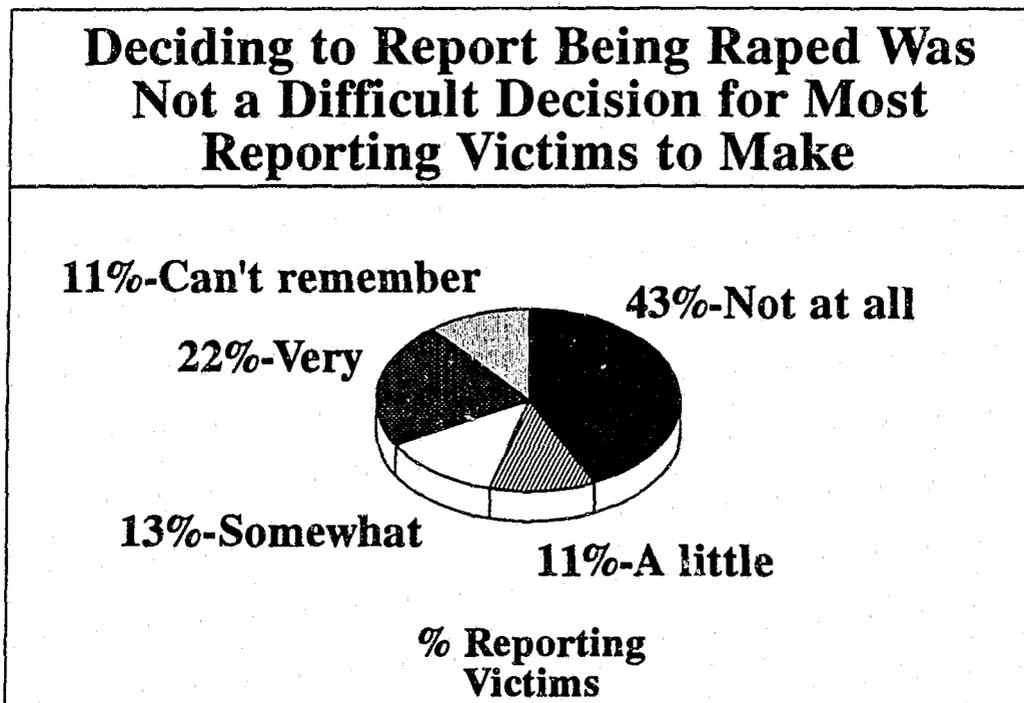


[Figure 30]

Figure 30 shows that nearly 3/4's of the victims who decided to report being raped sought advice from someone else before deciding to report: in most cases, a friend or family member. Comparing these statistics to those of women who do not report suggests that women who report their rape are more than 3 times more likely to talk to someone else about their decision. This suggests that an important part of rape prevention education should be to encourage women to seek advice should they ever be raped and feel uncertain about reporting. Further analyses show that seeking advice is unrelated to how long it took victims to report being raped to the police. Overall, this means that seeking advice does not delay reporting and in fact, it appears to increase reporting rates.

3. Was Deciding to Report Being Raped to the Police a Difficult Decision to Make?

Results have shown that most victims who decided not to report their rape did not find it a difficult decision to make. Do women who report rape find it difficult or relatively easy to make their decision?



[Figure 31]

Figure 31 shows that about half of the victims who decided to report rape said it was relatively easy for them to reach their decision. Only about 1 in 4 said it was very difficult for them to decide. It is interesting how similar these results are to those of women who do not report. Among victims who do and do not report, few find their decisions very difficult to make. Further analyses also show that the amount of difficulty victims experienced in deciding to report being raped to the police is unrelated to how long it took victims to actually report.

4. Why Did They Report Being Raped to the Police?

Results have shown that women who do not report rape usually have a variety of reasons for not reporting, and that some of these reasons are related to the difficulty that victims have in deciding not to report (i.e., they didn't want the media to find out and make their rape public). What are some of the reasons that women who do report their rape have for reporting and are any of those reasons related to the difficulty that victims experienced in deciding to report.

9 in 10 Victims Reported Being Raped Because They Wanted Their Assailant Punished

% Yes

88%	Wanted person who raped them to be punished
72%	Afraid rapist would rape others
68%	Felt it was their duty to report being raped
63%	Afraid rapist would try to rape them again
49%	Wanted support and counseling
47%	Someone convinced them they should report it
44%	Needed medical attention and had no choice
19%	Wanted free medical examination

[Figure 32]

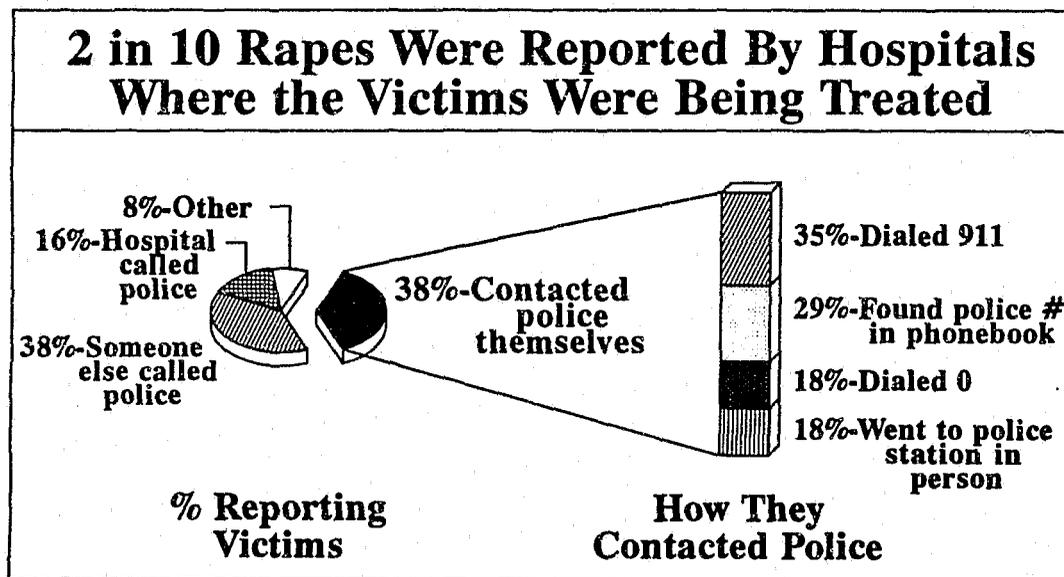
Figure 32 shows that the most common reason victims had for reporting was they wanted to see the person who raped them punished. In fact, 9 in 10 reporting victims gave wanting to see their assailant punished as a reason for their reporting. Other common reasons are being afraid the rapist would rape others, believing it was their duty to report their rape, and being afraid the rapist would come back and rape them again.

Like women who do not report rape, women who do report usually have several reasons for reporting. Analyses of the data show that 11% of the reporting victims had two reasons, 13% had three reasons, 15% had four reasons, and 48% had five or more reasons. The average number of reasons that reporting victims had for reporting was four.

Finally, analyses show that the specific reasons a women has for reporting rape, as well as, the total number of reasons she has are not related to how long it takes her to report being raped to the police.

5. How Did They Contact the Police?

Once victims decide to report their rape there are a variety of ways they can make contact with the police. Figure 33 shows how rape victims went about reporting their rape.

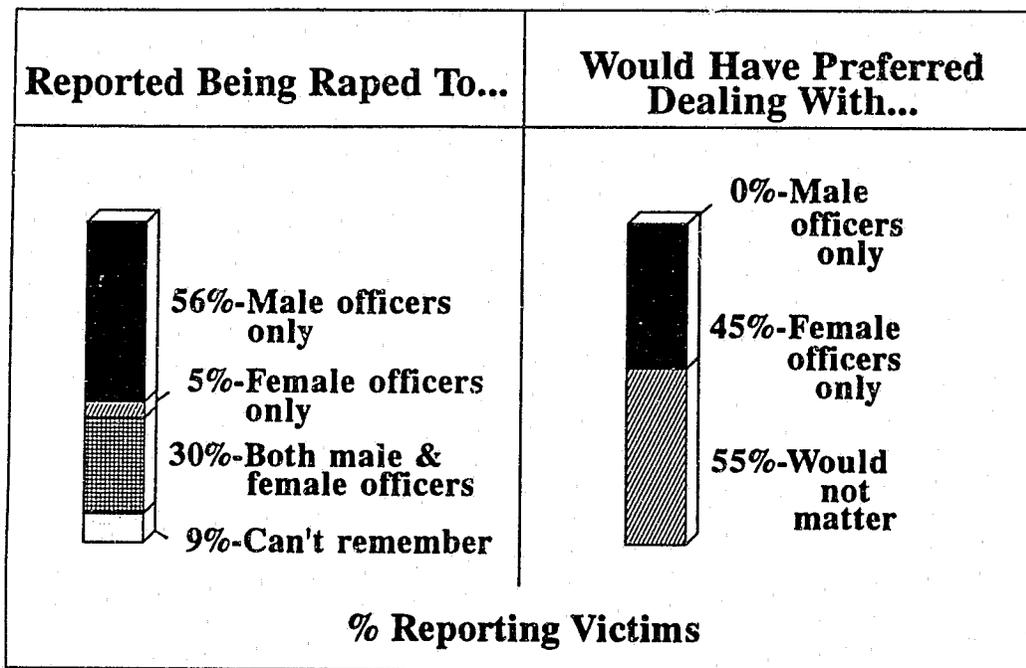


[Figure 33]

Results show that about 4 in 10 victims directly contacted the police themselves and that most of these victims made this contact over the telephone. The most common method for calling the police involved dialing 911. On the other hand, an equal number of victims contacted the police indirectly via someone else calling the police for them. It is also important to note that in almost 2 in 10 of the rapes that were reported, the police were contacted by a hospital where the victims were being treated as result of their rape.

6. To Whom Did They Report Their Rape? With Whom Would They Have Preferred Dealing?

Once victims make direct contact with the police, they are typically interviewed by one or more officers who can be only male officers, only female officers, or both. Because women who report their rape to the police are often under extreme duress as a result of being assaulted by a male, it is important to ask if the gender of the police officer(s) that victims are interviewed by makes a difference in their reporting experience. Figure 34 shows how many victims were interviewed by male, female, or male and female officers when they reported their rape, and which gender of officer they would have preferred to be interviewed by if they had had a choice.



[Figure 34]

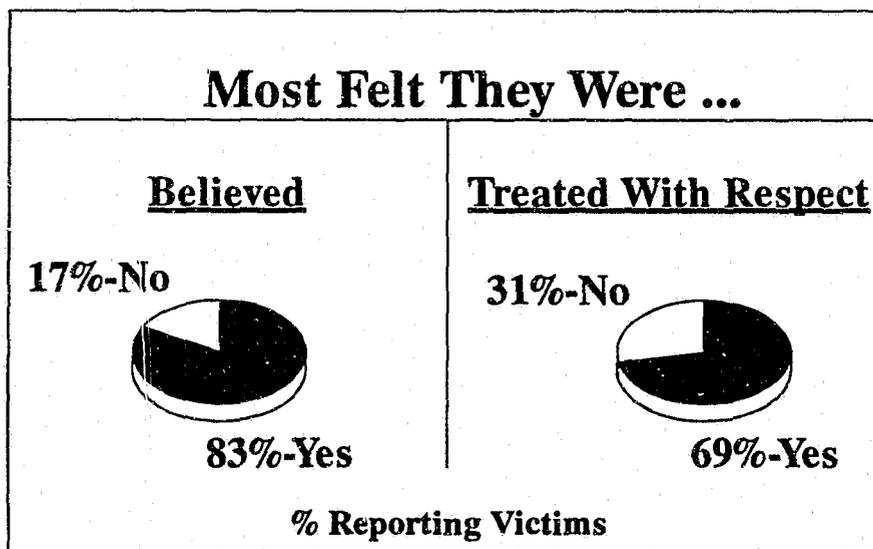
Results show that most of the victims who reported their rape were interviewed by male officers only. About 1 in 3 were interviewed by both a male and a female officer; whereas, only 5% of the victims were interviewed by female officers only. On the other hand, if given a choice none of the victims would have chosen to be interviewed by a male officer only and almost half would have preferred to be interviewed by female officers only. These results suggest that many rape victims and probably potential rape victims would prefer to deal with female officers when they report a rape. Given this preference among so many rape victims, it is probably advisable that police departments have at least as many, if not more, female officers in their sex crimes units as male officers at any given time. Moreover, it may be that if potential rape victims were assured they would have a choice of whether they could be initially interviewed by a female or male officer, it might be an inducement for more victims to report their rapes.

7. What Do Victims Say About the Reporting Process?

In light of the fact that 8 in 10 victims never report their rape and that at least 1/3rd of the victims who do report it say they had a difficult time making the decision, it seems fair to say there is a general reluctance on the part of most victims to get involved with the police and their investigative process, even though they have been assaulted and violated in the most heinous way. A large part of this reluctance is no doubt the fear of public scrutiny. On the other hand, an equally large part probably has to do with anxiety of how they will be treated by the police. Will the police believe they were raped? Will their cases be kept confidential? Will they be treated with respect? Will the police help them find support and counseling to deal with their sexual assault? Can the police really help them? These kinds of questions represent real concerns of many rape victims who struggle to decide whether or not to report their rape to the police. Consequently, it is important to learn how women who do report rape feel they were treated by the police. By learning more about how rape victims experience the police investigative process, potential victims will get a better idea of what to expect should they ever be raped. Just as importantly, police departments will learn more about the concerns of rape victims and how they can better help them.

a. How Did the Detectives Treat Them?

Figure 35 shows how victims felt they were treated by the police detectives handling their cases, Figure 36 shows whether police provided victims with vital information about rape support and, Figure 37 shows victims' evaluations of how well the police detectives in charge of their cases did their jobs.



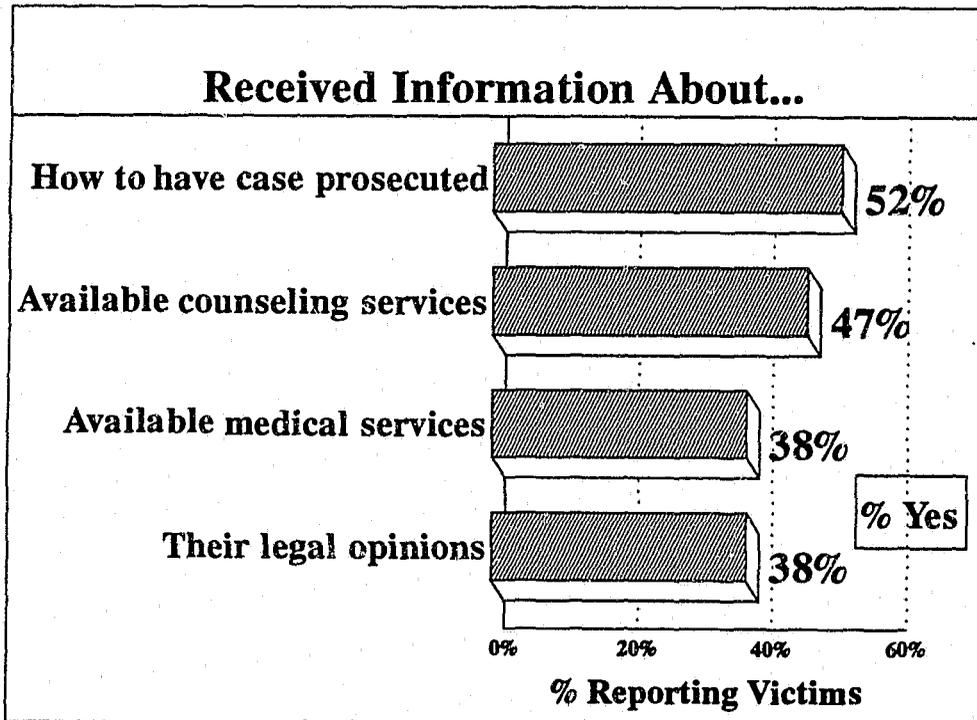
[Figure 35]

Figure 35 shows that about 3 in 4 of the victims who reported their rapes felt that the detectives handling their cases believed their report and treated them with respect. These results should encourage future rape victims to report their rapes as in most cases they will be believed and will be respected.

Analyses comparing treatment by the police and whether victims reported their rape within the past two years or more than two years ago show no significant differences.

b. What Information Did the Detectives Provide?

Previously, results have shown that one important reason for reporting rape to the police is that many victims want support and counseling (page 55). Often this desire for victim support involves victims wanting to receive information from the police about professional counseling or medical services. It also often involves victims wanting information about their legal options and what is normally involved in legally prosecuting rape. These kinds of support information are apparently important to many rape victims. Figure 36 shows the extent to which reporting victims in this study received information about support services from the detective(s) who handled their cases.



[Figure 36]

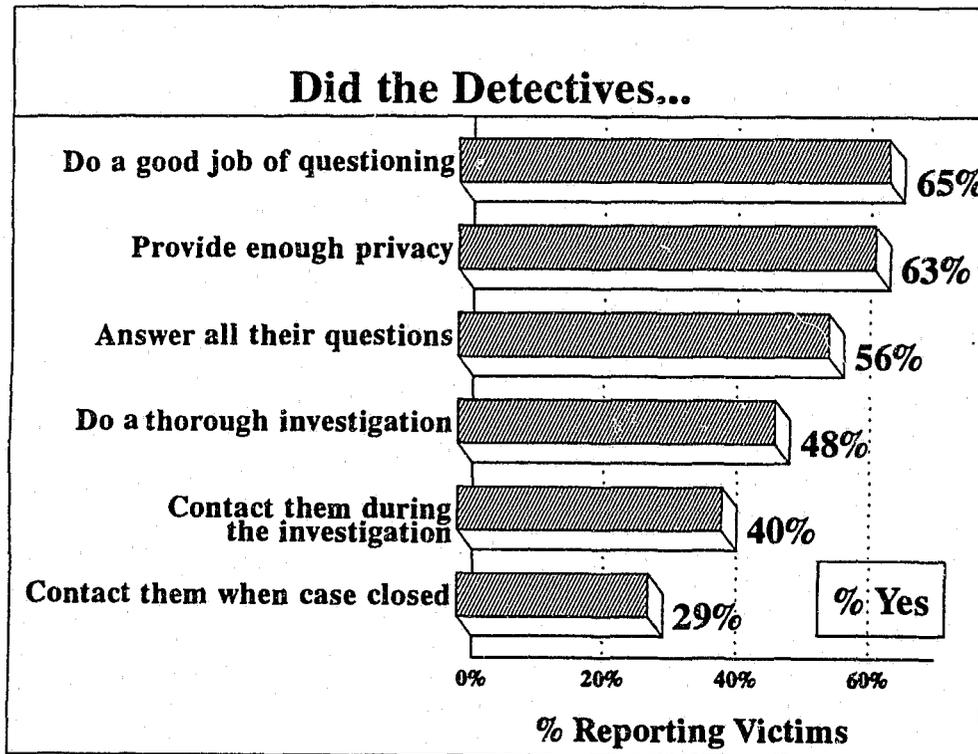
Results show that only about half the victims were given information about how to have their cases prosecuted and where they could find professional counseling services to help them deal with the trauma of being sexually assaulted. Results also show that only about 1/3rd of the victims received information about where and how to get medical services and about what their legal options were.

Providing victims with information about where to find medical and psychological support and informing victims about their legal options and what to expect if they try to have their assailant(s) prosecuted are important functions that police officers must assume during the investigation of rape. It is important for police officers to realize they are usually the first professionals that rape victims encounter. Where victims go and what they decide to do after reporting often depends on the kinds of information they get from the officers handling their cases. Results suggest that providing rape victims with support information is an area of rape investigation that can be improved. Moreover, from the point of rape prevention, it is especially important for investigating officers to clearly and repeatedly explain to victims their legal options and exactly how they can best go about getting their assailants prosecuted. It is worth remembering that the *Anatomy of Rape* study has shown that one of the most common reasons for rape not ending in arrest was that victims dropped their cases or stopped cooperating. It is important to consider whether more rape victims would see their investigations through if they are routinely given more information about their legal options and the legal processes they will experience if they should continue to pursue their assailant.

It is interesting to note that comparisons of whether victims received support information and whether they were raped within the past two years or more than two years ago show some interesting differences. For example, significantly more women who reported their rape within the past two years said they received information about counseling and medical support services from the police than did victims who reported their rapes more than two years ago (73% vs 37%; 64% vs 29%, respectively). This suggests that there has been a growing awareness among police officers about the importance of providing these types of support information. On the other hand, there are no differences found in terms of police officers providing legal information and support and when rapes were reported.

c. How Well Did the Detectives Do Their Jobs?

Figure 37 presents victim feedback about how the detectives who investigated their cases performed their jobs.



[Figure 37]

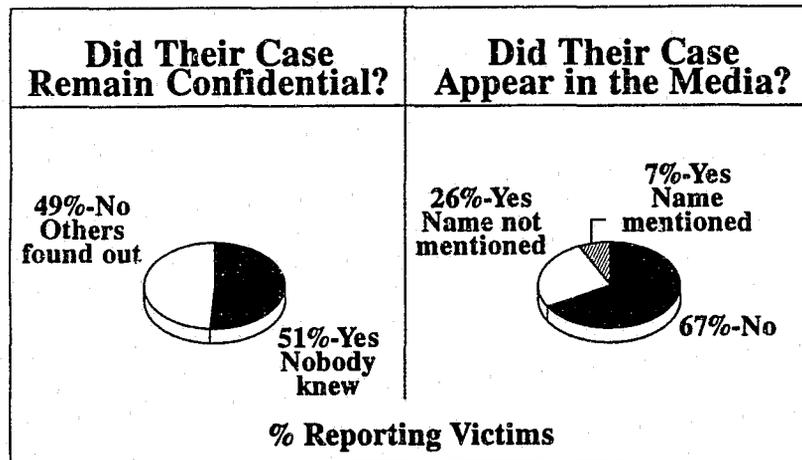
Results show that 2/3rds of the victims who reported their rapes said that the detective(s) handling their cases did a good job of questioning them and provided them with enough privacy while they reported their stories. About half also said that the detective(s) handling their case answered all of their questions and did a thorough job of investigating their case. On the other hand, less than half of the victims said that the detectives working their cases kept them informed during the investigation and less than 1/3rd said they were contacted when the police officially closed their case. Comparisons of these performance evaluations between victims reporting their rape within the past two years and more than two years ago show no significant differences.

Overall, results from victim feedback about how they were treated by the police suggest several areas where detectives who investigate rape might improve their performance from the victim's standpoint. One of these areas concerns routinely providing more information about counseling and medical support services, and more information about victims' legal options and how the legal system works. It is interesting to note that many victims said they did not receive support information from the detective(s) handling their case, yet many of these same victims also said that the detective(s) answered all of their questions. These two responses suggest that many victims may not know or realize at the time of their rape that there are support services or information available to them so they never ask about them. Consequently, even though detectives may be answering all of the victims' questions, unless these support topics are routinely brought up by the officers themselves, these victim concerns may never get expressed during the investigation.

A second area that sex crimes detectives might want to consider is that victims are saying that the officers handling their cases are not keeping them updated on the progress of their cases. In fairness to police officers who investigate rape, a significant part of this problem no doubt stems from the enormous caseloads that sex crimes detectives are routinely asked to investigate (e.g., in Tulsa about one new case every other day). Another part of this problem stems from victims who, for a variety of personal reasons having nothing to do with the police investigation (e.g. such as moving out of the area) stop cooperating. On the other hand, it is probable that there are significant numbers of victims who stop cooperating because the detectives handling their cases are not making enough contact with them after the investigation gets under way. In the absence of frequent contacts and reassurances, victims may start to believe that the police are not interested in their cases and that nothing is going to come of their continued cooperation with the police.

8. Did Their Case Remain Confidential After Reporting It to the Police?

Previous results (page 44) have shown that the most common reason why women do not report rape is that they were embarrassed about what had happened to them. Moreover, for nearly half of the non-reporting victims fear that the media would find out and publicize their rape was another reason for not reporting. These results suggest that keeping their rape confidential is a concern for many rape victims when deciding whether or not to report rape. Police departments are aware of the importance of confidentiality in cases involving sex crimes, and sex crimes detectives usually go to great lengths to ensure that a victim's identity and the details of her case will be kept as confidential as possible. However, once a rape is reported and the investigative process begins, other people, such as witnesses, significant others, family members, and friends, almost invariably have to get involved. Moreover, if the rape is sensational enough (meaning it happened in highly unusual circumstances, it was particularly violent, and/or the victim had a high social status in the community), crime reporters will relentlessly try to sniff out the details of the case and publish them. Because of the importance of confidentiality to most rape victims and the difficulties involved in insuring total confidentiality during a rape investigation, it is important to learn the extent to which victims who do report rape believe that their cases were kept confidential.



[Figure 38]

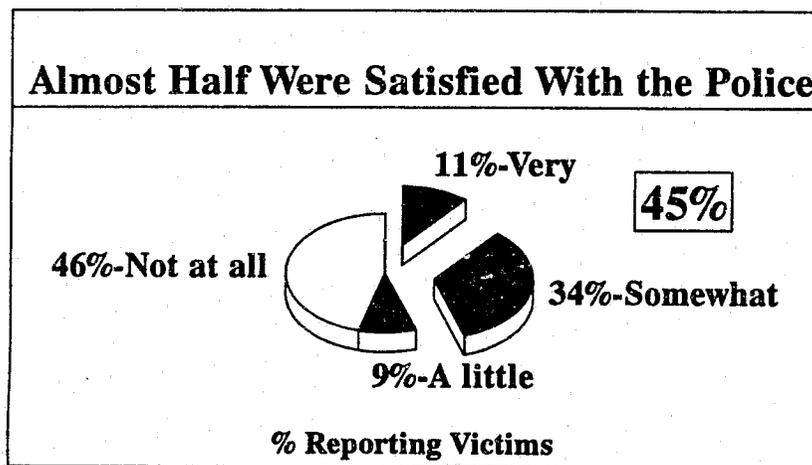
Figure 38 shows that about half the victims who reported their rape believe their cases remained confidential during the reporting process. Moreover, Figure 38 also shows that 2 in 3 of the victims who reported said that their rapes did not appear in the media. Of those victims whose rape did appear in the media, the majority said that their identities were not disclosed.

On the whole, given the potential publicness of police investigations, these results suggest that sex crimes investigators do a pretty good job of keeping rape investigations confidential. Although worrying about confidentiality is a natural concern for victims of rape, accounts of victims who do report rape suggest that police confidentiality does not need to be a significant barrier to reporting rape. In other words, reporting rape to the police does not necessarily mean that a victim's identity and the details of her assault will become common public knowledge.

9. How Satisfied Were They With the Way the Investigating Police Detectives Handled Their Case?

Are women who report their rape to the police satisfied with the way the detective(s) handled their case? The answer to this consumer satisfaction question should provide useful feedback to sex crimes detectives about how victims evaluated their performance after their cases were closed. The answer to this question should also provide useful information to potential victims of rape. If most women who do report rape say they were very satisfied with the way their cases were handled, it could provide a positive inducement for more women to report rape in the future.

Figure 39 shows the extent to which victims who reported rapes were satisfied with the way their investigations were handled.



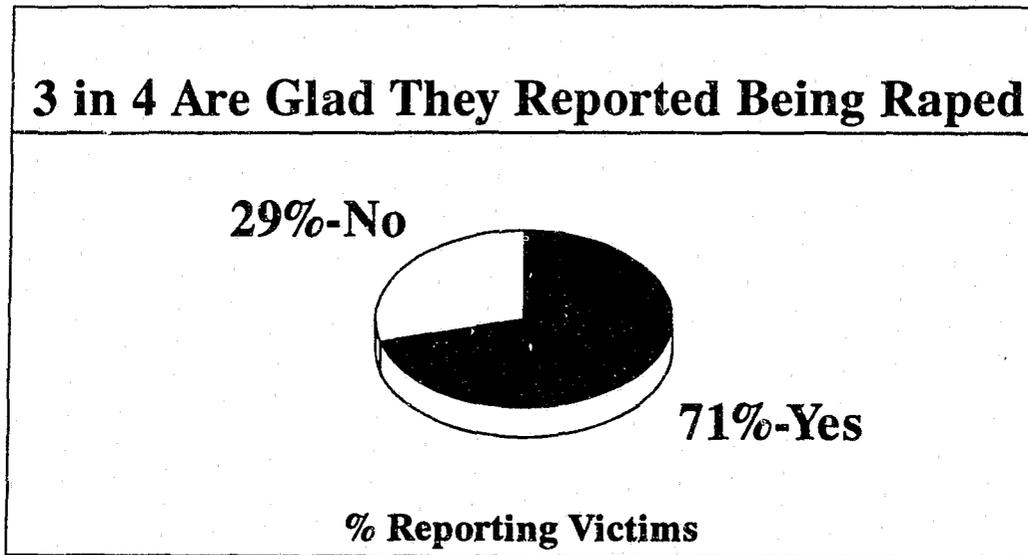
[Figure 39]

Results show that nearly half of the victims who reported their rape to the police said they were at least somewhat satisfied with the way the investigating police detective(s) handled their cases.

Overall, victims' evaluations of their experience with the police appear to be decidedly mixed. Because these reviews are so mixed, it is worth examining how victim satisfaction relates to the specific experiences victims had during the investigative process. Results of this examination show that victims were most satisfied with the way their cases were handled when the investigating detective(s) provided them with privacy when they first reported their stories, answered all of their questions, treated them with respect, did a thorough job investigating their cases, and updated them about the progress of their cases. Victims' satisfaction was also positively related to detectives doing a good job questioning victims, encouraging victims to file a formal complaint, explaining legal options to victims, and contacting them when their cases were officially closed. Victims also expressed more satisfaction with the police when their cases were successfully kept confidential. To the extent that police departments and their investigating detectives are concerned about how rape victims evaluate them once their cases are closed, the aspects of victim treatment cited in the last few sentences represent a good beginning blueprint of how to improve services and victim-police relations.

10. Are They Glad They Reported Being Raped to the Police?

Previous results have shown that 42% of the women who did not report their rape to the police wish they had; whereas, 58% are comfortable with their decision not to report (page 49). Are women who report their rape to the police glad they reported or do they wish they had not reported it?



[Figure 40]

Results show that 7 in 10 victims who reported their rape to the police are glad they did; whereas, 1 in 3 are not glad they made their report. In light of the fact that more than half of the victims expressed dissatisfaction about the way the police handled their cases, it is noteworthy that so few appear to regret their decision. Further analyses of victims' satisfaction with the police and whether they were glad they reported it shows that 60% of the victims who were dissatisfied with the way their cases were handled were still glad they reported their rape. There is a message in these results for future victims of rape who will have to decide whether or not to report their rape to the police. Although reporting rape to the police may turn out to be a relatively uncomfortable and even unsatisfying experience for many victims, in the long run, most victims will be glad they did report it.

D. Chapter Summary

Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police



Main Findings



Not Reporting:

- * **4 In 5 Victims Did Not Report Being Raped To The Police**
- * **8 In 10 Non-Reporting Victims Were Too Embarrassed To Report It**
- * **2 In 5 Wish They Had Reported It**

Reporting:

- * **Less Than 1 In 5 Victims Reported Being Raped To The Police**
- * **9 In 10 Reporting Victims Reported It Because They Wanted The Rapist To Be Punished**
- * **Most Reporting Victims Felt The Police Believed Them And Treated Them With Respect**
- * **3 In 4 Are Glad They Reported Being Raped**

The vast majority of women who were raped did not report their rape to the police. Most decided to hide their rape because they were embarrassed about what happened to them, and felt guilty for allowing themselves to get into a situation where they could be raped. Embarrassment and guilt appear to be two powerful emotional responses to rape that most victims experience. These emotional responses also appear to be two of the primary barriers to reporting rape to the police. A third important barrier found is that many women do not report because they believe that there is not enough evidence for the police to arrest their assailant.

Accounts of non-reporting victims also show that most of these women did not seek advice from anyone before they made their decision to hide their assault. This is in stark contrast to the victims who did report their rape to the police. In most cases reporting victims did seek advice from family and/or friends before deciding to report. This important difference between reporting and non-reporting victims suggests that seeking advice and talking about one's rape to others promotes the likelihood that victims will report.

Accounts of non-reporting victims also show that the decision not to report was a relative easy one for most of these women to make. This suggests that the embarrassment and guilt that most non-reporting victims experience must be enormous. On the other hand, although most non-reporting victims did not have a difficult time deciding to hide their assault, nearly half of these women at a later point in life ended up wishing they had reported their rape.

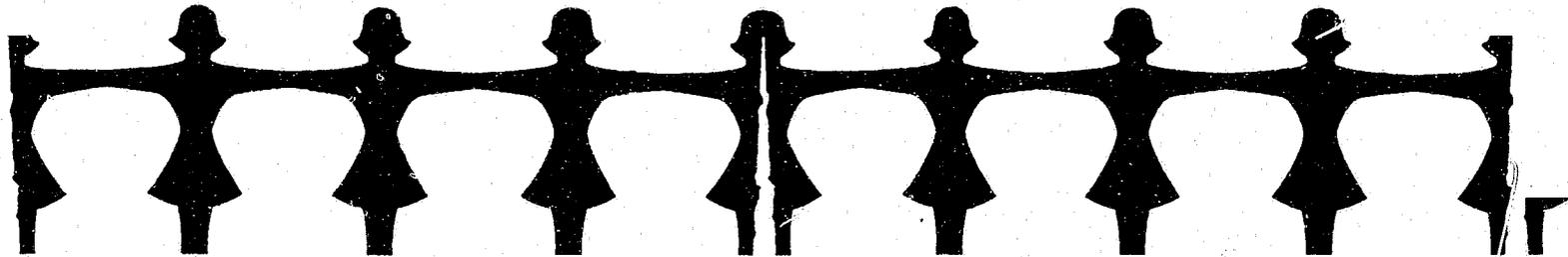
Accounts of the few victims who did report their rape to the police show that most of these women decided to come forward because they wanted to see their rapist punished and because they were afraid that their rapist would rape others. Apparently the desire for justice and revenge, and concern for others are strong motives for motivating women to report their rape to the police.

Accounts of victims who did report showed that once they contacted the police, most felt that the police believed their report and treated them with respect. Overall, reporting victims' evaluations of their experiences with police after reporting their rape were decidedly mixed. On the positive side, most victims thought that the detectives who investigated their cases did a good job questioning them, providing them with privacy to tell their stories, and answering all their questions. On the other hand, most did not feel that the detectives contacted them enough to inform them about the progress of their case, or that they were provided with enough information about medical and psychological rape support services and about their legal options. Finally, the majority of women who reported their rapes are glad that they reported, including most of those who expressed dissatisfaction with the police.



V. Differences Between Reported Rapes

and Unreported Rapes



- * **Are Victim Characteristics Related to Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police?**
- * **Are the Circumstances Surrounding Rape Related to Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police?**
- * **Chapter Summary**

V. Differences Between Reported Rapes and Unreported Rapes

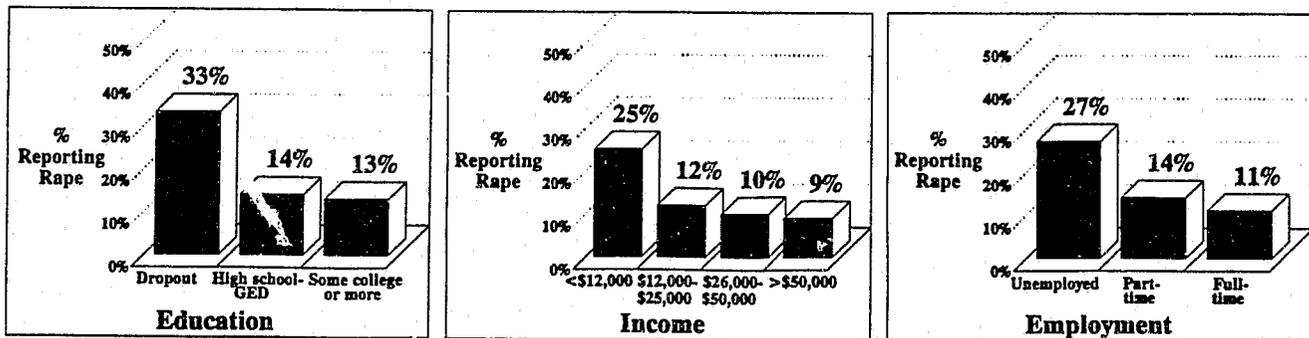
Because reporting rape is vital to the prevention of rape, it is important to learn whether there are systematic differences between victims who report their rape to the police and those who do not report, and differences between the kinds of rapes that reporting and non-reporting victims experience.

A. Are Victim Characteristics Related to Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police?

One set of factors that may differentiate reporters from non-reporters are victim characteristics such as race, education, employment status, and income. Are White, Black, or American Indian women more or less likely to report rape to the police? Is an affluent rape victim more likely than a poor rape victim to report? Do college educated victims tend to report rape more readily to the police than victims who have dropped out of high school? The answers to these types of questions will help police departments and rape prevention and support specialists better target those groups of potential rape victims that are most in need of learning about the importance of reporting rape.

To learn more about how victim characteristics relate to the reporting and non-reporting of rape, victims' race, current education, income level, and current employment status were compared on their reporting rates. Figure 41 shows those victim characteristics that differentiate victims who reported rape from those who did not.

Educated, Affluent and Employed Women Were Less Likely to Report Being Raped



[Figure 41]

Figure 41 shows that victims who never completed high school were twice as likely to have reported their rape than victims who graduated high school or had college experience. Results also show that victims who currently live in poverty were twice as likely to have reported their rapes than were victims who are currently more affluent. Figure 41 also shows that victims who are currently unemployed were more likely to report their rape to the police than victims who currently have full or part-time jobs. Finally, race comparisons among reporters and non-reporters show no systematic differences. In other words, White, Black, and American Indian women were equally likely to have reported their rape to the police.

Overall, the predictors of reporting rape suggest that women who have more education, live in more affluent circumstances, and have careers are significantly less likely to have reported their rape to the police than women who are poorly educated, live in poverty, and do not have careers. At first glance the casual reader might balk at these results thinking they were somehow backwards. Wouldn't a person with education, means, and empowerment be more likely to pursue her assailant than someone without these kinds of resources? We suggest that there are several reasons why this is not the case. The most important of these lies in the stigma that has historically been attached to women who have been raped. Going all the way back to ancient times women who were raped were punished for their victimization. In some cases (the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, and the Hebraic Deuteronomy 22:23-29), women, depending on their marital status and the circumstances surrounding their rape, were put to death along with their rapist.⁴ In other instances, women who were raped were regarded as defiled property. As defiled property, victims were outcast from their communities and more often than not forced into prostitution as their only means of survival.

This view of women as property and raped women as defiled property to be punished for allowing themselves to be defiled has been the rule for regarding rape victims throughout western history, even into the mid-1900's. In light of more than 4,000 years of unbroken ostracism, stigmatism, and loss that rape victims have experienced, it is little wonder that even women in 1993 America are reluctant to let others know they have been raped. Moreover, this reluctance should be especially keen among women who are educated and have some knowledge of how women were regarded throughout western history, and that have careers and social standing that might be jeopardized if their rapes were to become publicly known. Overall, the victim characteristics that predict the reporting and non-reporting of rape seem to support the idea that the more a woman thinks she has to lose by letting her rape become known to others, the less likely she will be to report her rape to the police.

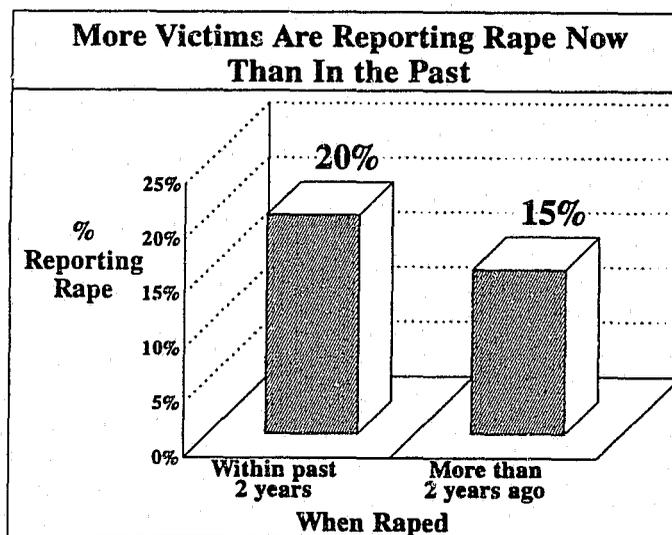
4. Dieker Akin, Kirsten. (1991). *Historical Aspects of Rape "No Means No": Adolescent Acquaintance Rape Prevention Curriculum*. Department of Mental Health, Oklahoma City, OK.

B. Are the Circumstances Surrounding Rape Related to Reporting and Not Reporting Rape to the Police?

In addition to victim characteristics, the circumstances surrounding different types of rape may also influence whether victims reported their rape to the police. To investigate these possible circumstantial influences, victims who reported their rapes and those who did not were compared for when, where, how, and by whom their rapes occurred.

1. When Rape Occurred and Reporting Rape

Figure 42 compares reporting rates of rapes that occurred within the past two years with those that occurred more than two years ago.

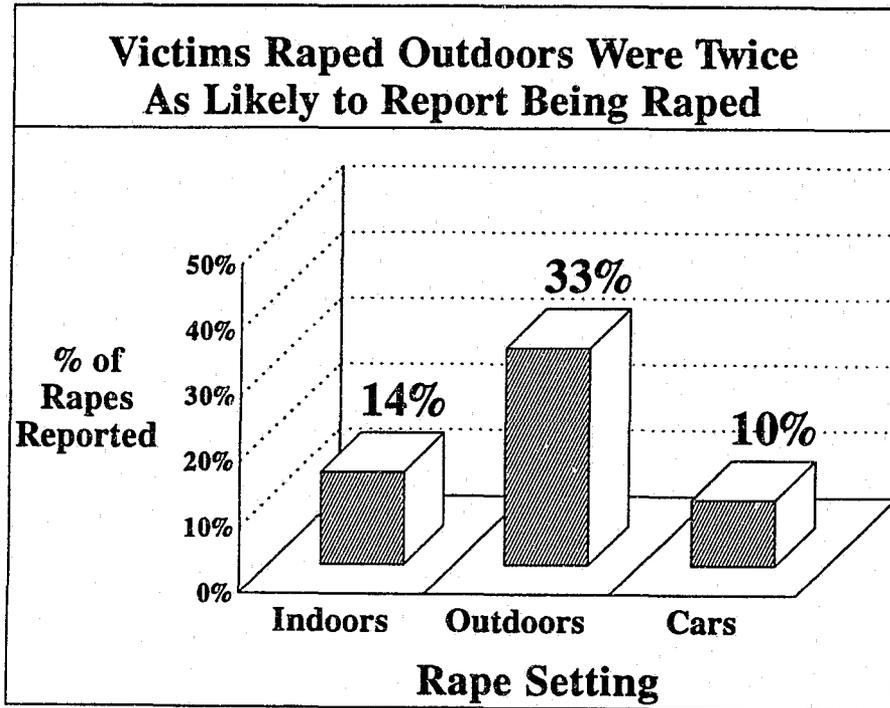


[Figure 42]

Results show that women who were raped within the past two years are significantly more likely to have reported their rape to the police than those who were raped more than two years ago. Although this 5% difference may seem relatively small, it does suggest that the attitudes of rape victims may be changing with respect to reporting rape. It is interesting to speculate what might happen if this two year 5% increase in reporting rate represented a national trend that continued for the next 10 years. If this were to occur, then by the year 2003 the number of rapes that are actually reported to the police would more than triple (20% vs. 70%). Under such a scenario, rape would no longer be among America's most hidden crimes. It would be a crime that American communities could see, and perhaps prevent.

2. Setting Where Rape Occurred and Reporting Rape

Do the settings in which rapes occur make a difference in whether victims report rape? Figure 43 compares reporting rates of rapes that occurred in indoor settings, outdoor settings, and cars/vans/trucks.

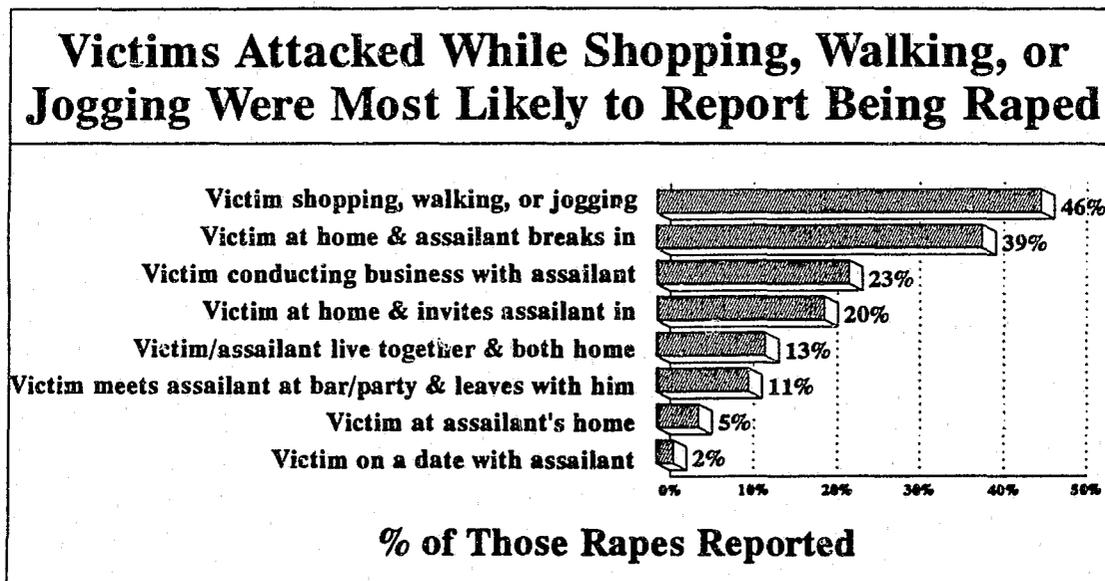


[Figure 43]

Results show that victims who were raped in outdoor settings were more than twice as likely to report their rape as victims who were raped in indoor settings or in cars.

3. Scenarios Leading to Rape and Reporting Rape

Does the scenario that brings the victim and assailant together influence whether the victim reports being raped? Figure 44 compares the reporting rates of rapes that occurred in eight different types of rape situations or scenarios.

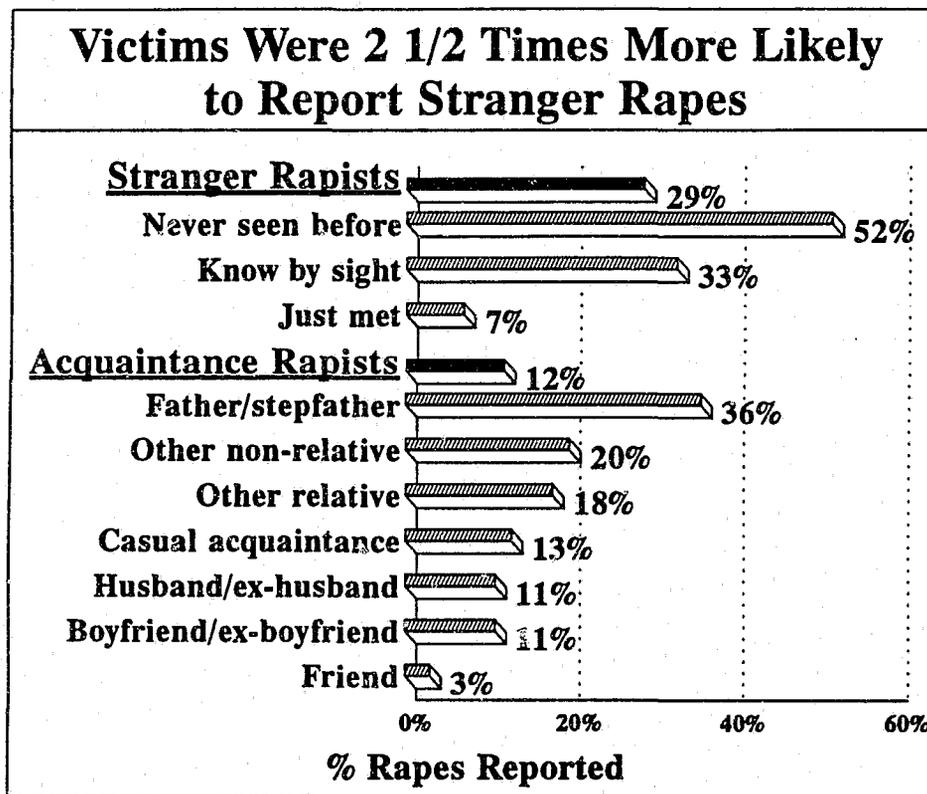


[Figure 44]

Results show that victims were *most* likely to report their rapes if they were attacked: 1) while walking, jogging, or doing errands, 2) after the assailant broke into their homes, 3) while they were conducting business with their assailant, or 4) after they invited the assailant into their homes. Conversely, victims were *least* likely to report their assaults if they were attacked: 1) while on a date, 2) while at the assailant's home, 3) after meeting their assailant at a bar or party and leaving with him, or 4) while living together with their assailant in their own home. Examination of these results suggests that the issue of victim consent underlies many of the differences between higher and lower reporting situations. For example, when a woman is raped while jogging in a park or after a rapist breaks into her home, it is usually very clear that the victim did not consent to her rape. On the other hand, when a victim is raped while out on a date or after she has voluntarily gone to her assailant's home, the issue of victim consent can often appear more clouded.

4. Victim-Rapist Relationship and Reporting Rape

If being raped in situations that may cloud the issue of consent represent one important barrier to reporting rape, then it is reasonable to believe that whether victims are raped by strangers or acquaintances would also be a factor related to whether victims report or not. Figure 45 compares reporting rates of victims in terms of who raped them.



[Figure 45]

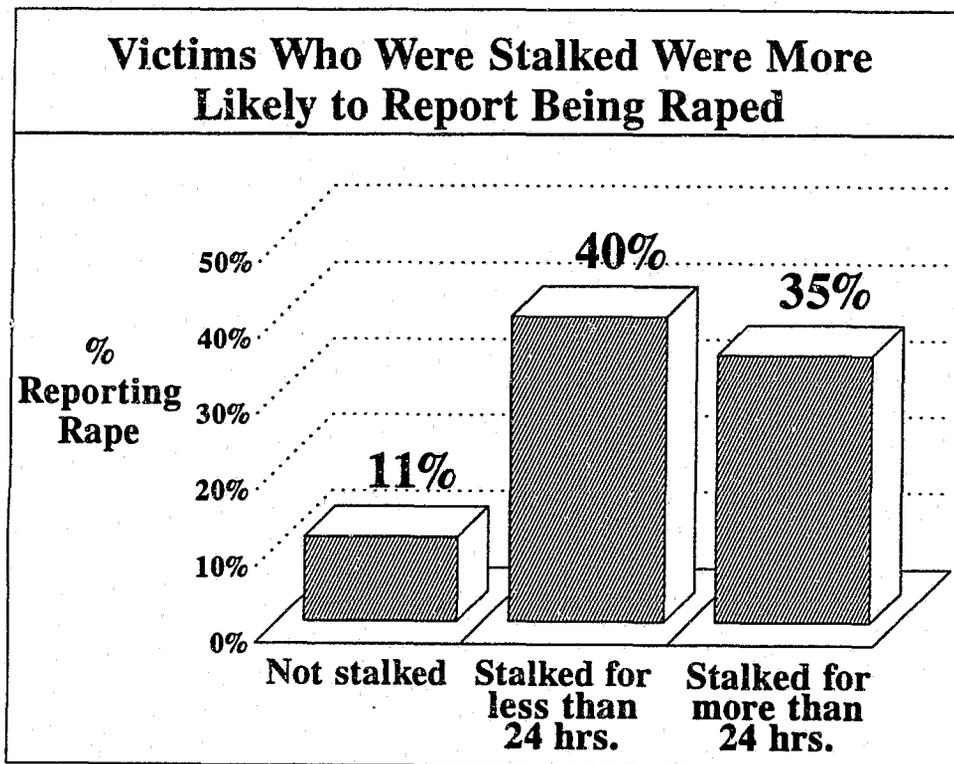
Overall, results show that women who were raped by strangers were more than twice as likely to report their rape to the police than were women who were raped by acquaintances.

In examining stranger rapes, half the victims raped by total strangers whom they never had seen before reported their rape to the police. This represents a reporting rate that is more than 3 times greater than the average 16% reporting rate for all rapes. Similarly, 1/3rd of the victims who were raped by someone who they only knew by sight reported their rape to the police. On the other hand, less than 1 in 10 victims who were raped by a stranger whom they had just met at a bar or a party reported their rape. Taken together, these three results regarding stranger rapes support the idea that when the circumstances involved in a rape cast aspersions on the issue of victim consent, victims are much less likely to report their rape to the police.

Looking within acquaintance rapes, Figure 45 shows that less than 2 in 10 victims raped by friends, current and former intimates, casual acquaintances, and relatives contacted the police after their assault. On the other hand, the data show that 1 in 3 victims who were raped by their fathers or stepfathers reported their rapes. Why would victims raped by fathers and stepfathers be more likely to report their rapes to the police than victims raped by other kinds of acquaintances? One possible explanation again concerns the issue of victim consent. If a victim is raped by an intimate, a friend, or virtually any other type of person(s) that the victim has had a personal relationship with, the issue of consent will most likely be questioned or even challenged in a court of law. On the other hand, given the universal taboo against incest, it is unlikely that any observer would accept the notion that a victim consented to have sexual relations with or seduced her own father or stepfather. Consequently, if a victim does report being raped by her own father or stepfather, she can do so with less fear that other people will think she consented than if she were raped by any other type of acquaintance.

5. Being Stalked Prior to Rape and Reporting Rape

In addition to the who, when, where, and by whom involved in rape, another circumstance that may be related to reporting is whether or not the victim was stalked prior to the attack. Figure 46 compares reporting rates by whether victims were stalked and if so, how long they were stalked.

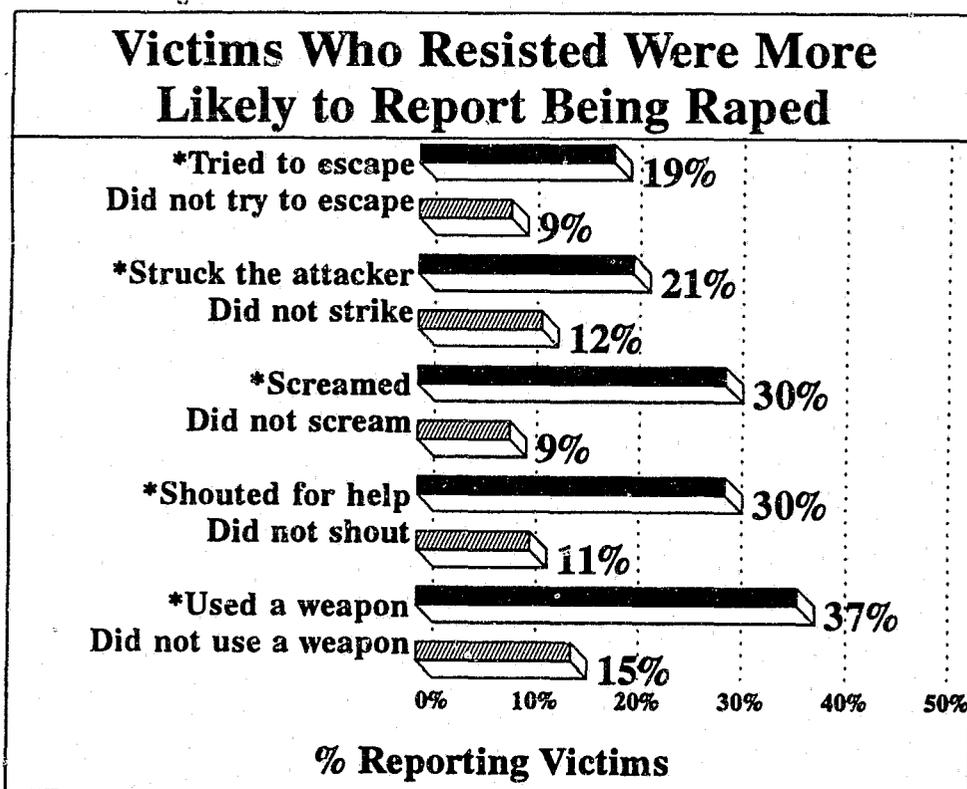


[Figure 46]

Results show that victims who were stalked by their rapist were 3 times more likely to report their rape to the police than victims who were not stalked. On the other hand, reporting rates did not differ between victims who were stalked for less than or more than 24 hours.

6. Victim Behavior During Rape and Reporting Rape

Another set of factors that might be related to whether victims reported or did not report their rape to the police is how they acted during their assault. For example, were victims who strenuously resisted their attackers more likely to report their rape to the police? To examine this question, reporting rates were compared between victims who tried various resistant types of behaviors to resist their attackers with victims who did not.

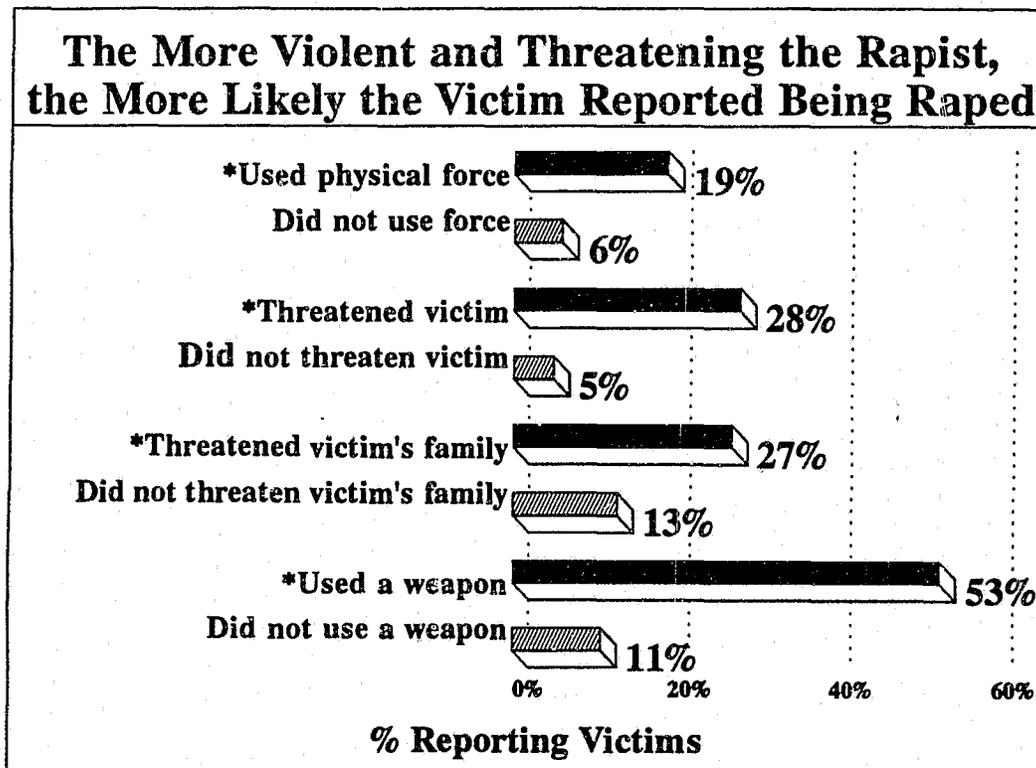


[Figure 47]

Results show that when victims tried to escape, struck their attacker, screamed, shouted for help, or used a weapon to try to stop their rape, they were more likely to report their rape to the police. Further analyses of these data show that the more resistant victims were in trying to stop the assault, the more likely they were to report their rape to the police. Conversely, the more passive victims were during their assault, the less likely they were to report their rape. In fact, comparisons between victims who resisted their attackers aggressively (struck the attacker, threatened to harm the attacker, or used a weapon) with victims who were more passive in their resistance (pleaded, screamed, shouted, cried, or tried to escape) show that aggressively resistant victims were twice as likely to report being raped than victims who resisted more passively (21% vs. 12%).

7. Rapist Behavior During Rape and Reporting Rape

If victim behavior during an assault relates to whether or not victims report rape, then it is probable that the ways in which rapists behaved during an assault would also relate to whether victims reported their rape. Figure 48 shows differences in reporting rates in terms of what rapists did during the attacks.



[Figure 48]

The data shows that when rapists used physical force, threats against the victim, threats against the victim's family, or a weapon, victims were more likely to report their rape to the police. Comparisons among the aggressive behaviors that rapists used to force their victims to submit reveal that the rapist behavior that is the most predictive of victims reporting to the police is when the rapist used a weapon. Further analyses also show that the more overall aggression rapists used during an assault, the more likely the victim was to report the rape to the police.

C. Chapter Summary

Differences Between Reported Rapes and Unreported Rapes



Main Findings



- * **Educated, Affluent, And Employed Women Were Less Likely To Report Being Raped**
- * **More Victims Are Reporting Rape Now Than In The Past**
- * **Victims Raped Outdoors Were Twice As Likely To Report Being Raped**
- * **Victims Were 2 1/2 Times More Likely To Report Stranger Rapes**
- * **Victims Who Resisted Were More Likely To Report Being Raped**
- * **The More Violent The Rapist, The More Likely The Victim Reported Being Raped**

The data have shown that there are a number of factors involved in rape that play a role in a victim's decision to report rape to the police. Some of these factors include victim characteristics, especially the victim's socioeconomic status and level of education. Overall, results indicate that educated, economically comfortable, career type women were the least likely to report being raped to the police. On the other hand, relatively uneducated, low-income, unemployed women were the most likely to report to the police. There are two points to remember when considering these results: 1) it is the relatively uneducated, low-income, unemployed women who were most likely to be raped, and 2) even though these women may be more likely to report their rape, only 1 in 4 of them do.

The most likely reason for these differences is the stigma and sanctions that have been associated with being a victim of rape throughout the history of western civilization. In light of the fact that rape victims have historically been punished for being raped, more educated, affluent, career women probably feel they have a great deal more to lose if their rape becomes known than do women without these resources.

In addition to victim characteristics, many of the circumstances that surround rape also play a significant role in the reporting of rape. One of these circumstances is that victims raped more recently were more likely to report rape to the police than victims raped more than two years ago. This may indicate a slow but hopefully growing trend among victims to report sexual assault.

Other differences found are that victims were more likely to report rape if they were raped in outdoor settings while walking, jogging, or doing errands. They were also more likely to report rape if they were raped by a stranger or by someone who has broken into their home. On the other hand, victims were more likely *not* to report rape to the police when they were raped while out on a date or after meeting someone at a bar or a party, or after being invited and going to the assailant's home. They were also more likely not to report rape if they were raped by acquaintances, especially someone whom they were living with or a friend. Overall, these differences related to reporting suggest that when women were raped in situations or circumstances that might raise a question about whether they consented to having sexual relations with their assailants, victims were less likely to report their rapes.

Finally, victim and assailant behaviors before and during a rape also seem to be differentially related to reporting rape. For example, when victims were stalked, they were more likely to report rape. Results also show that in rapes where the rapist used excessive violence and victims put up aggressive resistance, victims were more likely to report their rape to the police.



VI. Having A Medical Examination



- * **How Many Rape Victims Had a Medical Examination?**
- * **Why Would a Woman Who Is Raped Not Have a Medical Exam?**
- * **What Do Victims Say About Having a Medical Exam?**
- * **Chapter Summary**

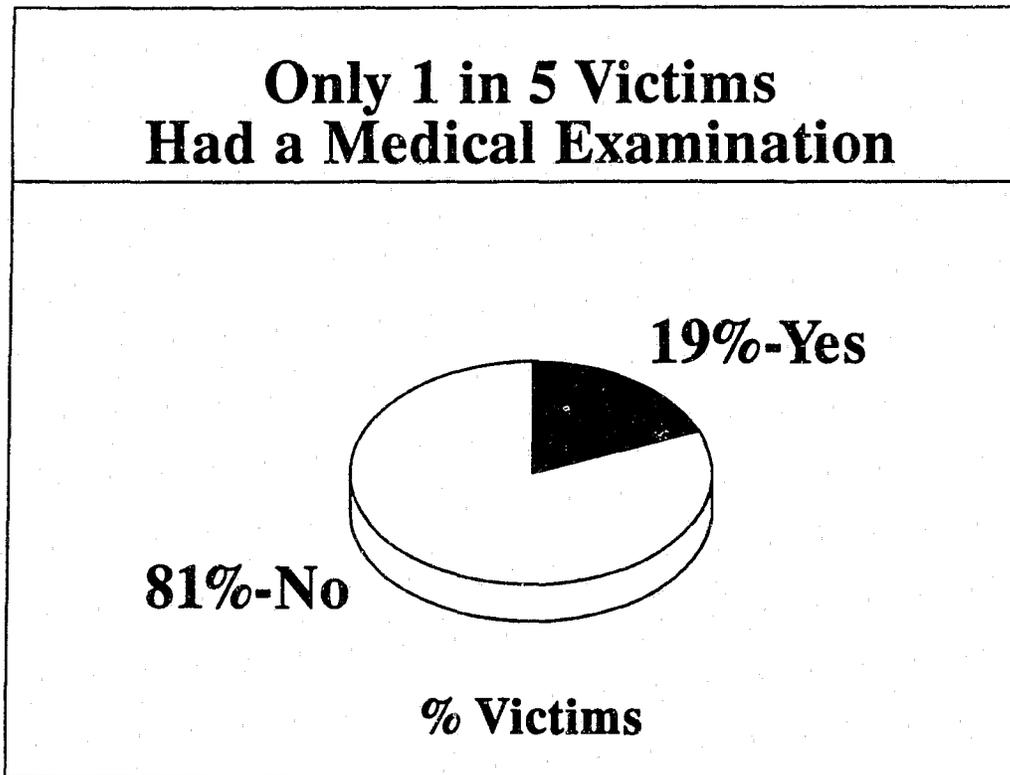
VI. Having a Medical Examination

Results from this study and the *Anatomy of Rape* study illustrate two basic facts about rape that are important to recognize: 1) all completed rapes involve one or more penetrations of the victim's body, either through the vagina, anus, or mouth; and 2) 8 in 10 rapes involve the use of physical force; and in about 2 in 10 cases, the violence is excessive enough that the victim requires emergency medical attention. Given the bodily penetration and the physical abuse that are characteristic of rape, it should be obvious that the act of rape almost always has potentially serious medical consequences associated with it. In addition to physical injuries, consequences can include the contraction of syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes, or any one of a number of other sexually transmitted diseases. In an even worse case scenario, rape can cause a victim to contract AIDS. In addition to disease, rape can also lead to unwanted pregnancy. Given the potential medical consequences that can result from rape, it is extremely important that all victims of rape, whether they have been overtly physically injured or not, have medical examinations to determine whether they have been infected, impregnated, or internally injured.

In addition to health consequences, there is another very important reason why victims should have medical exams. Medical examination, especially by a trained forensic specialist, is probably the single most important tool that law enforcement officials have for gathering physical evidence in a case of rape. Forensic medical examinations are the only means available to provide physical proof that a woman has in fact been penetrated. These exams can also provide physical evidence that physical force was involved in the act of penetration, as well as produce samples of the attacker's bodily fluids, hair, and skin that can be used to identify an assailant. In fact, much of the forensic evidence that is typically used to prosecute rape is obtained from a victim's forensic/medical exam.

A. How Many Rape Victims Had a Medical Examination?

Given the important health prevention and evidence gathering functions of having a medical examination, it is important to ask how many rape victims actually had a medical exam after their assault?



[Figure 49]

Figure 49 shows that only 1 in 5 victims had a medical examination after they were raped. This means that 4 in 5 rape victims did not get physically examined for medical consequences after their assaults.

Similarly, comparisons with results from the *Rape in America* study show that only 17% of their national sample of rape victims had medical examinations following their assaults.

B. Why Would a Woman Who Is Raped Not Have a Medical Exam?

Most women who are raped are embarrassed about what happened to them (page 44). For many, the feelings of embarrassment and humiliation are so intense they do not want anyone to ever know they have been raped. For these victims having a medical examination means that their rape will become known to other people. Another reason for not having a medical exam is that victims of rape, as well as other kinds of traumas, often try to deny that their traumatic experience may have long-term consequences for them. Consequently, it may never occur to some victims that their rape could lead to a sexually transmitted disease or pregnancy. Another reason is that most women who are raped do not want to report that rape to the police. Many of these women fear that by being medically examined the police will automatically learn of their rape and they will be forced to get involved in the legal process. Another important consideration is that most rape victims are teenagers who were never educated about what to do and what not to do in the event of being raped. Many of these young victims probably do not know they need to be medically examined, or how to get an exam. In addition, for many of these teenage victims going to a doctor because they are raped means that their parents will automatically find out about it.

Another reason for not having a medical exam is that rape victims have just experienced a violent penetration of their beings and probably the last thing some victims want is to have medical staff probing their bodies with instruments and probing their minds with questions about their rape. To give the reader a better idea of what it is like for a victim to have a forensic medical exam after being raped, Figure 50 presents a protocol of what happens to a victim who is given a standard rape exam through Tulsa's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program.

1. What Happens to a Victim During the Rape Examination?

When a victim enters the SANE program she is met by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner and a rape crisis counselor. The victim is informed about the importance of having the exam and that the hospital can treat both wounds and venereal disease. The victim is also told that the average exam takes between 2 and 3 hours to complete. She is also informed that psychological counseling is available to her if she wants it, and that she will not have to pay for the exam.

Medical/Forensic Exam Protocol

1. Have victim disrobe on a disposable examination pad or clean paper.
2. Collect any obvious debris on the victim's body (e.g., plant material, semen stains, fibers).
3. Have victim swish 2.5 ml. of sterile saline solution in mouth and use transfer pipet to withdraw 2 ml. of oral wash.
4. Place bag under victim's head and comb hair so that any loose hair and/or debris will fall into bag.
5. Pull (not cut) a minimum of 8 full-length hairs from each of the following scalp locations: center, front, back, left side, and right side (40 hairs total).
6. Place bag under victim's buttocks and comb pubic hair in downward strokes so that any loose hair and/or debris will fall into bag.
7. Pull a minimum of 25 full-length pubic hairs from various locations of the pubic area.
8. Swab victim's external genitalia.
9. Swab victim's anal canal.
10. Swab victim's cervix.
11. Introduce 2.5 ml. of sterile saline into victim's vaginal vault and redraw 2 ml. of vaginal wash.
12. Place a filter paper disk in victim's mouth to obtain a saliva sample.
13. Hold each of victim's fingers over a bag and scrape for any debris.
14. Clip any fingernails that were broken during the attack.
15. Draw a blood sample from the victim.
16. Administer a pregnancy test; if negative give oral contraceptives (i.e., "morning after" pill).
17. Administer antibiotics for sexually transmitted diseases.

[Figure 50]

Although SANE nurses and rape counselors try to make victims as comfortable as possible during an exam, the protocol in Figure 50 illustrates the probing and invasiveness that victims must endure if they have an exam. On the other hand, if victims do not have such an exam, they are risking serious health consequences and they are virtually destroying all possibility that their rapists can be arrested and punished.

2. What Influences Whether a Rape Victim Has a Medical Exam?

Although there are many understandable reasons why victims might decide not to have a medical exam after they were raped, it is important to examine whether there are any circumstances and situations involved in rape cases that might predict whether victims will or will not choose to have an exam. For example, is having a medical exam related to whether or not a victim reported her rape to the police? Or is having a medical exam related to the relationship between the victims and their assailants, or the settings in which the rapes occurred? Or is having a medical exam related to how long ago the rape took place?

To address these questions, comparisons were made between victims who had medical exams and those who did not in relationship to the circumstances surrounding their rapes.

One important factor that is strongly related to whether rape victims had medical exams is whether they reported their rape to the police. Results show that victims who reported being raped to the police were 11 times more likely to have medical exams (82%) than were victims who did not report their rape to the police (7%).

Another important factor that predicts whether victims had medical exams was their relationship with their assailant. Results show that women who were raped by strangers were twice as likely to have medical exams (34%) than women raped by acquaintances (15%). Further analyses also show that within stranger rapes only, victims raped by total strangers whom they had never seen before were 3 times more likely to have medical exams (53%) than victims raped by people they had just met and did not know well (16%). On the other hand, within acquaintance rapes only, victims raped by friends (19%) or family members (18%) were almost twice as likely to have medical exams than victims raped by current or former intimates (11%).

Analyses also show that having a medical exam is related to the settings and scenarios surrounding rape. For example, results show that women who were raped in outdoor settings were twice as likely to have medical exams (33%) than women raped indoors (18%) or in cars (13%). Women who were stalked by their assailant prior to being attacked were 3 times as likely to have medical exams (43%) than women who were not stalked prior to being attacked (13%). In addition, women who were raped by rapists who had weapons were almost 4 times as likely to have medical exams (56% vs. 15%). Finally, comparisons show that victims of rapes that definitely involved the use of alcohol or drugs were 5 times more likely to have medical exams than victims of rapes that did not involve substance use (25% vs. 5%). Further analyses reveal, however, that who was using the substances (e.g., assailant only, victim only, or both assailant and victim) had no relationship to whether the victim had medical exams.

Another set of circumstances related to having a medical exam is how aggressively both rapists and their victims act during a rape. Results show that the more aggressively and violently a rapist behaves during an assault and the more aggressively and violently a victim tries to defend herself, the more likely she will end up having a medical exam after the assault. This finding makes sense because as violence in rape escalates there is a much greater probability that the victim will be seriously injured and require medical attention. It is interesting to note, however, that there is one exception to this relationship. Barring severe injury that requires hospitalization, women who were raped by intimates who were excessively violent and aggressive were actually *less* likely to have medical exams. This indicates that being raped by a current or former boyfriend or husband has more influence in a victim's decision not to have a medical exam than physical injury. In fact, the worse the injury, the less likely she will have medical exams.

Overall, these results clearly show that the circumstances surrounding rape are important factors in whether or not women have medical exams after they were raped. Specifically, being raped by an acquaintance, in an indoor setting, especially the victim's own home, in the absence of a great deal of violence and physical injury were the kinds of rapes in which victims were least likely to have medical exams. Unfortunately, most rapes that occur involve these circumstances.

Finally, results also show that women who were raped more recently were more likely to have had medical exams than women who were raped longer ago. For example, 27% of the women who were raped within the past two years had medical exams as compared to only 17% of those raped more than two years ago. This finding is encouraging because it suggests that there may be a growing awareness among rape victims that it is important to have medical exams after being raped. It is also important to recognize that this increase in medical exam rate coincides with the implementation of Tulsa's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program which has made forensic/medical exams much more accessible and user-friendly to women who are raped in Tulsa County.⁵

5. Thomas, M. & Zachritz, H. (In press). *Tulsa Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners Program*. The Oklahoma State Medical Association Journal.

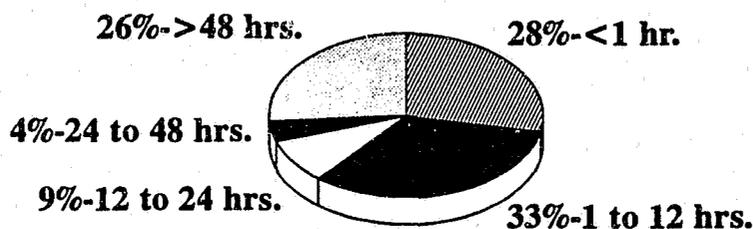
C. What Do Victims Say About Having a Medical Examination?

In addition to examining the percentage of rape victims who have medical exams and factors that might influence victims in deciding whether or not to have one, this study also surveyed victims who did have an exam about certain aspects of their experience. The following results are based on the responses of women who had medical exams after they were raped.

1. How Long After Being Raped Did They Have a Medical Examination?

Medical/forensic exams are important evidence gathering tools for the arrest and prosecution of rapists. However, it is important to realize that forensic medical evidence is by nature extremely fragile. Consequently, for a medical/forensic exam to be an effective evidence gathering tool, victims of rape should have an exam as soon after the assault as possible - and definitely within 48 to 72 hours of the attack. Once 72 hours have passed most forensic medical evidence that is used to prosecute rape cases will have deteriorated or been lost. Therefore, it is important to learn how long victims usually wait before having a medical exam.

2 in 3 Had a Medical Examination Within 24 Hours of the Assault



% Victims Who Had Medical Examination

[Figure 51]

Figure 51 shows that 2 in 3 victims had medical examinations within 24 hours of being raped. In fact, 1 in 4 were examined within one hour of the attack. On the other hand, results also show that 1 in 4 victims did not have medical exams until more than two days after they were raped. These findings are identical to those reported in the *National Women's Study* which also found that 60% of the rape victims who had medical exams did so within 24 hours of the attack; whereas, 40% waited more than 24 hours after being assaulted to get examined.

Given the importance of having a medical exam immediately after a rape, why do some victims wait for more than two days before deciding to have an exam? Is excessive delay in having a medical examination related to who the women were raped by or how violent the rapes were?

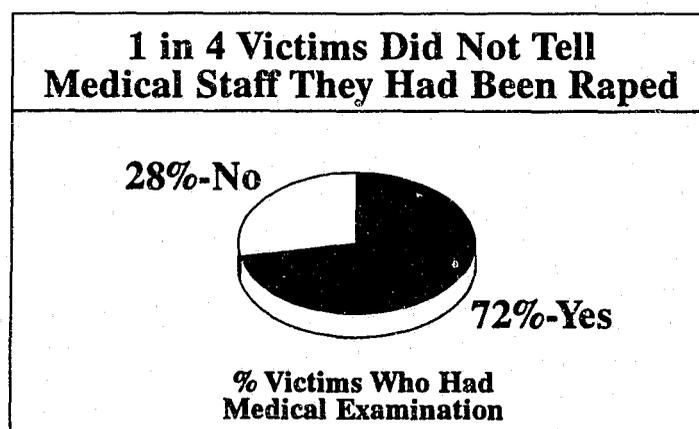
Analyses show that the delay between being raped and having the medical exam was significantly longer for victims who were raped by acquaintances than by strangers. For example; whereas, 45% of stranger rape victims had their medical exam within one hour of their assaults, only 18% of acquaintance rape victims had an exam within one hour of their assaults.

Analyses examining victim and rapist behaviors during the attacks in relationship to how long it took for victims to have the medical exam show that victims of more violent attackers had the examination done more quickly after their rape occurred. On the other hand, the amount of resistance victims put up during the attack was unrelated to the delay between when victims were raped and when they had an exam.

Finally, analyses show no significant differences in rapes occurring within the past two years and rapes occurring more than two years ago and how long after the rape it took victims to have medical exams.

2. Were the Medical Staff Aware They Had Been Raped?

Not all victims who have medical exams after they are raped go to programs like Tulsa's SANE program which offers examinations specifically for rape. Some victims who have medical exams go to a personal physician; whereas, others are examined in emergency hospital settings. When a victim receives a medical examination after being raped, it would seem safe to assume that the attending medical staff would know they were examining a woman who had been raped. Unfortunately, this has not been and is not always true. Because most women are embarrassed by their rape, some victims do not tell their personal physicians or attending hospital medical staff they have been raped. If they have injuries they may say they were just assaulted or perhaps even they fell down some stairs. And if they are concerned about being pregnant as a result of their rape, they may just go to their physician or some other agency for a pregnancy test. To what extent do the victims surveyed in this study who had medical exams say that the examining physician, nurse, or medical staff were aware they were examining a victim of rape?



[Figure 52]

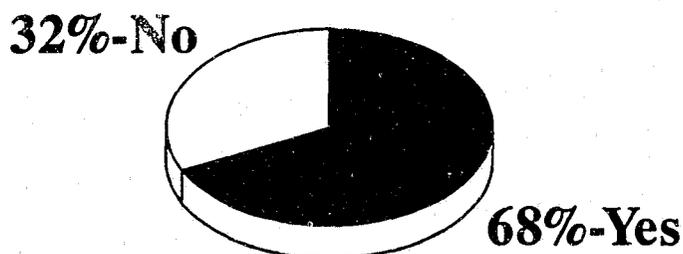
Figure 52 shows that 3 in 4 victims indicated that the medical staff who examined them were aware they had been raped. On the other hand, 1 in 4 victims who had a medical exam were examined by doctors or nurses who did not know the women had been raped. Similarly, the *National Women's Study* also found that 1/3rd of the victims who had medical exams never informed the medical staff that they had been raped. Why would victims not share this vital piece of information with the medical staff who examined them?

Victims who had medical exams performed by medical staff who were aware they had been raped and victims who were examined by staff who were unaware they had been raped were compared on a variety of circumstances that surround rape. Results of these comparisons show that the only circumstance consistently related to victims hiding knowledge of their rape from the medical staff who examined them was whether they were raped by someone they had a relationship with. In other words, victims raped by acquaintances were significantly more likely to hide their rape from the examining medical staff than were victims raped by strangers or men they had just met. These results indicate the importance of educating the medical community about how to recognize signs of rape in patients who do not disclose their victimization.

3. Did the Medical Staff Treat Them With Respect and Consideration?

The vast majority of women who are raped do not have medical exams. Therefore, it is important to ask victims who did have medical exams how they were treated by the medical staff who examined them. To the extent that most victims who had medical exams say they were treated with respect and consideration, it may serve as an inducement for future rape victims to have exams. On the other hand, if most victims say they were not treated with respect and consideration, it is probably an indication that the medical community needs to be further educated about how to treat victims of rape.

2 in 3 Felt Medical Staff Treated Them With Respect and Consideration



% Victims Who Had Medical Examination

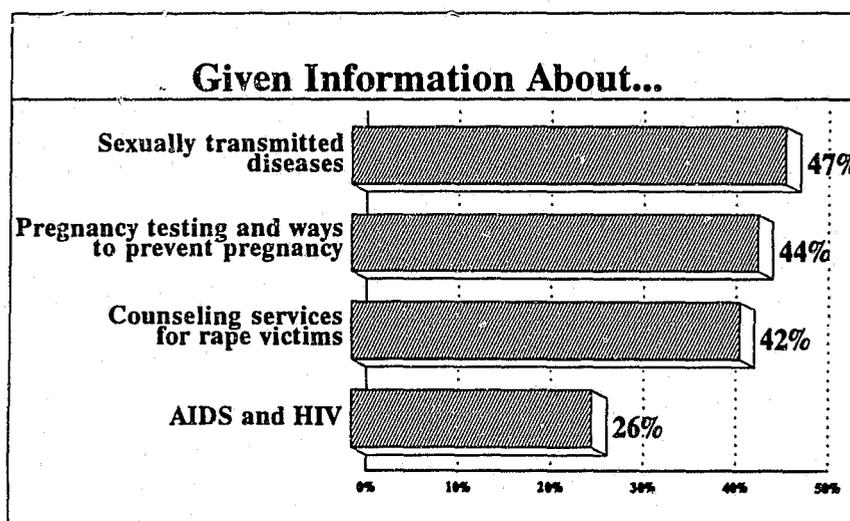
[Figure 53]

Figure 53 shows that 2 in 3 victims who had medical exams felt that the medical staff who examined them treated them with respect and consideration. Conversely, 1/3rd of the victims who had exams said they were not treated with respect and consideration. Overall, these results suggest that most victims who had medical exams did have a relatively positive experience and that for the most part, the medical community does appear to recognize and respond to the special needs of rape victims.

On the other hand, the fact that 1 in 3 victims did not have a positive experience with medical staff during their examination indicates that there is still a significant need within the medical community to educate physicians and nurses about how to treat women after they have been sexually assaulted. It is important to note that comparisons of medical staff treatment among victims raped within the past two years and those raped more than two years ago show that victims who had exams more recently felt they received more respect and consideration from the medical staff who examined them (87%) than did victims who had their medical exams further in the past (64%).

4. What Information Were They Given at the Time of the Medical Examination?

In addition to treating rape victims with respect and consideration, another type of performance indicator of how victims are treated during a medical examination is whether victims are provided with information about testing for exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS or HIV infection, testing for pregnancy, and information about counseling and support services that are available to rape victims. As all of these issues represent important health concerns for victims of rape, victims were asked whether the examining physicians and nurses talked with them about these issues during their exams.



[Figure 54]

Figure 54 shows that less than half of the victims who had medical exams received information about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), pregnancy testing and prevention, or counseling services available for victims of rape during their medical examinations. Furthermore, only 1 in 4 received AIDS information. Although more victims who had medical exams in the *National Women's Study* received information about STDs (61%), comparisons again converge showing that only 40% of the national sample received pregnancy information and only 27% received information about AIDS and HIV.

Comparisons between recent rape victims and victims of rapes happening more than two years ago and whether they received AIDS, STDs, pregnancy, and counseling information during their exams show that recent victims were more likely to receive these types of information.

Overall, these results strongly suggest that the medical community needs to educate its physicians and nurses to routinely provide rape victims with information about STDs, AIDS, and pregnancy testing, as well as, information about counseling and support services that are available. It is encouraging to note that there is a trend of providing victims with more information in that programs like SANE now provide victims with comprehensive information packets.

D. Chapter Summary

Having a Medical Examination



Main Findings



- * Only 1 In 5 Victims Had A Medical Examination**
- * Women Raped By Strangers Were Twice As Likely To Have Medical Exams Than Women Raped By Acquaintances**
- * 1 In 4 Victims Who Had An Exam Did Not Tell The Medical Staff They Had Been Raped**
- * 2 In 3 Felt The Medical Staff Treated Them With Respect and Consideration**
- * The Majority Of Victims Did Not Receive Information About Proper Medical Care When They Had Their Medical Exams**

Having a forensic medical exam as soon after a sexual assault as possible is very important. Such exams help victims protect themselves from sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, and internal injuries that might have resulted from the rape. They are also important for gathering physical evidence to help law enforcement officials arrest and convict rapists.

Victim accounts show that the vast majority of women who were raped did not have medical exams after their assaults. Consequently, most of these women were not tested for pregnancy, or venereal disease, or examined for possible internal injuries after they experienced a forcible rape.

Results show several factors related to whether victims received medical exams after their rapes. One of the most important of these was whether the victims reported their rapes to the police. Victims who reported their rapes were much more likely than non-reporting victims to receive medical exams.

Another important factor was the relationship between the victim and her assailant. Results show that women who were raped by strangers were twice as likely to have medical exams than women raped by people they knew. Other factors related to having an exam are being stalked, being raped in an outdoor setting, being raped when substance use was involved, and being involved in a rape where the assailant used excessive force and where the victims aggressively tried to defend themselves. The one exception found in this relationship between excessive violence and having medical exams was when the excessively violent rapist was a former or current intimate of the victim. In violent rapes by intimates, victims were less likely to have medical exams.

Accounts of victims who did have medical exams show that most had exams within 24 hours after being raped. However, victims raped by acquaintances or by assailants who were not especially violent were more likely to delay having medical exams.

Finally, victims of rapes that occurred within the past two years were more likely to have medical exams than victims raped more than two years ago. Hopefully this trend reflects a growing awareness among rape victims about the importance of having medical exams as soon after a rape as possible.

Further examination of medically examined victims shows that about 1 in 4 did not tell the examining medical staff that they had been raped. Results also show that although most victims said they were treated with respect and consideration by the examining medical staff, more than half were not given information about testing for STDs, pregnancy, or AIDS and HIV. Nor were most victims given information about rape counseling and support services. However, results show that more recent rape victims are more likely to receive these kinds of important information than victims raped several years ago.



VII. Arrest, Prosecution and Punishment



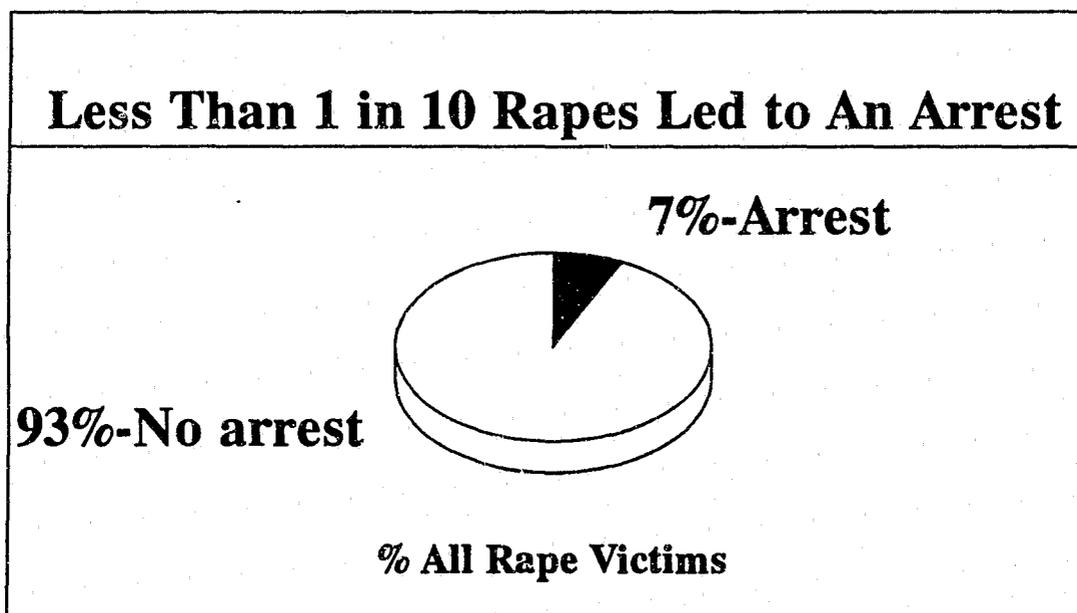
- * Rape and Arrest
- * Rape and Prosecution
- * Rape and Punishment
- * Chapter Summary

VII. Arrest, Prosecution and Punishment

Arresting, convicting, and incarcerating men who rape women is a bottom line for rape prevention. Unless men who rape women are removed from our communities the incidence of rape will continue to increase. Therefore, it is important to ask how many rapes that occur end in the arrest of a rapist and how many of those arrests lead to legal prosecution?

A. Rape and Arrest

Figure 55 shows the percentage of victims who reported that their rapes ended in the arrest of their assailant.



[Figure 55]

Victims' accounts show that less than 1 in 10 rapes that occurred led to the arrest of an assailant. This means that at least 9 in 10 rapists did not have to pay any consequences of physically and sexually abusing another human being. Moreover, without consequences there is little to deter rapists from raping again and again.

Why do so few rapes end in arrest? In light of the finding that less than 2 in 10 victims report their rape to the police, it is self-evident that the vast majority of rapes cannot possibly end in arrest. Conversely, when victims do report rape and cooperate in a police investigation, there is at least some chance that a rapist will face consequences for his criminal behavior. For example, whereas, only 7% (20) of the 294 rapes reported in this sample ended in an arrest, the arrest rate increases to 43% when only the 47 rapes that were reported to the police are considered. This means that for the women in this sample, those who reported their rape had about a 50-50 chance of seeing their assailant face consequences for their crime. On the other hand, none of the 247 women raped in the sample who did not report to the police had any chance at all of seeing their assailant punished. In addition, this also means that at least 247 rapists were left free to possibly rape again. In considering these observations, it is worth recalling that 1 in 2 of the women raped in this study (page 9) and more than 1 in 3 raped in the *National Women's Study* were raped more than once in their lives. This suggests that when rape victims do not assist law enforcement officials in ridding their communities of rapists, they not only increase the risk of other women being raped, but they increase their own risk of being raped again.

It is important to note that because so few victims report their rapes to the police, the 43% arrest rate in this study is based on a small sample of cases. In the *Anatomy of Rape* study of 608 reported rapes, the arrest rate was 24%. Based on a larger sample of reported rapes, it is reasonable to believe that the arrest rates in most large American cities are probably closer to 24% than the 43% figure found in this study.

Previous results have shown that the way victims were treated by the police is related to how satisfied they were with the way the police detectives handled their cases (page 65). Is police satisfaction also related to whether or not an arrest was made? Analyses show that arrests were strongly related to satisfaction: victims who's cases ended in arrest were twice as likely to have been satisfied with the police than victims of non-arrest cases (58% vs. 29%). In light of this relationship between arrest and satisfaction and the fact that very few arrests were made, it becomes understandable why more than half of the victims were dissatisfied with the way the police handled their cases.

B. Rape and Prosecution

Once a rapist is arrested, it does not automatically mean that the District Attorney's Office will decide to prosecute the case or that it will go to trial. For example, the Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics ⁶ presents the dispositions of felony arrests made in eight states during 1988. Of the rape arrests made in those states, about 1/4th (23%) were not prosecuted.

Because the prosecution of rape cases is so vital to rape prevention, the women who reported their rapes and saw them end in an arrest were asked if their cases went to prosecution. Of the 20 cases that ended in an arrest, 17 victims said their cases went to the District Attorney's Office. Of the 17 cases that went to the District Attorney's Office, 12 (71%) were actually prosecuted. This means that about 1 in 4 cases that went to the District Attorney were rejected for prosecution. It also means that 60% of all the rapes that ended in an arrest were actually prosecuted, which is similar to the 77% "likelihood for being prosecuted for rape" listed in the Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics. What these 12 rape prosecutions also mean is that **in only 4% of the 294 rapes that occurred in this sample did the rapist actually face legal consequences for forcibly raping another human being.**

When a rape victim reports a rape to the police she opens her violation up to some public scrutiny. When her assailant is arrested and the case is accepted for prosecution, she opens her violation up to general public knowledge. She also places herself in an arena where everything about her, especially her character, will be open to challenge. Victims were not unaware of this likelihood as evidenced by the fact that 40% of the victims in this study said they did not report their rape to the police because they were afraid they would have to testify in court (page 44). Because many rape victims fear the prospect of having to go through the prosecution of their rape, it is important to learn more about the experiences of victims who did have their cases prosecuted. Consequently, the 17 victims in this sample whose cases got as far as the District Attorney's Office were surveyed about some of their experiences.

Of the 17 women surveyed, 14 (82%) reported that the District Attorney believed their stories, and they were treated with respect and consideration (82%). In addition, when asked how satisfied they were with the way the DA's office handled their cases, 10 women (59%) reported they were not satisfied with the District Attorney's Office's performance and seven women (41%) reported they were satisfied.

6. Flanagan, T. J., and Maguire, K. (Eds.), (1991). Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics. U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.

C. Rape and Punishment

As a final note on the disposition of the 12 rape cases that were actually prosecuted, two went to trial (16%), five were resolved by plea bargaining (42%), and five were dismissed (42%). If it is assumed that the five plea bargained cases led to some kind of negative consequences for the assailants involved, and that one of the two cases that went to trial resulted in the conviction and punishment of the assailant,⁷ then we find that in this sample of 294 rapes, the arrest/punishment rate is 30% (6 of 20), the report/punishment rate is 13% (6 of 47), and the overall rape/punishment rate is 2% (6 of 294). To the extent that these rates are even remotely representative of the actual consequences that men who rape women pay in our society, it is clear that rape in America is virtually an unpunished crime.

7. The 1991 Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics shows a 62% conviction rate for 3,900 prosecuted rapes in 14 states during 1988.

D. Chapter Summary

Arrest, Prosecution and Punishment



Main Findings

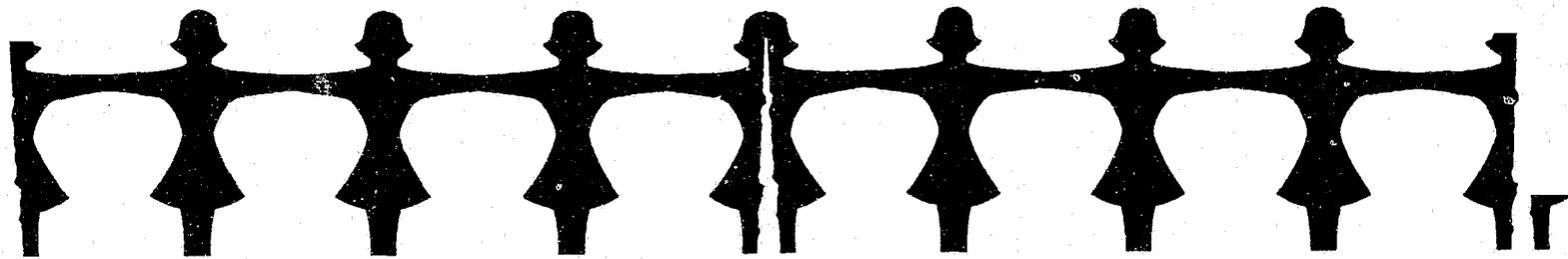


- * In Less Than 1 In 10 Of All Rapes That Occurred Was An Assailant Arrested**
- * The Rapist Actually Faced Legal Consequences For Forcibly Raping Another Human Being In Only 4% Of The 294 Rapes That Occurred**
- * The Rapist Received Some Sort Of Punishment For His Crime of Rape In Only 2% Of All The Rapes That Occurred**

Arresting, convicting and incarcerating men who rape women is a bottom line for rape prevention. Accounts of women who reported their rapes to the police show that less than half of the rapes ended in an arrest of a suspected assailant. These victim accounts also show that of the rape cases that ended in an arrest, only 60% were actually prosecuted. Counting rapes that were reported to the police and rapes that were not reported, this means that only 4% of the 294 rapes that occurred in this sample were ever legally prosecuted. These results indicate that rape in America is not only a hidden crime but it is also a crime that goes virtually unpunished.



VIII. Health Consequences of Rape



- * **Mental and Emotional Consequences of Being Raped**
- * **Pregnancy and Rape**
- * **Psychological Counseling For Rape Victims**
- * **Long-Term Effects of Rape on Current Health Status**
- * **Chapter Summary**

VIII. Health Consequences of Rape

A. The Mental and Emotional Pain of Being Raped

Rape is more than an assault of a women's body. It is also an assault on her mind, her sense of self, her sense of security, her sense of well-being. Because rape is a mental and emotional assault, as well as a physical assault, victims can and often do experience mental and emotional injuries as a result of being raped. To learn more about the mental and emotional pain of rape, victims were asked to use a list of 15 psychological symptoms to describe the mental and emotional problems they experienced as a result of being raped.

Most Rape Victims Experience Several Post-Rape Distress Consequences

<u>% Yes</u>	
70%	Nervousness
68%	Depression
68%	Feeling detached & estranged
65%	Difficulty sleeping
63%	Sexual dysfunction
56%	Trouble concentrating or completing tasks
55%	Nightmares
54%	Relationship problems with spouse/sign. other
53%	Anger
47%	Fear and terror
32%	Suicidal thoughts
30%	Fear a stranger was trying to get them
27%	Hungry and compelled to eat all of the time
23%	Increased use of alcohol or drugs
17%	Tried to commit suicide

[Figure 56]

Figure 56 shows that most women experience several mental and emotional problems as a result of being raped. Two-thirds of the women who were raped experienced extreme nervousness and depression, feelings of detachment and estrangement from others, difficulty sleeping and sexual dysfunction. Half reported they had trouble concentrating on the normal day-to-day tasks of living, nightmares, problems in their relationships, and feelings of anger, fear, and terror. One in four also reported that they increased their use of alcohol and drugs as a result of being raped. Finally, results also show that 1/3rd had suicidal thoughts and almost 2 in 10 tried to commit suicide. Overall, victims experienced an average of 7 mental and emotional problems directly as a result of being raped. In fact, 2 in 3 victims experienced four or more of these problems.

These figures document the terrible mental and emotional aftermath of rape. The fact that nearly 2 in 10 victims reported they had attempted suicide as a result of being raped is probably the most poignant example of just how devastating rape can be for its victims. Whereas the *Anatomy of Rape* study shows that the average rape physically lasts less than one hour, this study shows that the violence and violation victims experience during that hour usually causes mental and emotional anguish that can last much longer.

Are victim characteristics such as socioeconomic status, education, or race related to the kinds of mental and emotional distress that victims experienced after a rape? Demographic comparisons suggest that they are. Overall, American Indian women, less educated women, and women currently living on household incomes of less than \$12,000 reported experiencing the most distress after rape. For example, American Indian women were about twice as likely to experience suicidal thoughts (54%) and increased alcohol and/or drug use (50%) as a result of being raped than White (26% and 20%, respectively) or Black (27% and 24%, respectively) women. They were also significantly more likely to experience depression, difficulty sleeping, detachment and estrangement from others, fear of being hurt by strangers, sexual dysfunction, and attempted suicide. On average, American Indian victims reported experiencing two more mental and/or emotional problems as a result of rape than the other victims in the study. These results suggest that American Indian women may be especially vulnerable to the distress caused by rape. Consequently, it is important that this group of women have easy and readily available access to rape support and education services, and that these services are sensitive to the cultural differences that are associated with this special vulnerability.

With regard to economic status, women who currently live in poverty were more likely to have experienced 11 of the 15 symptoms than women who presently live on middle and upper income levels. Similarly, women with less education were also more likely to experience more overall distress, especially depression, suicidal thoughts, attempted suicide, difficulty sleeping, and feelings of intense anger with no apparent reason for being angry.

In addition to victims' demographic characteristics, another factor that appears to be strongly related to the mental and emotional aftermath of rape is victim sexual abuse history. For example, the data show that the more rapes victims experienced, the more symptoms of mental and emotional distress they experienced after their last rape.

Further analyses of the mental and emotional aftermath of rape and the different circumstances involved in rape did not show any strong overall relationships. In other words, who committed the rape, where it happened, and the kind of scenario involved, are for the most part, unrelated to the overall distress that victims experience after rape. The only circumstance involved in rape that did relate to greater victim post-rape distress was if the victim was raped by an assailant she was living with at the time of the rape.

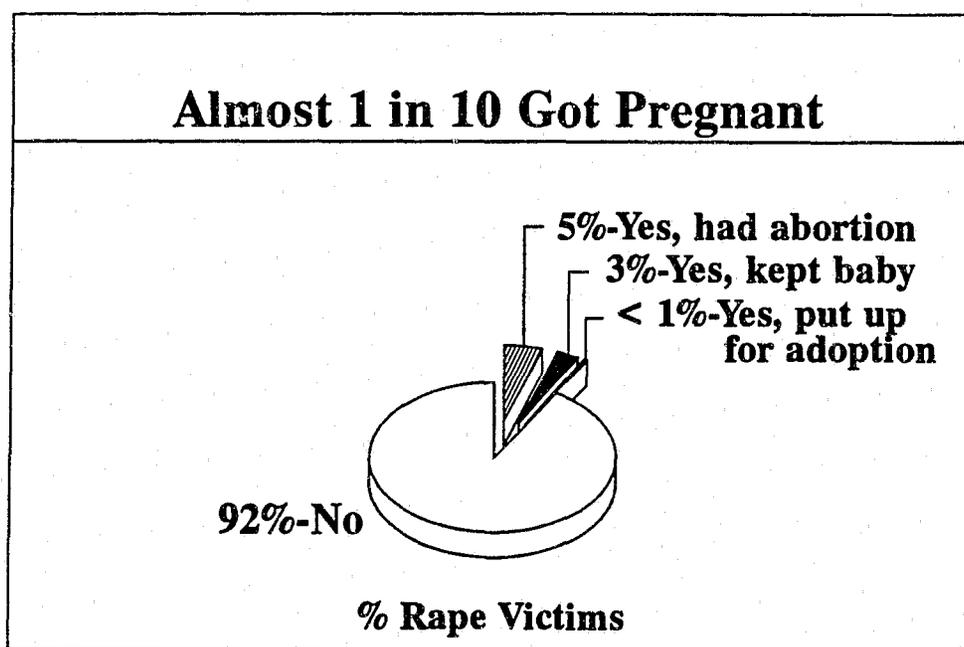
Whereas the circumstances involved in rape do not appear to be related to post-rape distress, the behaviors of victims and rapists during the rape are. Results of these analyses show that the more aggressively and violently that rapists behaved during an assault, the more mental and emotional distress victims experienced after the rape. Similarly, the more victims tried to resist during their assault, the more overall distress victims experienced after the assault. Taken together these findings suggest that the more violent the rape, the worse the aftermath is for the victim.

As a final set of analyses on the mental and emotional aftermath of rape, we examined post-rape distress in relation to whether victims reported or did not report their rape to the police. Results show that victims who reported their rape were also more likely to experience a greater number of mental and emotional problems resulting from being raped than victims who did not report. Similarly, victims who received a medical exam after their rape also reported more post-rape distress than victims who did not undergo a medical exam. To better understand these observations, recall that victims who experience more violent rapes were also more likely to report their rape to the police and have medical exams (page 78 & page 86, respectively). We have also learned that more violent rapes were associated with greater post-rape distress. Together these observations suggest that victims who report rape and have medical exams experience greater post-rape distress because they are more likely to have experienced excessively violent rapes. To better understand these relationships between the violence of rape and post-rape distress and reporting rape to the police and post-rape distress a statistical procedure was used to determine which of the two factors (violence or reporting) is the strongest contributor to distress. Results from this analyses show that the violence involved in rape makes a much larger contribution to post-rape distress than does reporting rape to the police. On the other hand, results also revealed that reporting rape to the police still has a relationship with distress even when the violence of rape is accounted for. This suggests that reporting rape to the police and opening oneself to a police investigation is stressful for victims in and of itself, and that the stresses involved in the reporting process may contribute to the distress that victims already experience as a result of being raped. In other words, there is a mental and emotional price attached to reporting rape to the police. On the other hand, it is essential for victims to realize that unless they are willing to pay the price for reporting rape, sexual assault will continue to be among America's most hidden and unpunished crimes.

Further examination into the relationship between reporting rape to the police and experiencing greater post-rape distress shows that among women who did report their rapes, there is a strong negative relationship between how satisfied they were with the way the police handled their cases and their post-rape distress. In other words, victims who reported their rapes and were satisfied with how their cases were handled experienced less post-rape distress than those who were unsatisfied with the way their cases were handled. This finding suggests that once victims report their rapes to the police, the mental and emotional health of the victims probably will be influenced by how satisfied they are with how the detectives manage their cases. Recalling previous results, we learned that victims were most satisfied with police performance when an assailant was arrested (page 96), and when the investigating detectives provide them with privacy when they first report their stories, answer all their questions, treat them with respect, do a thorough job investigating their cases, and update them about the progress in their cases (page 65). In light of these observations, it is important for investigating detectives to realize that although they cannot guarantee victims that their assailants will be arrested, there are things they can do that may help to lessen victims' post-rape distress.

B. Pregnancy and Rape

Along with mental and emotional distress, there is another potential consequence of rape that victims sometimes experience. The *Anatomy of Rape* study showed that less than 1 in 10 rapists uses a contraceptive during rape. This means that the vast majority of women who are raped are at some risk of pregnancy. To estimate this risk, the 294 victims were asked whether or not they became pregnant as a result of being raped, and if so, what they did about it.



[Figure 57]

Results from these victim accounts show that almost 1 in 10 of the women who were raped became pregnant as a result of being raped (8%). Moreover, closer examination of these 24 victims who became pregnant shows that 13 or nearly half were raped by current or former husbands or boyfriends, five by people they had just met at a bar or party, three by friends, two by family members, and one by a total stranger. In addition, seven of the rape pregnancies occurred more than five years ago, only three of the pregnant victims had medical exams after their assaults, and only one of those received information about pregnancy testing and prevention. Finally, 5 of the 24 sought counseling as a result of being raped.

As for the outcome of these rape pregnancies: 15 of the women had abortions (63%), eight had and kept the baby (33%), and one gave the baby up for adoption (4%).

If the 8% rape/pregnancy rate found in this study is at all representative of the national rape/pregnancy rate, then the need to educate women about the importance of having a medical exam and pregnancy test if they are raped is clearly demonstrated.

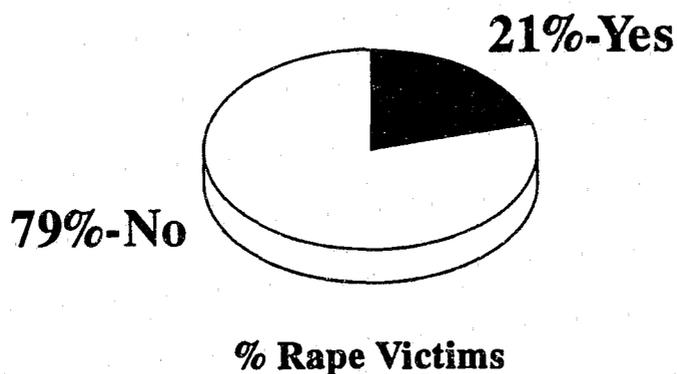
C. Psychological Counseling For Rape Victims

Results have shown that women who are raped experience many mental and emotional difficulties as a result of their assault. One important vehicle for helping rape victims deal with their post-rape distress is psychological counseling. How accessible are counseling and support services for victims of rape around the country? In the *National Victim Center Service Agency* study⁸ contact was made with 522 agencies within the United States that provide services to adult victims of rape and/or sexual assault, at least some of whom did not report their rapes to the police. Eighty-six percent of those agencies were non-profits and 12% were government supported. Most provided crisis intervention, counseling, court monitoring, information and referral, victim support groups, and education services. They had on average six paid staff members, 24 volunteers, a yearly budget between \$150,000 (medium) and \$250,000 (mean), and case levels of about 600.

Given the amount of post-rape distress reported in this sample, the question arises as to how many Tulsa women who have been raped took advantage of psychological counseling as a means for helping them manage their post-rape distress?

1. How Many Rape Victims Went to Counseling As a Result of Being Raped?

Only 1 in 5 Rape Victims Got Counseling



[Figure 58]

8. Kilpatrick, D.G., Edmunds, C. N., and Seymour, A. (1992). *Rape in America: A Report to the Nation*. National Victim Center, Arlington, VA. 22201.

Figure 58 shows that only 1 in 5 of the rape victims surveyed received psychological counseling after being raped. Moreover, demographic comparisons of victims who did and did not receive post-rape counseling show no race, income, or educational differences. In addition, the data also show that victim's sexual abuse history is unrelated to receiving post-rape counseling, nor are the circumstances surrounding the rapes, including who the rapist was, and the settings and scenarios in which the rape occurred. On the other hand, the data show several factors that do appear to be related to whether victims sought counseling. One of these is how recently the rape took place. For example, analyses show that 42% of the victims raped less than 6 months ago received counseling, versus 36% who were raped between 6 months and a year ago, versus 23% who were raped 1 to 2 years ago, versus 24% who were raped 3 to 5 years ago, versus 17% who were raped more than 5 years ago. This apparent growth in the number of victims seeking counseling probably reflects the efforts of rape support and advocacy groups who have fought to make post-rape counseling more accessible to victims over the years.

Two other factors related to whether victims receive post-rape counseling are: 1) how aggressive and violent the rapist behaved during the rape, and 2) the number of mental and emotional problems that victims experienced as a result of being raped. The data show that victims were more likely to receive counseling if their rapist was excessively violent during the assault. Similarly, the more post-rape distress symptoms that victims experienced, the more likely they were to receive counseling. For example, victims who received counseling averaged 9 symptoms of post-rape distress; whereas, victims who did not receive counseling averaged 6 symptoms of post-rape distress.

In addition to experiences of violence and distress, another factor related to receiving counseling is whether victims reported their rapes to the police. Analyses show that victims who reported their rapes to the police were twice as likely to receive counseling than those who did not report (38% vs. 17%).

2. Why Do Rape Victims Not Seek Counseling?

Because 8 in 10 of the rape victims did not seek or receive counseling to help them manage their distress, it is important to find out why they did not seek counseling. To address this question, victims who did not receive counseling were surveyed about their reasons for not seeking counseling.

Most Rape Victims Did Not Get Counseling Because They Wanted to Forget and Keep It Secret

% Yes

84%	Wanted to forget rape experience
67%	Did not want anyone to know about their experience
54%	Did not feel they needed counseling
46%	Could not afford counseling
42%	Believed women were expected to remain silent
42%	Did not know how to get counseling
42%	Did not know counseling could help rape victims
28%	Did not have time to go to counseling
19%	Prefer to deal with their own problems

[Figure 59]

Figure 59 shows that the three most prevalent reasons that victims gave for not seeking post-rape counseling were they wanted to forget their rape experience, they did not want anyone to know about their rape, and they did not feel they needed counseling. In addition, 4 in 10 of the victims said they did not seek counseling because they could not afford it, they believed women were expected to remain silent about rape, they did not know how to get counseling, and they did not know counseling could help them.

Examination of these widely held reasons for not seeking counseling suggests there may be two different kinds of resistance to counseling operating on victims. One of these resistances appears to be *denial*. *Wanting to forget the rape experience, not wanting anyone else to know about it, and not feeling the need for counseling*, all reflect efforts by victims to deny or dismiss the mental and emotional consequences they may be experiencing as a result of being raped.

The second type of resistance appears to revolve around a *lack of education* about the benefits of counseling for rape victims, and the costs and accessibility of counseling services. Most large communities have rape support services that are both free and accessible. The fact that 4 in 10 victims may not know about these services and their benefits, or they believe women are expected to remain silent about rape bespeaks a need for more rape prevention and support education in the community.

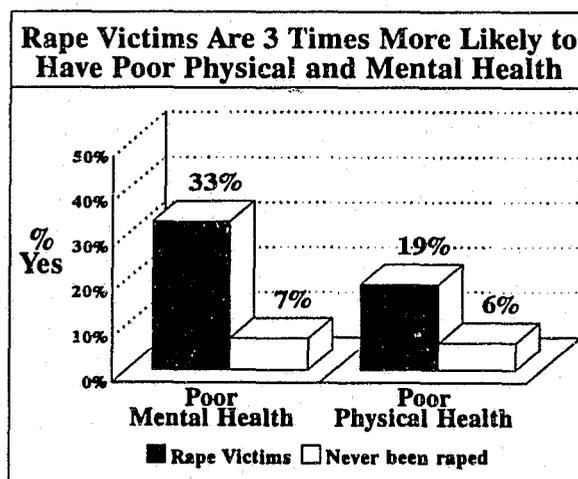
The next question addressed was whether overall post-rape distress and the reasons victims had for not seeking counseling are related. Results from these analyses show that among victims who did not seek counseling, the more post-rape distress they experienced, the greater number of reasons they had for not seeking counseling. Conversely, the greater number of reasons they had for not seeking counseling, the more distress they were experiencing. The observation that victims experiencing the most distress had the most reasons for not seeking counseling will appear to be counter-intuitive to most readers. However, further analyses of the data show that the most common reasons for highly distressed victims not to seek counseling all involve a lack of education about the costs, accessibility, and benefits of counseling. Unlike those victims who prefer to forget and hide their rape experience, the most distressed victims are those who might be open to going to counseling but do not go because they believe they can't afford it, or they don't know where or how to get counseling, or they are unsure if counseling would help them. These results again underscore the need to educate victims and potential victims about the benefits and particulars of rape counseling.

D. Long-Term Effects of Rape on Current Health Status

Results have demonstrated that most women who were raped experience significant mental and emotional distress because of their assault. This means that the violence and violation involved in rape go well beyond the physical act of rape itself. This also means that even if victims were not physically injured during a rape, most were injured mentally and emotionally. The next important question to ask is whether or not the mental and emotional injuries caused by rape heal over time, or whether they have an impact on the long-term health and well-being of victims. In other words, does the experience of rape leave its victims scarred? To examine this issue, all 980 women who responded to the survey were asked about their current physical and mental health status, current use of alcohol and drugs, history of substance abuse treatment, and current level of self-esteem and life satisfaction. Comparisons were then made between women who were raped and women who were not raped on these current health status questions.

1. Impact of Rape on Current Physical and Mental Health Status

Does rape have a negative impact on victims' physical and mental health status, and if yes, for how long after the rape occurs does this negative impact last? Figure 60 compares the percent of rape victims who rated their current physical health as poor and those who rated their current mental health as poor with ratings of women who have never been raped.

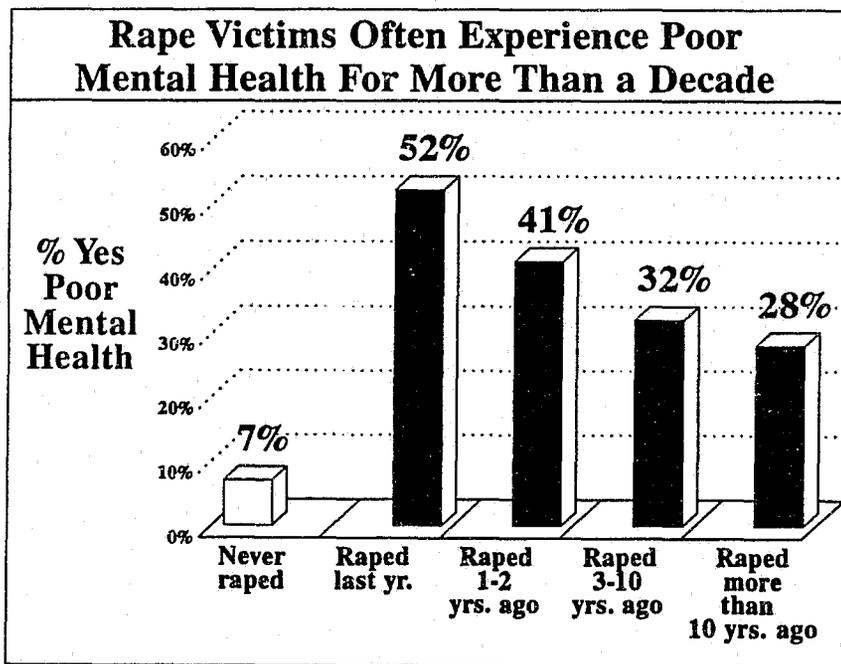


[Figure 60]

Results show that rape victims were almost 5 times more likely than non-rape victims to report their current mental health status as poor. They were also 3 times more likely to report they have poor physical health. These data demonstrate that women who have been raped experience worse physical and mental health in the future.

a. How Long Into the Future Do Negative Health Consequences Associated With Rape Last?

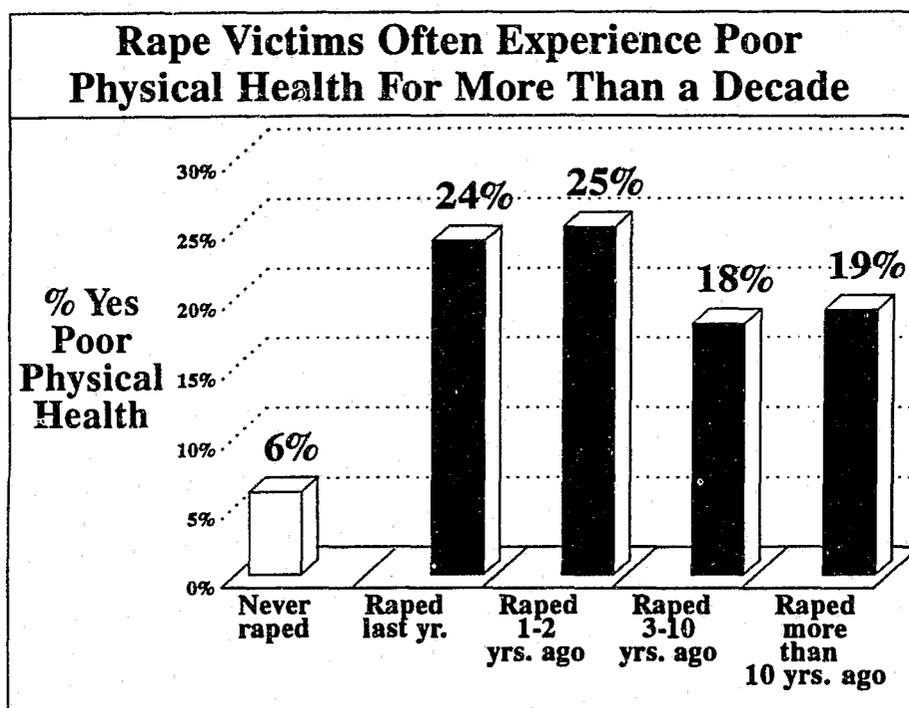
Figure 61 shows the current mental health status of victims who were raped within the last year, 1 to 2 years ago, 3 to 10 years ago, and more than 10 years ago with the current mental health status of women who have never been raped.



[Figure 61]

There are two points to consider from the data shown in Figure 61. The first is that women who were raped even more than 10 years ago were 4 times more likely to report poorer current mental health status than women who have never been raped. This suggests that rape victims can often carry the psychological scars of being raped for more than a decade. The second point to notice is that among the rape victims there is a lineal relationship between the recency of the rapes and the percentage of victims who reported poor mental health status. In other words, the more recent the rapes, the greater the percentage of victims who reported poor mental health, and the longer ago the rapes occurred the smaller the percentage of victims who reported poor mental health. This suggests that for most victims the negative impact of rape on their mental health does diminish over time.

Figure 62 shows the current physical health status of victims who were raped within the last year, 1 to 2 years ago, 3 to 10 years ago, and more than 10 years ago and the current physical health status of women who have never been raped.



[Figure 62]

There are four points to consider from the data in Figure 62. First, comparing this figure to the previous health status figure suggests that rape appears to have a greater impact on victims' mental health status than physical health status. For example 52% of the women raped within the last year reported poor mental health status compared to 24% who reported poor physical health status. Second, victims who were raped more than 10 years ago were 3 times more likely to report they have poorer physical health than women who have never been raped. This suggests that for many victims rape can have an impact on the physical health conditions that victims experience for more than a decade after their assault. Third, unlike mental health status, there does not appear to be a linear relationship between the recency of rape and the likelihood of experiencing poorer current physical health status. This suggests when victims receive serious physical injuries during an assault, or develop psychosomatic injuries from the trauma of rape, that these injuries can leave permanent scars on the victims' future physical health status.

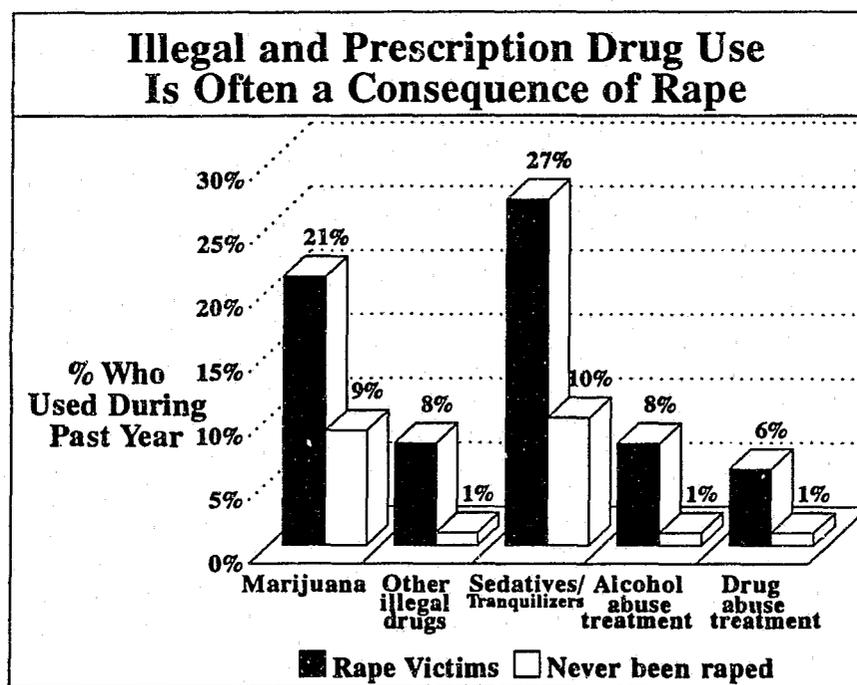
Demographic comparisons of rape victims' physical and mental health status show that victim race is unrelated to differences in current health status. On the other hand, educated and affluent victims are more likely to indicate that their current physical and mental health is better than rape victims who were less educated and live in poverty or near poverty.

**b. Rape and
Mental Health Treatment
and Psychiatric Hospitalization**

In addition to asking all 980 women about their current mental health status, respondents were also asked if they had ever received mental health treatment from a psychologist or psychiatrist and whether they had ever been hospitalized for an emotional or mental problem. Answers to these questions show that rape victims were significantly more likely to have received mental health treatment (57% vs. 35%), as well as to have been hospitalized (14% vs. 3%) than women who have never been raped. Although we did not ask whether the women who were raped received treatment for mental health problems prior to or after their rape, the fact that most victims were under 20 years old at the time of their assault suggests that most of the victims probably received treatment sometime after being raped. To the extent this supposition is true, these data would tend to corroborate the negative impact that rape can have on victims' mental and emotional health.

2. Impact of Rape on Current Drug Use

Another indicator that is often used to assess health status is a person's consumption of marijuana, other illegal drugs, or prescription drugs such as tranquilizers or sedatives. Does rape have an impact on victims' current drug use? Figure 63 compares rape victims and non-rape victims on whether or not they used marijuana, other illegal drugs, or prescription drugs (sedatives/tranquilizers) within the past year, and on whether they have ever received treatment for a substance abuse problem.



[Figure 63]

Results show that when compared with non-rape victims, women who were raped were twice as likely to have used marijuana during the past year, 8 times more likely to have used other illegal drugs, and 3 times as likely to have used sedatives or tranquilizers. In addition, although regular weekly use of these substances is low among both victims and non-victims, analyses show that rape victims were significantly more likely to use marijuana, other illegal drugs, and/or prescription drugs on a regular weekly basis than non-rape victims (weekly marijuana use: 6% vs. 2%; weekly other illegal drug use: 2% vs. .2%; and weekly sedative or tranquilizer use: 8% vs. 2%). Overall, these data suggest that rape does have an impact on victims' vulnerability to the use of illegal and prescription drugs.

Data was also collected about alcohol use during the past year. Analyses comparing rape victims' use with that of women who have never been raped show no significant differences in whether they used alcohol last year (79% vs. 81%, respectively) or in their frequency of alcohol use (weekly: 26% vs. 24%, respectively).

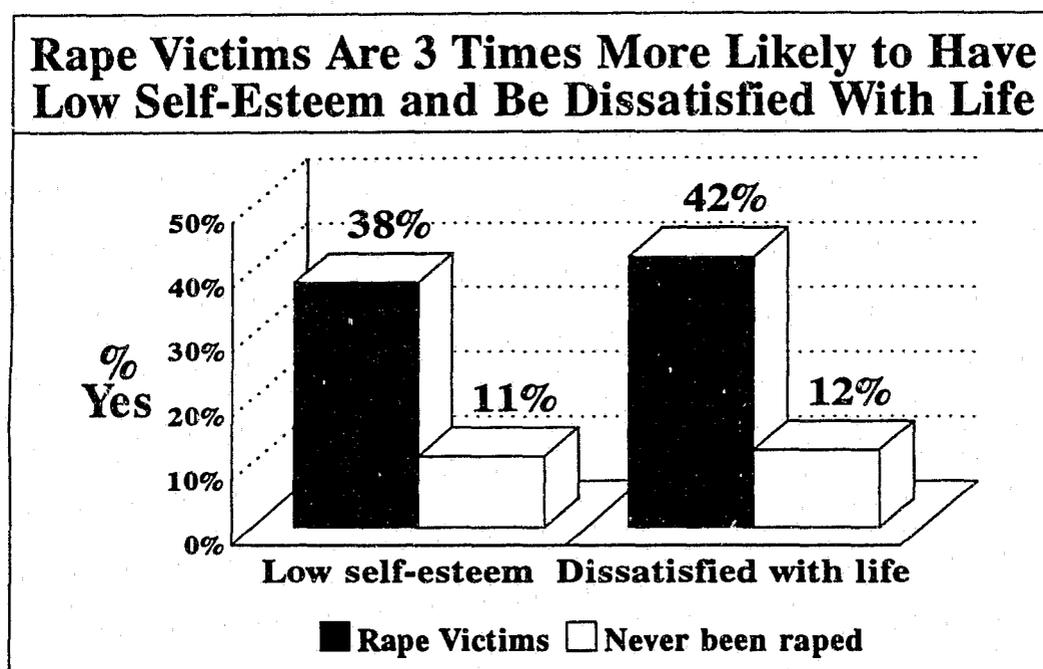
To examine whether the use of alcohol or drugs had ever been an abuse problem, respondents were asked whether they had ever been treated for alcohol or drug problems. Results show that rape victims were at least 6 times more likely to have received alcohol (8%) and drug (6%) treatment than women who have never been raped (1% and 1%, respectively). Again, since most victims were raped when they were under the age of 20, these data suggest that most victims were probably treated sometime after their assault.

Demographic comparisons of rape victims' use of illegal and prescription drugs and whether they had ever received treatment for a substance abuse problem show that American Indian victims were more likely to have used illegal drugs within the past year and have been treated for alcohol or drug problems than other victims. The data also show that less affluent and less educated victims were also more likely to have used drugs and been in treatment.

Overall, these data suggest that women who were raped were more vulnerable to future substance use and abuse than were women who have never been raped.

3. Impact of Rape on Current Self-Esteem and Life Satisfaction

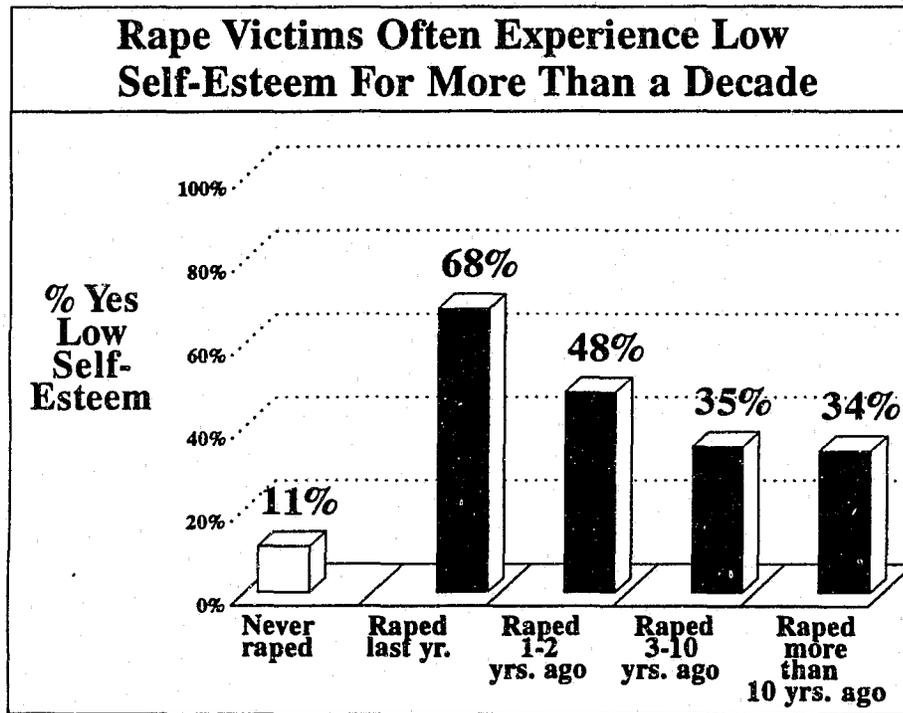
Two other important indicators of health and well-being are a person's overall self-esteem and their satisfaction with life in general. To examine whether the violence and violation of rape have consequences for victims' future self-esteem and life satisfaction, respondents were asked to indicate on a 5-point scale ranging from "awful" to "great" how they felt about themselves as a person and how they felt about their lives in general. Figure 64 compares self-esteem and life satisfaction ratings of rape victims with ratings of women who have never been raped.



[Figure 64]

Results show that rape victims were less likely to feel good about themselves or their lives than women who have never been raped. In fact, 38% of rape victims indicated they had low self-esteem as compared to 11% of non-victims. In addition, 43% of rape victims indicated they felt dissatisfied with life in general or had mixed feelings about life as compared to 12% of non-victims. These results suggest that being raped is related to how women will feel about themselves and their lives in the future. In other words, low self-esteem and dissatisfaction with life appear to be consequences of rape for more than 1/3rd of the victims.

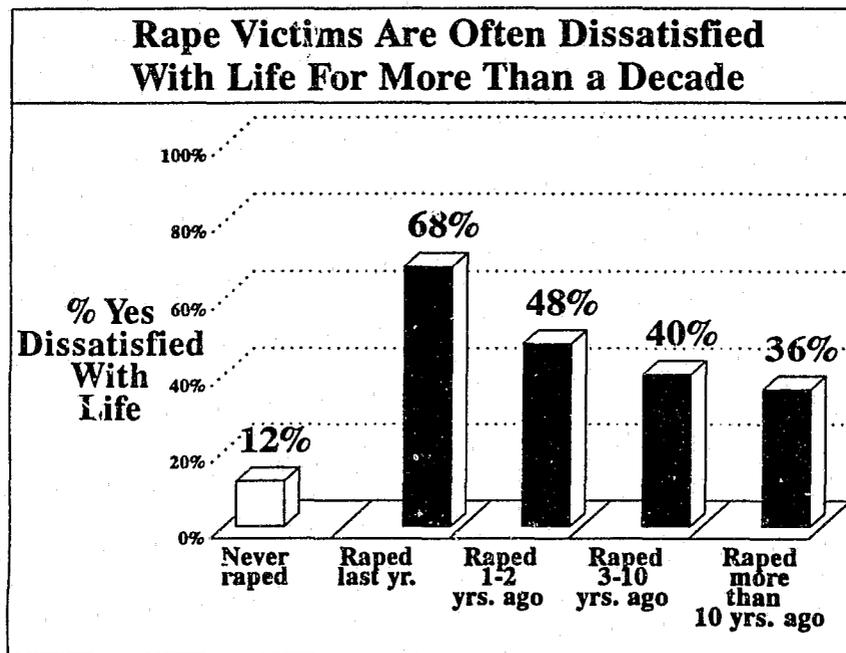
Given that rape appears to have a negative impact on the self-esteem and life satisfaction of many victims, how long does this impact last? Figure 65 shows the current self-esteem of victims who were raped within the last year, 1 to 2 years ago, 3 to 10 years ago, and more than 10 years ago with the current self-esteem of women who have never been raped.



[Figure 65]

The data in Figure 65 shows that women who were raped even more than 10 years ago were 3 times more likely to report low self-esteem than women who have never been raped. This suggests that low self-esteem is a long-term consequence for many women who have been raped. In addition, the data show that there is a lineal relationship between the recency of rape and the percentage of victims who reported low self-esteem. In other words, the more recent the rapes, the greater the percentage of victims who reported low self-esteem, and the longer ago the rapes occurred, the smaller the percentage of victims who reported low self-esteem. Similar to the impact of rape on victims' mental health status, the negative impact of rape on self-esteem also appears to diminish over time.

Figure 66 presents the percentage of victims who reported dissatisfaction with life in relation to the recency of their rape.



[Figure 66]

Overall, the data in Figure 66 are virtually identical with those in Figure 65. Like low self-esteem, dissatisfaction with life seems to be a long-term consequence that is associated with rape. Also like low self-esteem, the percentage of victims who experience dissatisfaction with life seems to diminish over time. In light of the fact that self-esteem and satisfaction with life are usually found to be highly correlated, it makes sense that victims who experience low self-esteem following their rape would also experience dissatisfaction with life.

Demographic comparisons among rape victims' self-esteem and life satisfaction ratings show that victim race is unrelated to self-esteem or how satisfied they are with life in general. On the other hand, more educated and affluent rape victims reported higher self-esteem and life satisfaction than rape victims who were less educated and live in poverty or near poverty.

Overall, rape victims' accounts of their current health status suggests that like most major injuries in life, rape can leave a permanent scar. Why is it that some victims of rape are more scarred than others? Because almost all rape victims experience post-rape distress and only some seem to carry this distress well into the future, one answer to this question may lie in the level and nature of the post-rape distress that victims experience. To examine this possibility, physical and mental health ratings were combined with substance use reports, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and self-esteem and life satisfaction ratings into a composite overall *current health score*. This overall current health score was then correlated with victims' overall post-rape distress, as well as, each of their post-rape distress symptoms. Results from these analyses show a significant relationship between victims' overall level of post-rape distress and their overall current health: The more symptoms of distress that victims experienced as a result of being raped, the worse their current health. In addition, results also show that three post-rape distress symptoms are especially predictive of poor current health, namely, increased drug and alcohol use, excessive nervousness, and excessive anger.

As a final note, it is important to recognize that the consequences of rape on victims' health found in this study are similar to those found in the *National Women's Study*. For example, the *National Women's Study* found that rape victims experience more mental health problems including post-traumatic distress disorder, depression, and contemplated and attempted suicide, than the non-rape victims sampled. They also found rape victims are more likely to have current drug and alcohol problems than women who have never been raped.

E. Chapter Summary

Health Consequences of Rape



Main Findings



- * **Most Rape Victims Experience Several Post-Rape Distress Consequences**
- * **2 In 10 Victims Tried To Commit Suicide**
- * **Almost 1 In 10 Victims Became Pregnant As A Result Of Being Raped**
- * **Only 1 In 5 Victims Got Counseling**
- * **Most Rape Victims Did Not Get Counseling Because They Wanted To Forget And Keep Their Experience Secret**
- * **Rape Has Long-Term Physical and Mental Health Consequences That Can Last For More Than a Decade**

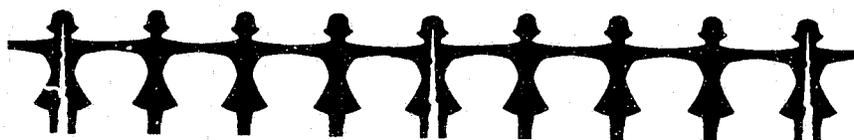
Results from this chapter suggest that rape has significant mental and emotional consequences for most victims. Most women who are raped experience considerable post-rape distress including nervousness, depression, feelings detached and estranged from others, difficulty sleeping, and sexual dysfunction. In addition, victim accounts showed that 2 in 10 victims tried to commit suicide as a result of being raped. It is also important to note that nearly 1 in 10 victims reported that they became pregnant as a result of their sexual assault. This finding underscores the importance for women to have medical exams if they are raped.

Even though most rape victims experienced significant mental and emotional distress as a result of being raped, only 1 in 5 received psychological counseling to help them deal with their distress. Overall, results suggest that there are two principal barriers that prevent victims from seeking counseling. One of these barriers is a tendency on the part of the victims to want to deny or forget their rape experience and the post-rape distress they were experiencing. The second barrier identified was a basic lack of education about the benefits of counseling or the particulars of how to get counseling.

In addition to post-rape distress, comparisons between rape victims' and non-rape victims' current health status suggest that rape has long-term health consequences for many of its victims. For example, when compared with women who have never been raped, rape victims' current health status shows that the act of being raped is related to victims' future physical health, mental health, self-esteem, satisfaction with life, and vulnerability to use illegal and prescription drugs. In each of these areas of health, the act of rape was strongly associated with poor health. Moreover, the negative impact of rape on health was seen in victims who were raped more than 10 years ago indicating that rape can and does have very long-term negative health consequences, especially mental health consequences, for many rape victims. Results also show that the negative impact of rape on most victims' mental health and outlook appear to diminish over time.

More victims of recent rapes complain of poor mental health and mental outlook than do victims who were raped longer ago. The fact that between 1/2 to 2/3rds of the victims raped within the past year experienced mental and emotional difficulties is probably due to the observed relationship between post-rape distress and current mental health status. Apparently, the post-rape distress almost all victims experience lingers on for a good many victims. Moreover, results indicate that for some victims, the physical injuries and post-rape distress they experience from rape become more or less permanent disabilities that scar their experience and ability to enjoy life for many years after their assault.

If, as this study suggests, rape does have short-term and long-term negative impacts on the health of its victims, then communities need to make sure that both mental health support and medical support are available and accessible for victims of rape, and that all women in the community are aware of and encouraged to use these resources if they are victimized. In addition, because poor and uneducated women appear to be especially vulnerable to the health ravages of rape, education and support resources need to be specifically directed towards this population. Extra effort and allowances also need to be made for American Indian victims who appear to be especially vulnerable to substance abuse as a consequence of being raped.



IX. Women Who Have Never Been Raped



- * How Does Rape in the Community Affect Women's Lives?**
- * How Do Women Who Have Never Been Raped Think They Would React to Being Raped?**
- * Chapter Summary**

IX. Women Who Have Never Been Raped

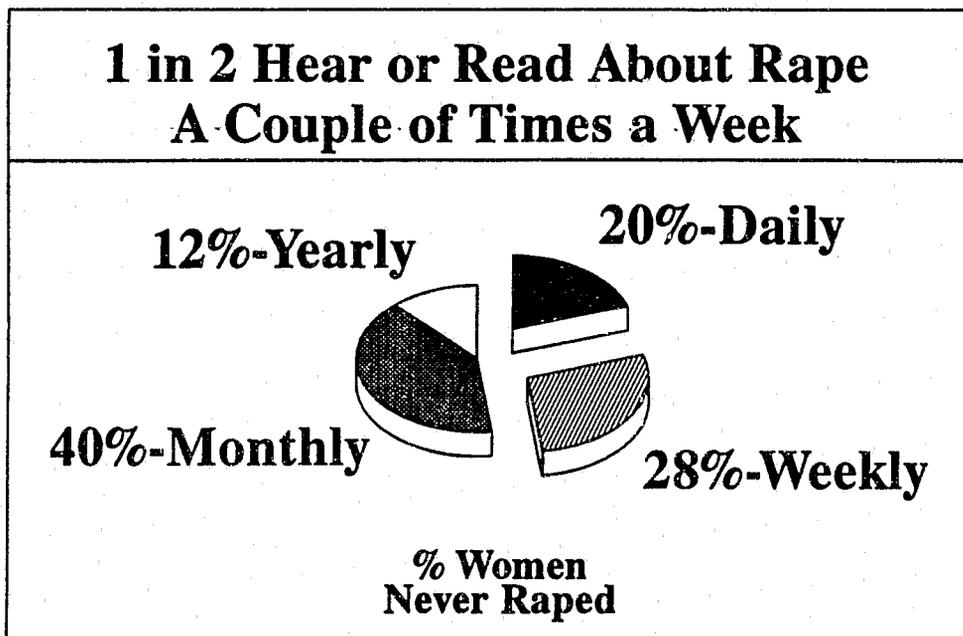
The previous chapters of this report have focused on the experiences of the 1 in 3 women who have experienced rape. These next chapters will focus on how rape has affected the lives of the 2 in 3 women who have never been raped.

A. How Does Rape In the Community Affect Women's Lives?

A principal goal of rape prevention is to educate and encourage women to alter their behaviors and lifestyles in ways that make them more aware, vigilant, and cautious about the possibility of being raped. Being aware means to think about the possibility of being raped regularly; whereas, being vigilant and cautious means to recognize and avoid the kinds of risky situations that are most often associated with sexual assault. How often do the 2 in 3 women in the community who have never been raped hear and read about rape in the media? How often do they think about rape, and how have they altered their behaviors and lifestyles in ways that make them more aware, vigilant and cautious about rape?

1. How Often Do Women Who Have Never Been Raped Hear or Read About Rape in the Media?

It is no secret that the daily consciousness of most people in this country is powerfully influenced by what they read and hear about in the media. When events representing important social issues are portrayed regularly in the media, people tend to think about them. How often do women who have never been raped read or hear about rape in newspapers, books, magazines, television, radio, or the movies? Figure 67 presents the responses to this question by the 686 never-raped women in this sample.



[Figure 67]

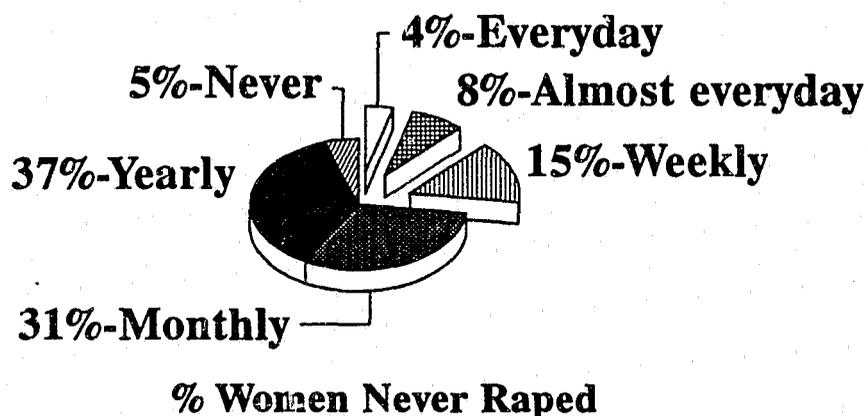
Results show that half of the women hear or read about rape in the media a couple times a week; only 1 in 10 say they are hardly ever exposed to information about rape in the media.

Overall, these results suggest that the vast majority of women in the community are exposed to some kind of information about rape on a regular basis. On the other hand, demographic analyses of these data show that Black women in the community were 3 times more likely to say they hardly ever hear or read about rape in the media (29%) than White (11%) or American Indian (8%) women. Age comparisons with regard to media exposure to rape also show a significant difference in that older women read and hear about rape in the media more often than younger women.

2. How Often Do Women Who Have Never Been Raped Think About the Possibility of Being Raped?

Although most women in the community appear to be exposed to rape in the media on a regular basis, does it mean they also think about the possibility of their being raped on a regular basis? In other words, how often are women aware of the possibility of their being raped, and is rape awareness related to exposure to rape in the media?

1 in 4 Think About the Possibility of Being Raped a Couple Times a Week



[Figure 68]

Results show that 1 in 4 women who have never been raped think about rape at least a couple of times a week. In fact, 1 in 10 women say they think about rape almost everyday. On the other hand, 42% of the never-raped victims report they hardly ever (never or a couple of times a year) think about the possibility of being raped.

Overall, these results suggest that a great many women in the community think about the possibility of their being raped quite often. For example, if the 27% estimate of women who think about rape weekly is extrapolated onto Tulsa's 147,000 adult females, the resulting figure shows that about 40,000 women in Tulsa are alert to the possibility of their becoming a rape victim at least a couple of times a week. Conversely, if the 42% estimate of women who hardly ever think about rape is extrapolated onto Tulsa's adult female population, the result shows that there are about 60,000 Tulsa women who are hardly ever alert to the possibility of their being raped. Although it is a sorry state of affairs when so many women in our society have to live mindful of the possibility of being raped, the high incidence of rape reported in this and other studies requires women to maintain regular awareness and vigilance. The observation that nearly half the women in the community hardly ever think about being raped is a clear demonstration of the need for rape prevention education and a cause for concern. It is important to remember that rape is a hidden crime and therefore, the probability of being raped is much greater than most people believe. Lack of rape awareness and vigilance can only make women more vulnerable to the already much too high probability of experiencing a sexual assault.

Because rape awareness is so important to the safety of women, it is important to learn whether there are demographic differences in how often women think about rape. The only demographic difference found in these analyses is that Black women were more likely to say they hardly ever think about rape (58%) than White (41%) or American Indian (39%) women. Because previous results have shown that Black women are among the most vulnerable to being raped (page 8), rape prevention should be targeted toward this group of women.

Finally, two possible influences on how often women think about being raped were examined: media exposure to rape and previous experience of being raped. Results indicate that the more often women are exposed to rape in the media, the more often they think about being raped. These results suggest that media attention to rape does promote greater rape awareness for many women. Results also indicate that having been raped in the past is related to how much a woman thinks about the possibility of being raped in the future. For example, 1/3rd of the women who have been raped say they think about rape at least a couple of times a week (39%), as compared to 1/4th of the women who have never been raped (27%). These observations suggest that being raped does appear to make some victims more aware of the possibility of their being raped again in the future. On the other hand, these data also suggest that many rape victims are less attentive to the possibility of their being raped again than one might expect given their previous experience. Apparently, just because a woman has been raped does not necessarily mean that she has become more knowledgeable or educated about rape prevention.

3. Has Fear About the Possibility of Being Raped Made Women Who Have Never Been Raped Change Their Everyday Behaviors?

In addition to reading, hearing, and thinking about rape, never-raped women were asked if their concern about rape has made them change any of 16 everyday behaviors.

9 in 10 Have Changed At Least 8 of Their Behaviors Because They Fear Rape

% Yes	
96%	Pay closer attention to people around them
93%	Lock doors when they are at home
91%	Lock car doors & close windows when driving alone
88%	Fearful of parking in public garages or parking lots
84%	Think about things they carry that could be used for defense
83%	Cautious about going into certain areas of town
82%	Less likely to go out alone at night
81%	Less likely to talk to men they do not know
43%	More distrustful of men
30%	Carry mace to defend themselves
22%	Installed security system in home
20%	Bought a dog for protection
14%	Less likely to go out alone during the day
13%	Carry a whistle
10%	Carry a gun
8%	Carry a knife

[Figure 69]

Results show that concern over the possibility of being raped has made the vast majority of never-raped women change a number of their everyday behaviors. Most of these changes revolve around increased vigilance and caution especially with respect to paying more attention to the people around them, making sure to lock doors and windows at home or when driving alone in a car, being more cautious about parking in public garages or parking lots, being more cautious about going to certain areas of town, being more likely to think about things they normally carry that could be used for their defense (e.g., keys), being less likely to talk to men they don't know, and being less likely to go out alone at night. Overall, 9 in 10 of the women who had never been raped say they altered at least eight everyday behaviors because of their concern about the possibility of being raped. These results are encouraging because they suggest that most women recognize the possibility of their being raped and say they have altered at least some of their behaviors accordingly.

Because the women responded to each of the 16 everyday behaviors it was possible to calculate an *overall alteration of lifestyle score* for each respondent. High scores on this index indicate greater alteration in lifestyle because of concern over being raped.

Demographic comparisons on these alteration of lifestyle scores indicate that White and American Indian never-raped women have altered more of their everyday lifestyles out of concern over rape than have Black never-raped women. Some of the specific race differences found were that White and American Indian women were more likely to not go out alone at night, and fear public garages and certain areas of town than Black women. On the other hand, Black women who have never been raped were twice as likely to carry mace and 4 times as likely to carry knives for protection than White women. Both Black and American Indian women were twice as likely to carry guns than White women.

Although never-raped women's socioeconomic status does not appear to be related to overall lifestyle alteration, there are several specific behavioral changes related to income that are worth mentioning. For example, income comparisons show that more affluent women are more likely to have security systems installed in their homes and to fear public garages and certain parts of town than were poorer women. On the other hand, poorer women were more likely to carry knives, whistles, guns, and mace. In light of these differences it appears as if two different protective styles are being adopted by never-raped women living in different socioeconomic circumstances. More affluent women seem to be more likely to adopt a preventative protection style in which they try to avoid high risk situations. On the other hand, poorer women seem more likely to adopt a more reactive protective style in which they focus on defending themselves if and when they are attacked.

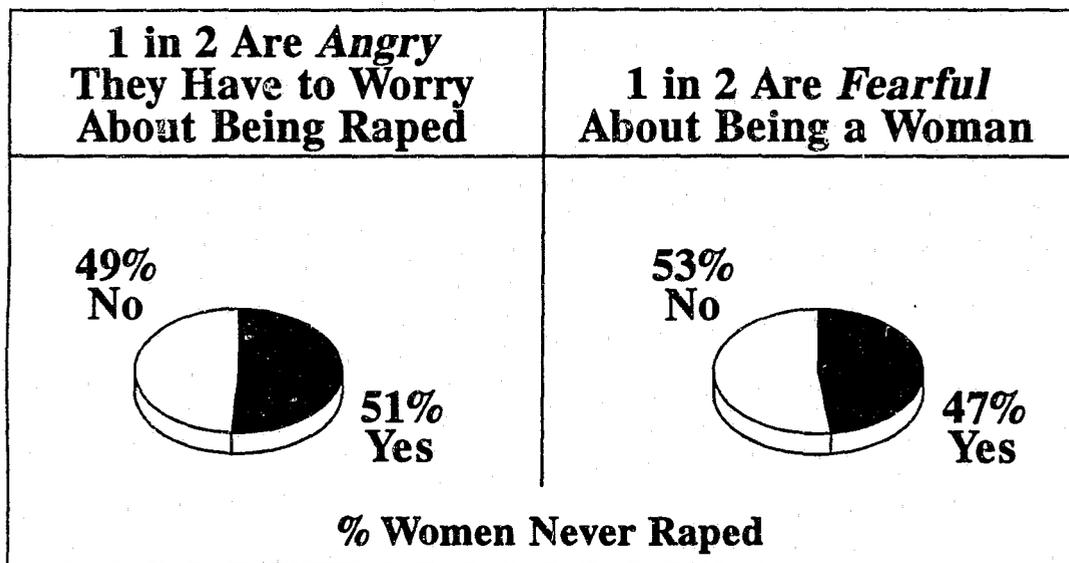
It is interesting that a similar pattern was found when age comparisons were examined for differences in lifestyle alterations made out of concern for being raped. Although overall lifestyle alteration is unrelated to the age of never-raped women, there are several specific behavioral changes that were related to age. These age related specific behavioral changes suggest that older never-raped women tend to adopt the more preventative protective style of trying to avoid high risk situations; whereas, younger never-raped women were more likely to use a reactive protective style that includes carrying weapons or whistles to defend themselves if they were attacked.

Analyses examining the relationships between overall alteration in lifestyle out of concern over rape, media exposure to rape, and how often women think about rape also produced some interesting results. The data show that the more often never-raped women are exposed to rape in the media, the more they have altered their lifestyles. Similarly, the more often these women think about the possibility of rape, the more they have altered their lifestyles. These observations suggest that media exposure to information about rape and increased awareness about the possibility of being raped are both related to alterations in lifestyle that focus on vigilance, caution, and self-defense.

Finally, do women who have been raped differ from those who have never been raped in terms of their overall alteration of lifestyle? Has concern about rape differentially impacted changes in the everyday behaviors of women who have and have not been raped? Analyses show that rape victims have altered more of their everyday behaviors than never-raped women. In particular, comparisons show that rape victims were more likely to carry a knife (25% vs. 8%) or gun (21% vs. 10%), buy a dog for protection (28% vs. 20%), and try not to go out alone during the day (20% vs. 14%).

4. What Emotional Impact Does Worrying About Being Raped Have on Women Who Have Never Been Raped?

In light of the findings that most women who have never been raped are regularly exposed to rape in the media, say they think about the possibility of being raped on a fairly regular basis, and have altered their everyday behaviors, how do these women feel about having to worry about the possibility of being raped?



[Figure 70]

Figure 70 shows that 1 in 2 women who have never been raped were angry they have to worry about being raped, and 1 in 2 were also fearful about being a woman. These results suggest that worry about rape does appear to have a general emotional impact on about half of the women who have never been raped.

Demographic comparisons show that more White and American Indian never-raped women were angry at having to worry about rape and fearful about being women than Black never-raped women. This observation is consistent with previous results showing that Black women were less likely to be exposed to rape through the media, less likely to think about the possibility of rape on a frequent basis, and less likely to have altered their everyday behaviors. On the other hand, analyses reveal no significant age or socioeconomic differences related to the emotional impact of having to worry about rape.

Finally, comparisons between rape victims and women who have never been raped show that rape victims were more likely to be angry they have to worry about being raped (61% vs. 51%). On the other hand, analyses reveal no significant differences between women who have and have not been raped and their tendencies to feel fearful about being women (47% vs. 51%).

B. How Do Women Who Have Never Been Raped Think They Would React To Being Raped?

An important part of rape prevention is preparedness, and one important part of preparedness is how women think they would react to being raped. How do women who have never been raped think they would react if they were raped? Who do they think would be most likely to rape them, a stranger or someone they know? What would they be most concerned about if they were raped? Would they report their rape to the police and would they know how to report it? How do they think they would be treated by the police if they did report their rape, and if they wouldn't report it, why wouldn't they? Would they get counseling if they were raped, and if not, why not?

In light of the relatively high probability that a woman who has never been raped could be raped, it is important that women think about these kinds of questions and have answers for them. The expectations that people have about how they will respond to an event often have a powerful influence on how they experience the event if it should occur, and how they actually do respond to it. Moreover, knowing what one will do to respond to a traumatic event often acts as a buffer to stress if and when one does have to respond to the event. However, preparedness can only help people if the expectations it is based on are realistic. By realistic, we mean that there is a high probability that the expected response will occur. In fact, preparedness that is based on unrealistic expectations can often add to the pain and stress that people experience from a traumatic event such as rape. Therefore, it is not only important to learn about how never-raped women think they would respond to being raped, but also whether their expectations are realistic. One way to learn whether a woman's beliefs about how she would respond to rape are based on realistic expectations is to compare her beliefs with the experiences of women who have been raped.

Figure 71 presents the responses of 686 never-raped women to questions about how they would react if they were raped, and also shows the actual responses of 294 women who have been raped.

Overall, Figure 71 shows that women who have never been raped have many unrealistic expectations about how they would respond to being raped. To begin with, never-raped women were twice as likely to think they would be raped by strangers if they were ever raped. This expectation is clearly unrealistic given previous results which have shown that 4 in 5 women who have been raped were raped by people they know. The fact that most never-raped women believe that their greatest threat comes from strangers rather than from the people they know is a belief that makes many women vulnerable to sexual assault. For example, if a woman focuses all of her vigilance and caution to avoid situations where she might be assaulted by a stranger, she may not realize that going over to a male friend's house after a late night out and having a few drinks could be a risky situation for her. Given the widespread belief among never-raped women they would most likely be raped by a stranger, it is important that rape education specialists increase public awareness about the high incidence of acquaintance rape and the kinds of situations that are associated with these kinds of assaults.

Most Never-Raped Women Have Unrealistic Expectations About How They Would React To Being Raped

If They Were Raped:	Women Who Have Never Been Raped Expectations	Rape Victims' Reality
<u>Who Would Rape Them?</u>		
Strangers	67%	21%
Acquaintances	33%	79%
<u>Concerned About?</u>		
Getting AIDS or HIV	100%	27%
Getting a sexually transmitted disease	97%	34%
Rapist coming back and raping them again	89%	59%
Name made public by media	85%	44%
Getting pregnant from being raped	75%	44%
People thinking it was their fault	71%	69%
People finding out they were raped	66%	62%
Family knowing they were raped	46%	61%
<u>Would They Report It To The Police?</u>		
Yes	99%	16%
<u>Do They Know How To Report It?</u>		
Yes	70%	*
No	30%	*
<u>Why Would They Report It?</u>		
Want person who raped them punished	99%	88%
Afraid rapist would rape others	96%	72%
Their duty to report being raped	87%	68%
Want support and counseling	87%	49%
Afraid rapist would try to rape them again	68%	63%
Would need medical attention and have no choice	43%	44%
Want free medical examination	37%	19%
Someone would convince them to report it	26%	47%

[Figure 71]

If They Were Raped:	Women Who Have Never Been Raped Expectations	Rape Victims' Reality
<u>What Would Prevent Them From Reporting?</u>		
Rapist threatened to hurt family or friends	61%	14%
Not wanting media to find out their name	59%	43%
Not enough evidence and nothing would come of it	51%	59%
Thinking police would not be able to make an arrest	47%	46%
Afraid rapist would get angry and rape them again	46%	43%
Embarrassed about what had happened	43%	80%
Afraid police would not believe them	36%	43%
Not realizing they had been raped when it happened	31%	54%
Afraid to testify in court	30%	40%
Being too upset	25%	45%
Being drunk or high when it happened	23%	19%
Significant other not wanting them to report it	22%	13%
Feeling partly responsible	21%	61%
Not wanting to deal with male police officers	18%	24%
Someone close to them not wanting them to report it	13%	15%
Not wanting significant other to find out	11%	21%
Not wanting to get assailant in trouble	4%	32%
Thinking that society expected women to remain silent	4%	41%
Thinking it was not that important	2%	27%
<u>How Do They Think Police Would Treat Them?</u>		
Would encourage them to file a formal complaint	85%	68%
Would pry into their sexual history	68%	*
With respect	68%	69%
Would keep case confidential	61%	51%
Would answer all of their questions	60%	56%
Would be enthusiastic to help them	53%	*
<u>Would They Get Counseling?</u>		
Yes	87%	21%
<u>Why Would They Not Get Counseling?</u>		
Prefer to deal with their own problems	73%	19%
Would want to try to forget	65%	84%
Not feeling they needed it	47%	54%
Could not afford it	39%	46%
Not having the time to go	37%	28%
Not believing counseling could help problems	34%	42%
Not knowing how to get counseling	27%	42%
Not wanting anyone to know about their experience	24%	67%

[Figure 71]
(cont.)

Another difference between the expectations of never-raped women compared to the experiences of rape victims are beliefs about what they would be concerned about if they were to be raped. Whereas actual rape victims indicated they were most concerned about people thinking it was their fault and people finding out they had been raped, and least concerned about getting AIDS, HIV, or a sexually transmitted disease, never-raped women tend to think that their greatest concerns would be just the opposite. That is, never-raped women think they would be most concerned about getting AIDS, HIV, or STDs and least concerned about people finding out or blaming them. The implication of this unrealistic expectation is that most never-raped women do not appear to be prepared for the devastating embarrassment and self-blame that most women report they experience after they are sexually assaulted. These results suggest that teaching women about the kinds of concerns they will most likely experience after a rape should be a focus of rape education.

Probably one of the most striking differences between never-raped women's expectations and the actual experiences of rape victims has to do with reporting rape to the police. Whereas previous results have shown that only 16% of all rape victims reported their rape to the police, 99% of the never-raped women think they would report it if they were ever raped. On one hand, this result is extremely positive because it shows that almost all women who have never been raped know they should report rape to the police, and they want to and expect to report rape to the police if it should happen to them. On the other hand, this finding may also indicate that most never-raped women are not really prepared for all of the barriers to reporting they will most likely be facing if they are ever raped. It is worth noting that two of the most difficult barriers to reporting are the post-rape embarrassment and self-blame that most never-raped women express so little concern over. Here again, these results suggest another important focus for rape education which is preparing women for what they might face in reporting their rape to the police. Another response of never-raped women that merits real concern is that nearly 1/3rd of these respondents said they would not know how to report rape to the police if they were raped (30%). The prevalence of this kind of response clearly demonstrates the need for more community education about rape.

Figure 71 also shows some interesting data regarding the reasons why never-raped women think they would report their rape to the police. Inspection of the figure shows that most never-raped women have similar reasons for wanting to report rape as those of rape victims who have actually reported their rape. These are: they wanted their rapist punished, they were afraid their rapist would rape others, and they believed it is their duty to report being raped. On the other hand, never-raped women also had reasons for reporting rape that are different from the reasons given by rape victims who have reported. For example, never-raped women were twice as likely to think they would report being raped because they would want support and counseling or a free medical examination. Conversely, they were significantly less likely than victims who have reported to think they would report it because someone else convinced them they should.

Never-raped women's reasons for why they would not report rape also reveal some interesting differences when compared with the reasons given by actual victims who did not report their rape to the police. For example, never-raped women were more likely to believe they would not report being raped because the rapist would threaten to hurt their family or friends, they would be fearful of the media releasing their name, or their significant other would not want them to report it than rape victims indicated were their actual reasons for not reporting it. On the other hand, never-raped women were less likely than actual non-reporting rape victims to give embarrassment, not realizing it was rape at the time, fear of testifying, being too upset, feeling partly responsible, not wanting their significant other to find out, not wanting to get the rapist in trouble, or feeling it was not important enough as reasons for not reporting rape. Here again, results indicate that although most never-raped women were well motivated and disposed to report rape to the police if it should happen to them, many do not appear to be fully aware of the kinds of stresses they would experience that would prevent them from reporting.

An important part of expecting to report rape to the police are the expectations that never-raped women have about how they would be treated by the police if they were to report. Figure 71 shows that for the most part never-raped women's expectations were similar to the kind of treatment actual rape victims say they received when they reported their rape to the police. Overall, most never-raped women believe that the police will treat them with respect and consideration which is consistent with the way the majority of rape victims report they were treated by the police.

Finally, Figure 71 shows almost 9 in 10 never-raped women expect they would get counseling if they were raped; whereas, only 2 in 10 actual victims received counseling after being raped. Here again we can see that most never-raped women appear to understand the importance of post-rape counseling and want and expect to seek counseling if they were raped. On the other hand, the reality is that most will experience significant barriers that may prevent them from seeking counseling if they were raped. Comparing the reasons why never-raped women would not seek counseling with the reasons that actual rape victims gave for not seeking counseling may offer some clues as to the barriers to counseling that many never-raped women may not be aware of. For example, most never-raped women believe that if they did not seek rape counseling it would be because they prefer to deal with their own problems. Yet, relatively few rape victims cited this preference for self-sufficiency as a main reason for not seeking counseling. Conversely, never-raped women were less likely to think they would not go to counseling because they would not want anyone else to find out about their experience, they would not know how to go about getting counseling, or they would want to try to forget their experience. Yet these are the reasons that rape victims often cited for not seeking counseling after being raped. Overall, the results indicate that most never-raped women have unrealistic expectations about whether they would seek counseling if they were raped. Therefore, most would benefit by learning more about the barriers that actually prevent the vast majority of rape victims from seeking counseling.

C. Chapter Summary

Women Who Have Never Been Raped



Main Findings



Women Who Have Never Been Raped:

- * 1 In 4 Think About The Possibility Of Being Raped A Couple Of Times A Week**
- * Almost All Have Changed At Least 8 Of Their Behaviors Because They Fear Rape**
- * 1 In 2 Are Angry They Have To Worry About Rape**
- * 1 In 2 Are Fearful About Being A Woman**
- * Most Have Unrealistic Expectations About How They Would Respond To Being Raped**

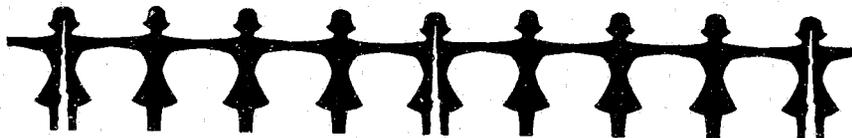
Although there is a relationship between media exposure and how often women who have never been raped think about rape, results indicate that only half of these women are alert to the possibility of being raped on a more or less daily basis. This indicates that there is a need for more rape prevention community education. Results also show that women who are exposed to rape in the media tend to think about rape more often. This suggests that the media could be an effective tool for increasing rape awareness and educating women about rape prevention.

The data also show that the vast majority of women say they have altered their lifestyles in several ways that make them less vulnerable to rape. Moreover, a strong relationship was found between how often women think about and are alert to the possibility of their being raped, and the overall number of lifestyle changes they have made because of their concern about being raped. Results also suggest that lifestyle changes made by never-raped women look as if they fall into one of two self-protective strategies. One of these appears to be a preventative strategy in which victims try to avoid situations that could make them vulnerable to rape. The second strategy is a reactive strategy in which victims prepare to defend themselves if and when they are attacked. Overall, results indicate that White women, older women, and women with a higher socioeconomic status tend to use more preventative rape strategies; whereas, minority women, younger women, and women from lower socioeconomic strata tend to adopt more reactive strategies.

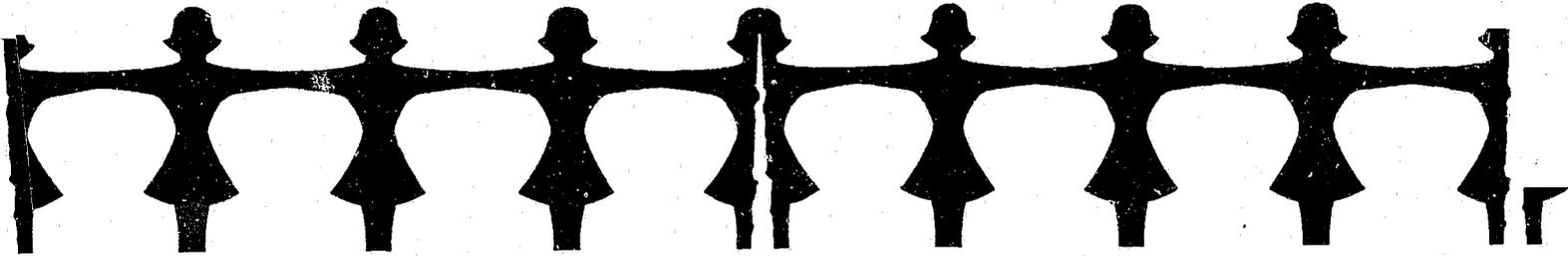
Results also show that about half of the never-raped women were angry because they have to be concerned about the possibility of being raped, and half fear being women because of the possibility of rape. Extrapolated onto Tulsa's adult female population, this indicates that there may be 70,000 women in this community alone that are angry about rape. It is important that women in the community know that many others share their anger and fear about rape. It is also important for politicians, policy makers, judges, and law enforcement officials to recognize that there is anger, rage, fear, and frustration about rape on the part of women who live in the community.

In addition to the need for promoting rape awareness in the community, these data suggest that most never-raped women carry many unrealistic expectations about how they would react to rape. Although most of these women appear to know how they should react and want to react, many of these projected reactions are at variance with the ways that rape victims actually respond to rape. The fact that the majority of never-raped women believe they would report their rape to the police and seek counseling is of particular concern since the vast majority of actual rape victims do not report their rape or seek counseling.

Taken together, these two observations suggest that most never-raped women were unaware of the barriers they would have to overcome in order to follow through on their expectations should they ever be raped. In particular, the intense embarrassment and self-blame, and the intense need to keep rape hidden appear to be barriers to reporting rape to the police and seeking counseling that most never-raped women do not seem to expect. Rape prevention programs should systematically address these issues in their educational curriculum. By addressing these issues, future rape victims might be better able to report rape and seek counseling.



X. Rape Prevention



- * **How Prepared Are Tulsa Women to Protect Themselves Against Rape?**
- * **What Do Tulsa Women Think Should Be Done to Prevent Rape?**
- * **Chapter Summary**

X. Rape Prevention

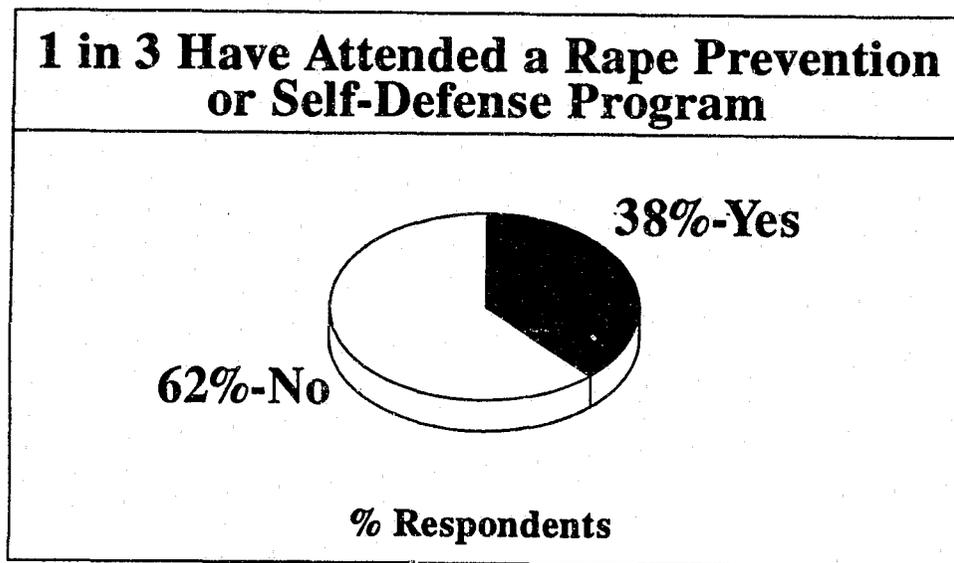
Rape prevention can be thought of as having two principal aims. One of these aims is to teach women preparedness for the possibility of being raped. The second aim is advocacy to change the social conditions that seem to foster rape.

In the previous chapter, two facets of preparedness were examined in women who have never been raped: being alert to the possibility of rape and having expectations about how one would respond to being raped. This chapter examines two other facets of preparedness: having actual knowledge about how to protect oneself from rape and women's opinions about what society should do in order to reduce the incidence of rape. The data presented in this chapter are derived from all 980 women who participated in the survey.

A. How Prepared Are Tulsa Women to Protect Themselves Against Rape?

1. How Many Tulsa Women Have Ever Taken a Course in Rape Prevention or Self-Defense?

Rape prevention education courses can usually be found in most urban communities. These courses offer a wide variety of specialized information that is intended to help women protect themselves from being raped. This information can range from facts about the incidence of rape, information about situations that make women vulnerable to rape, information about what to do if one should be raped, information about victim rights and political advocacy, and self-defense. How many women in the community have ever attended a course in rape prevention or self-defense in order to better protect themselves against the possibility of sexual assault?



[Figure 72]

Results show that 1/3rd of the women have taken a course in rape prevention. Conversely, 2/3rds have never received any formal education about how to protect themselves from rape. These results indicate that the majority of women who live in the community have not had any formal rape prevention training.

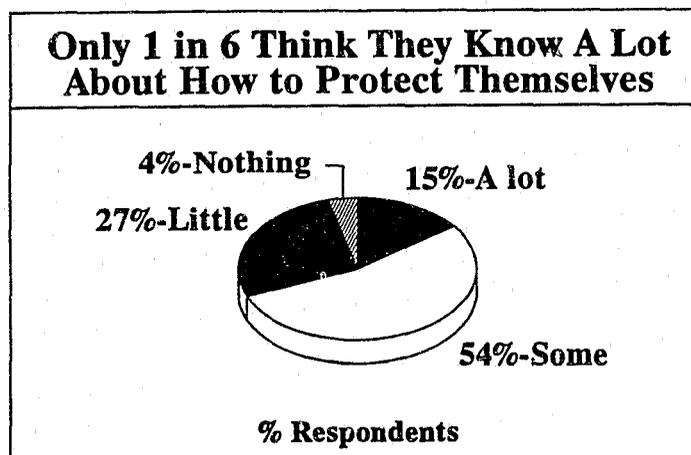
Demographic comparisons of who has taken a course in rape prevention show that older women were more likely to have taken a course in rape prevention or self-defense. In addition, more affluent women were also more likely to have taken a course. For example, only 24% of women with incomes less than \$12,000 have taken a course, whereas, 42% of women with incomes above \$50,000 have taken a course. Finally, White women (40%) were more likely than American Indian women (32%) who were more likely than Black women (27%) to have taken a course.

Results also show that whether or not a woman has ever been raped is unrelated to taking a course in rape prevention or self-defense.

Finally, analyses show that women who have taken a course in rape prevention tend to think about rape more often than women who have never been raped.

2. How Much Do Tulsa Women Know About Protecting Themselves From Being Raped?

If most women in the community have never taken a course in rape prevention, then how much do they think they know about how to protect themselves from being raped?



[Figure 73]

Results show that only 1 in 6 women think they know a lot about how to protect themselves from being raped. On the other hand, almost 1/3rd of the women say they know little or nothing about how to protect themselves. These data clearly indicate that a significant number of women in the community (at least 45,000 if extrapolated onto Tulsa's adult female census) confess they do not know how to protect themselves against sexual assault. Moreover, more than half of the respondents (an additional 80,000 women if extrapolated onto Tulsa's census) say they only have some knowledge about how to protect themselves. Clearly, these data show that more rape prevention education is needed in the community.

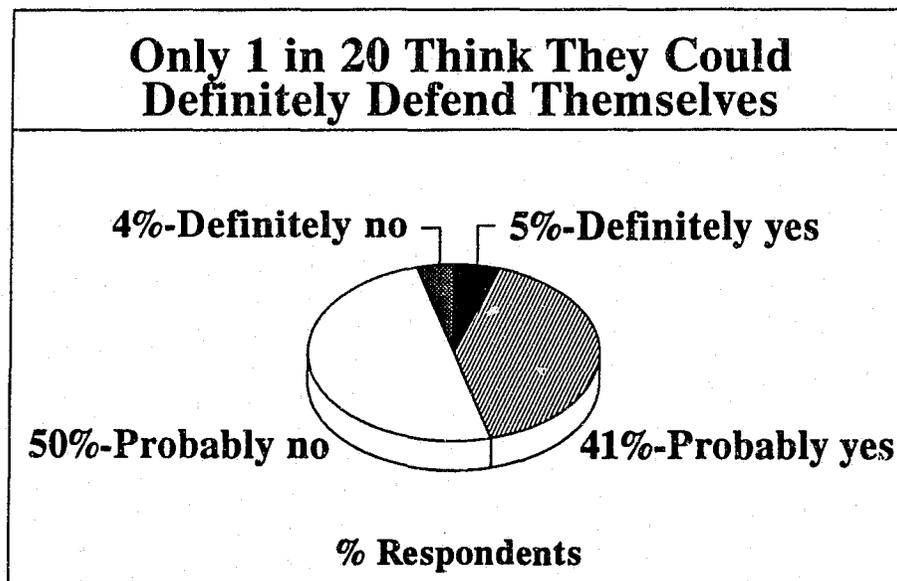
Demographic comparisons reveal no significant relationships between age, race, or current education and how much women think they know about protecting themselves against rape. On the other hand, more affluent women express more confidence about knowing how to protect themselves from being raped than do poorer women.

Comparisons between women who have and have not been raped show that rape victims tend to express more confidence in their knowledge about how to protect themselves than do women who have never been raped.

Finally, analyses show that women who think about rape more often, and who have taken a course in rape prevention were more likely to think they know more about how to protect themselves from rape than women who rarely think about rape and who have never had rape prevention education. In other words, there are positive relationships between education, alertness, and confidence in one's ability to protect oneself from the possibility of being raped.

3. Do They Think They Could Defend Themselves Against a Rapist If Attacked?

In addition to knowing how to protect oneself from being raped, a related aspect of preparedness is knowing how to physically defend oneself in the event one is actually sexually assaulted. How many women believe they could successfully defend themselves from a rapist if they were attacked?



[Figure 74]

Results show that only 5% of the women were certain they could defend themselves against a rapist. On the other hand, more than half of the women think they probably or definitely could not defend themselves if attacked. Overall, these results are very similar to previous results and indicate that most women in the community are not adequately prepared for the possibility of sexual assault.

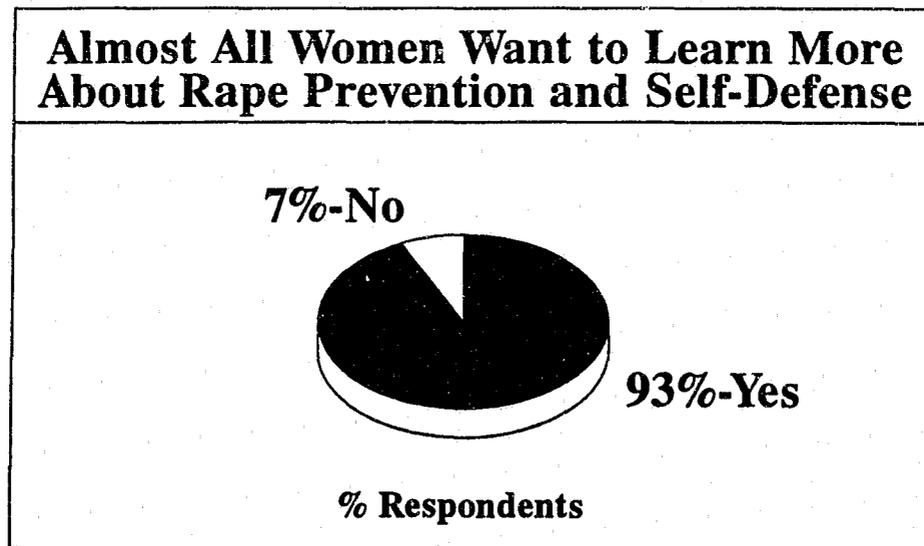
Demographic comparisons show that age, income, and education were unrelated to victims' beliefs about whether they could defend themselves against a rapist. On the other hand, Black women (15%) were 3 times more likely than White women (3%) and 2 1/2 times more likely than American Indian women (6%) to think they could definitely defend themselves against a rapist.

Analyses also show that women who have been raped were more likely to think they could definitely defend themselves (8%) than were women who have never been raped (3%).

Finally, analyses show that women who have taken a course to learn how to defend themselves are not only more alert to the possibility of rape, but also have more confidence in their abilities to protect themselves.

4. Do They Want To Learn More About How To Protect Themselves?

In light of the relatively small number of women who are confident they know how to protect themselves from being raped, do most women want to learn more about how to protect themselves? In other words, is there a desire among women in the community to learn more about rape prevention and self-defense?



[Figure 75]

Results show that at least 9 in 10 women say they want to learn more about how to protect themselves against rape.

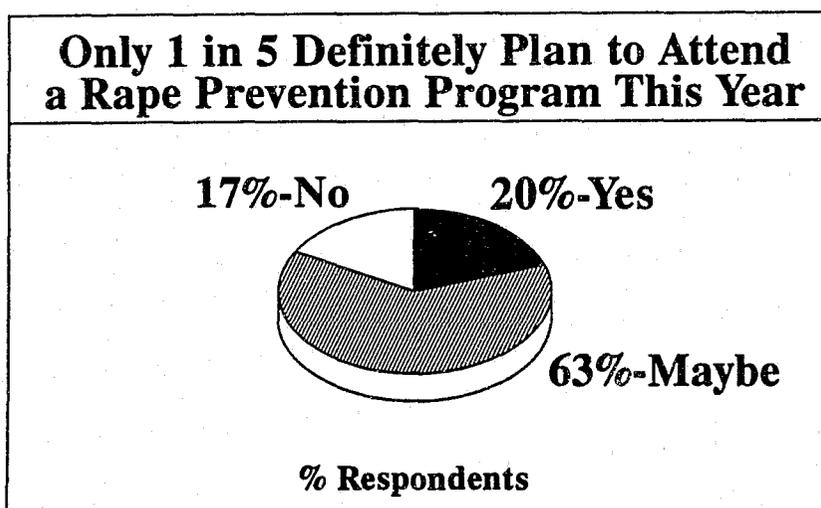
Demographic comparisons show that race, income, and education are unrelated to wanting to learn more about rape prevention. On the other hand, analyses show that older women are somewhat more likely to say they want to learn more about rape prevention than younger women.

Comparisons between women who have and have not been raped show that rape victims were slightly less likely to say they want to learn more (91%) than never-raped women (95%). This observation is consistent with the previous one showing that rape victims tend to be somewhat more confident in their knowledge about how to protect themselves than never-raped women. However, it is important to recognize that 9 in 10 of the women who have been raped still express a desire to learn more about protecting themselves from future assault.

Finally, analyses show that how much women think they know about protecting themselves against rape is unrelated to their wanting to learn more about protecting themselves. On the other hand, women who say they want to learn more about rape prevention were also more likely to say they frequently think about the possibility of being raped.

5. How Many Plan to Attend a Rape Prevention Program This Year?

Thus far, results have shown that 2/3rds of the women in the community have never had rape prevention education, that most do not know how to protect themselves from sexual assault, and that almost all would like to learn more about how to protect themselves. Given this apparent widespread community need and desire for rape prevention education, how many women plan to take a course in rape prevention sometime within the next 12 months?



[Figure 76]

Results show that although only 1 in 5 women plan to definitely attend a rape prevention or education program this year, another 3 in 5 say they might attend.

Income comparisons show that women with incomes of less than \$12,000 were more likely to say they will definitely not attend a course (27%) than women from higher income brackets (16% \$12,000 - \$25,000; 10% \$26,000 - \$50,000; 18% > \$50,000). Racial comparisons show that Black women were more likely to say they definitely do not plan to attend a program (27%) than American Indian (18%) and White (15%) women. Finally, planning to attend a rape prevention course is unrelated to age or whether a woman has ever been raped.

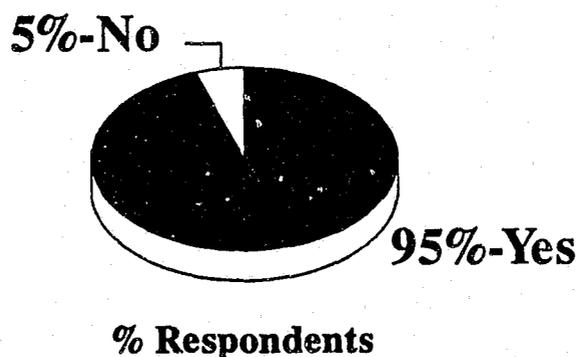
Analyses show that women who say they plan to attend a rape prevention program this year also think about the possibility of being raped more often, say they want to learn more, and think they already know more about rape than women who do not plan to attend a program this year. In addition, women who have attended rape prevention programs in the past were also more likely to say they plan to attend another program this year. Overall, these intercorrelations suggest that once women recognize the serious threat that rape presents, they tend to try to become more prepared. And once they begin to prepare themselves by taking courses in rape prevention and self-defense, they become even more alert to the threat of sexual assault and want to learn even more about how to protect themselves.

B. What Do Tulsa Women Think Should Be Done to Prevent Rape?

1. Do Women Think Society Can Do Anything to Decrease the Number of Women Who Are Raped?

The second aim of rape prevention is political advocacy for societal changes that will help communities reduce their incidence of rape. For any kind of political advocacy to be effective, citizens have to first believe that society can do something about a given social problem. Do women, the primary targets of rape, believe that society is capable of doing things that would decrease the number of women who are raped?

Almost All Women Believe There Are Things Society Can Do To Prevent Rape



[Figure 77]

Results show that almost all of the 980 women participating in this study think that there are things society could do to decrease the incidence of rape in the community.

Further analysis shows no difference between women who have and have not been raped and their belief that society is able to reduce rape.

2. What Do They Think Would Be Effective In Preventing Rape?

If the majority of women in the community believe that society could do something about reducing rape, then what courses of action do they think would be most effective to accomplish this change? To answer this question, women were given a list of nine possible solutions for reducing rape and asked to rate how effective each possible solution would be. Figure 78 shows the percent of women who think the solutions would be *somewhat-to-very* effective.

Women Want Harsher Punishments For Rapists and More Rape Awareness Education	
<u>% Yes</u>	
95%	Harsher prison sentences for convicted rapists
92%	Prosecute everyone charged with rape
88%	Educate high school students about rape and its consequences
79%	Make punishment for rape the death penalty
73%	Offer cash rewards for information leading to prosecution and conviction of rapists
59%	Develop rehabilitation programs for convicted rapists
59%	Prohibit pornography
54%	Pass law prohibiting media from disclosing rape victims' names
51%	Encourage all women to learn how to use and carry a weapon

[Figure 78]

Results show that 9 in 10 women think harsher prison sentences for convicted rapists, more prosecution of people charged with rape, and educating high school students about rape and its consequences are the most effective means society has to try to reduce the incidence of rape. About 2/3rds of the women believe that rehabilitation programs for rapists and laws prohibiting pornography would also be effective ways to combat rape. Finally, about half of the women believe that laws protecting victims' confidentiality and messages encouraging women to learn how to use and carry weapons would also be effective societal strategies.

Comparisons between women who have and have not been raped show that women who have never been raped were slightly more likely to believe that harsher prison sentences (96% vs. 93%), prosecution of everyone charged with rape (94% vs. 90%), cash rewards for information leading to the prosecution and conviction of rapists (60% vs. 57%), and more rehabilitation programs (60% vs. 57%) would be effective strategies to help prevent rape. On the other hand, the only strategy rape victims were significantly more likely to endorse is encouraging women to carry weapons (55% vs. 49%).

a. What Punishments Do Women Want For Convicted Rapists?

If nearly all women believe that giving convicted rapists harsher prison sentences would be an effective way to reduce rape, then what kinds of sentences do they think convicted rapists should receive? To answer this question, women were given a list of 10 possible punishments for rape ranging from probation to capital punishment and asked what punishment they think should be given to a person convicted of rape for the first time, and a person convicted of rape for the second time. It should be noted that respondents were told that the prison sentences listed referred to actual prison time with no possibility of parole.

Women Want Castration, Life Imprisonment, or Death for Repeat Rape Offenders

<u>1st Rape Conviction</u>		<u>2nd Rape Conviction</u>	
24%	Castration	28%	Castration
17%	Prison-10 years	27%	Prison-life
13%	Prison-5 years	20%	Capital punishment
12%	Prison-20 years	7%	Prison-30 years
10%	Prison-life	7%	Prison-20 years
9%	Prison-30 years	7%	Prison-10 years
7%	Prison-3 years	3%	Prison-5 years
5%	Prison-1 year	1%	Prison-3 years
2%	Capital punishment	0%	Prison-1 year
1%	Probation	0%	Probation

[Figure 79]

Results show that in the case of first-time rape convictions 1 in 4 women think that the rapist should be castrated, and about 1 in 3 women think that the rapist should receive 5 or 10 years of actual prison time. In the case of second-time rape convictions, 3 in 4 women endorse castration, life imprisonment, or capital punishment as the punishments they think rapists should be given.

Comparisons between women who have and have not been raped reveal no differences in the percents who favor castration for second-time offenders (27% and 28%); however, women who have never been raped were more likely to favor life imprisonment (31% vs. 18%), whereas rape victims were more likely to favor capital punishment (28% vs. 17%).

There are several points to be made about these results. First, the women in this sample favor punishments that are significantly harsher than the ones that first or second-time rapists usually receive. For example, in 1989 only 78% of the rapists convicted in U.S. District Courts were sentenced to prison, with the rest being sentenced to probation.⁹ Of those sentenced to prison, the average length of sentence imposed was 7 1/2 years. This 7 1/2 year average sentence did not account for time-off for good behavior, pre-parole release programs, or any of the other factors that normally reduce actual prison time served to less than half of that imposed. On the other hand, only 1% of the women sampled would give a first-time offender probation. Similarly, if we just look at the prison sentences endorsed by these women for first-time offenders, nearly twice as many respondents gave sentences of 10 or more years of "hard" prison time as those who gave sentences of 5 years or less of "hard" prison time.

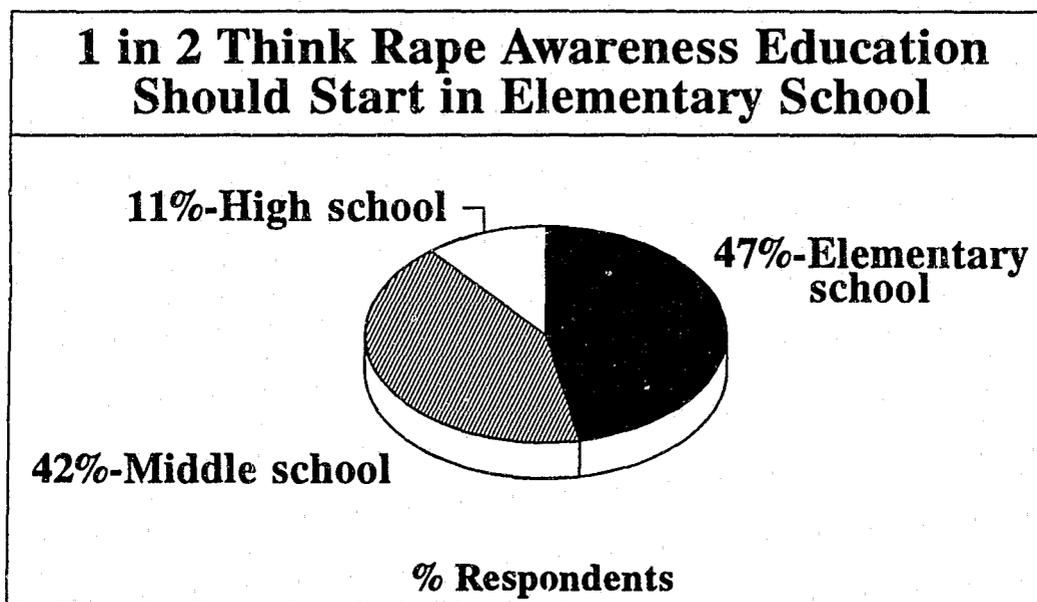
The second point is that most women would impose much harsher punishments on rapists convicted a second time than on rapists convicted for the first time. Moreover, these penalties are far more severe than the penalties currently imposed on second-time rape offenders.

The third point is that even though many people may think that castrating or executing rapists would be an "uncivilized" or even ineffective mode of punishment for men who rape women, the fact that 1/4th of the women prescribed these punishments for first-time offenders, and half for second-time offenders is a powerful indication of how frightened and angry women are about the threat of rape.

9. Federal Criminal Case Processing, 1980-1989. U. S. Dept. of Justice, NCS-130526, Washington, D.C., pp. 15-17.

b. At What Age Do Women Want Rape Awareness Education to Start?

Another possible solution endorsed by most of the women surveyed is to teach rape awareness to young people. How early do these women think that youth should be taught about rape and its consequences?



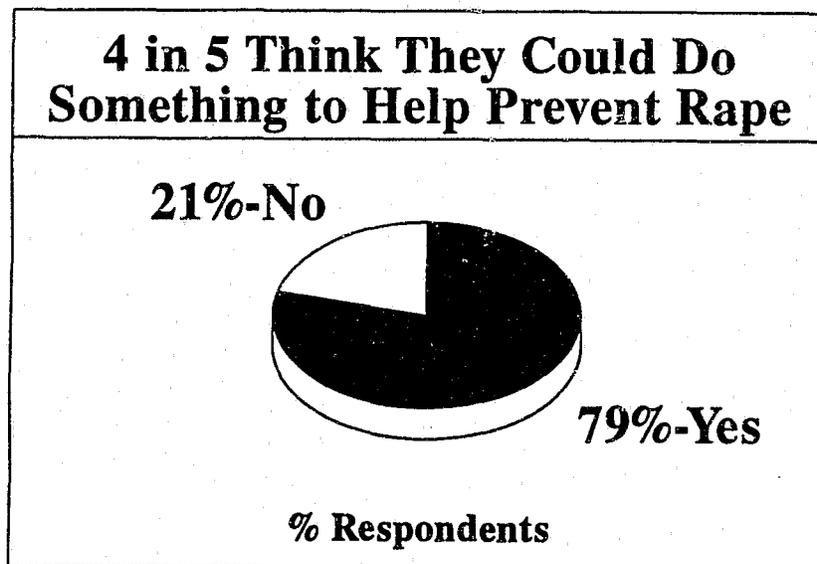
[Figure 80]

Results show that about 1 in 2 women think rape awareness education should begin in elementary school, and that only 1 in 10 believe rape education should be held off until high school. Given that the majority of rape victims are young girls and teenagers, this support for early education about rape is important and appropriate.

Results also show that women who have been raped were more likely to think rape awareness education should begin in elementary school (55%) than were women who have never been raped (43%).

3. Is There Anything They, As Individuals, Could Do to Help Prevent Rape?

In addition to learning about what women think society can and should do about reducing the incidence of rape, it is also important to learn if women, as individuals, think they can help prevent rape.



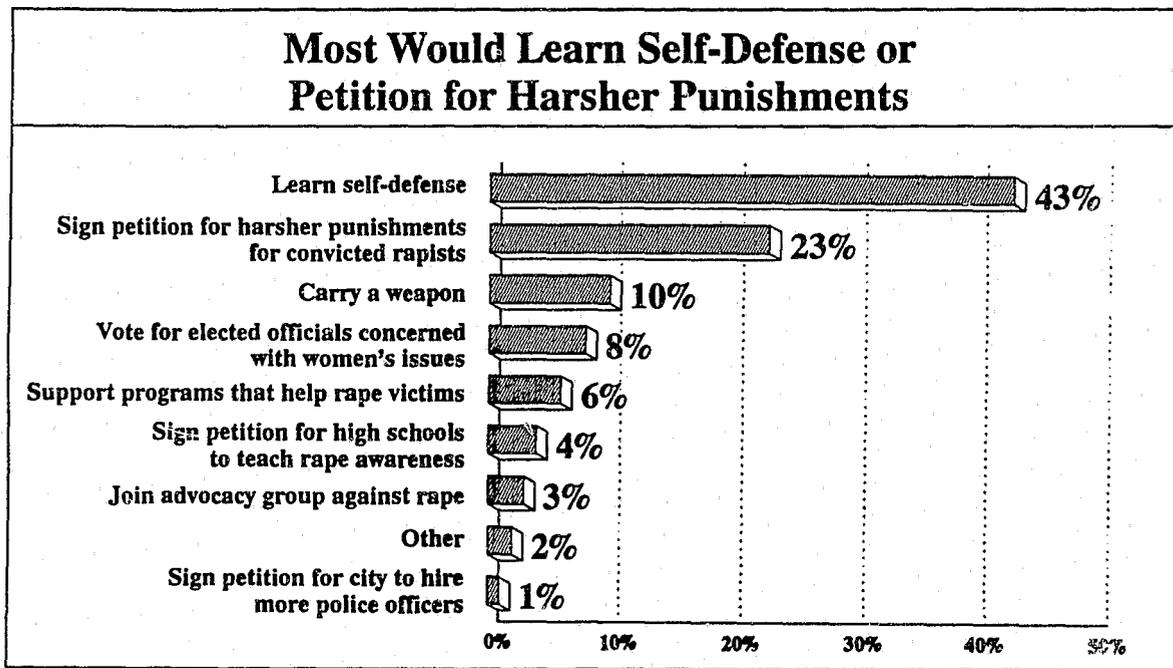
[Figure 81]

Results show that 4 in 5 women believe there are things they, as individuals, could do to help reduce the incidence of rape.

Comparisons between rape victims and never-raped women show that women who have never been raped were slightly more likely to believe they could do things to help prevent rape (81%) than were rape victims (75%).

4. What Action Would They Most Likely Take to Help Prevent Rape?

If most women believe they can do something to help prevent rape, then what do they think they would most likely do? To answer this question, women were given a list of nine things that individuals might do to help prevent rape and asked to choose the one action they would most likely take.



[Figure 82]

Results show that the number one action women say they would be most likely to take to prevent rape is to learn self-defense. The second most endorsed action is to sign petitions demanding harsher punishments for convicted rapists. And the third most endorsed action is to carry a weapon. On the other hand, few women, less than 1 in 10, think the one thing they would most likely do is support programs for rape victims, join advocacy groups, or sign petitions for more rape awareness education or for the city to hire more police officers.

Comparisons between women who have and have not been raped reveal no significant differences in what they say they would be most likely to do to help prevent rape.

C. Chapter Summary

Rape Prevention



Main Findings



- * **Only 1 In 3 Have Attended A Rape Prevention Or Self-Defense Program**
- * **Only 1 In 6 Are Confident They Know How To Protect Themselves**
- * **Only 1 In 20 Think They Could Definitely Defend Themselves**
- * **Although All Women Want To Learn More About Rape Prevention, Only 1 In 5 Definitely Plan To Attend A Program This Year**
- * **Most Women Think Harsher Punishments For Rapists Is The Most Effective Way To Reduce Rape**
- * **1 In 2 Think Rape Awareness Education Should Start In Elementary School**

This chapter examined rape prevention in terms of women's preparedness to protect themselves against rape and the possible solutions women think would be most effective in preventing rape. Overall, results indicate that the majority of women who live in the community are poorly prepared to protect themselves from rape. Few women in the community have had any kind of formal education about rape prevention or self-defense. As a result, most women have little confidence in their knowledge about rape prevention or in their abilities to defend themselves from a rapist should they be attacked. This widespread unpreparedness means that thousands of Tulsa women are vulnerable to sexual assault and in need of education about how to protect themselves against rape.

Results also show that the vast majority of women in the community recognize their unpreparedness and would like to do something about it. Unfortunately, few of these women are planning to actually attend a rape prevention or self-defense program within the next year. In other words, although most women want to better prepare themselves against rape, few are planning to take the necessary steps to do so. The end result of this "well-intended inaction" is that the majority of women in the community will be just as vulnerable to rape next year as they are now. Consequently, it is important to the interests of the community that the barriers preventing women from pursuing rape prevention and self-defense education are systematically studied. Once these barriers are identified and understood, it should be possible for program providers to develop effective strategies for mobilizing more women to educate and prepare themselves against the threat of rape.

Results presented in this chapter also show that most women in the community believe that there are a number of things that America can do to decrease the number of women who are raped. The three most popular changes endorsed by these women are imposing harsher punishments on convicted rapists, prosecuting every assailant who is arrested and officially charged with rape, and starting rape awareness education in elementary school. Although it is encouraging that most women have faith in America's ability to reduce rape, it is important to recognize that each of these suggested societal changes will require a great deal of effort, advocacy, and public expense to realize. It will be difficult to enact harsher penalties on rapists when America's prisons are bursting at the seams and "pre-release" has become the rule rather than the exception. It will be difficult to prosecute more rapists when America's court rooms are overcrowded and "plea bargaining" has become the standard of prosecutorial success. Finally, it will also be difficult to teach youth about rape and its consequences when America's schools understand issues such as rape and AIDS as matters of sexual relations rather than as matters of public safety.

