

RAPE AND RELATED ISSUES

AUTHOR: BASSAM IMAM

THE BASICS

Rape is always wrong. It is an intrusive sexual violation of a victim by one or more perpetrators. Although laws in jurisdictions vary intercourse is not always necessary. The rapist may use physical force, the threat of force, implied force, or commit the act covertly while the victim is unconscious, incapacitated, or in rare cases deceased. The incapacitation can be an incidental occurrence, or the rapist can induce it by the use of date rape drugs and/or alcohol.

The rapist is most often an intimate partner or an acquaintance. Stranger rape is less common. Rape knows no boundaries, men, women, children, babies, seniors, physically or mentally challenged individuals, animals and corpses can be raped too. Some perverts purchase blow-up dolls for this purpose.

The vast majority of rapists are males most of their victims are females. In the case of child molesters boys or girls can be their target.

When rape is a common occurrence in a relationship physical and mental abuse are usually present. It's quite difficult to imagine a man who rapes his partner every-so-often without getting physical with her, or mentally degrading her. The same occurs in lesbian and gay relationships where rape occurs.

Rape can be state-sponsored or encouraged by an occupying military to terrorize a population. Unfortunately, the vast majority of rape victims in this context are female civilians and children.

Rape can and does occur in the porn industry. Unfortunately, the rape can be part of a scene. Sound tracks are inserted to replace the screams of agony of the victim, and in most cases there's no one to complain too.

Vacationers, women on cruise ships, hitchhikers, and street walkers can be easy targets.

Sexual harassment at work is harmful to the victim. It should never be tolerated in any civilized society or in a corporation or company.

Groping is a form of physical sexual harassment. The offender is not content with verbal harassment. This activity includes uninvited sexually touching or fondling of another in inappropriate areas of the body, usually with the hands but intrusive rubbing may. In the latter case the groper may rub or smother his genitals up against the target. Crowded buses, trains, and subways are places that gropers like.

I have written this book as a basic educational tool in understanding rape and related issues, to promote activism against this all-too-prevalent problem, and to help make rape victims feel that there are many people out there who really care.

-AQUANTANCE RAPE (most common type): The rapist is someone the victim knows; a fellow student, casual friend, classmate, friend of a friend, friend of the family, a well-known or respected person in the community.

-STRANGER RAPE: The rapist is not known by the victim. The rapist may be lurking in the shadows, break into your home and pull a knife or weapon on you, etc. He may wear a mask or other disguise to hide his identity making it quite difficult for the victim to make a positive identification in a police line-up or to make a basic composite.

Stranger rape almost always takes the victim by surprise, is shocking and it may be difficult to focus and identify the

offender's facial or body features, or clothing. But noticing a peculiarity can be helpful (a tattoo, scar, a lisp or stutter, a birth mark, etc.).

-MARITAL OR DATE RAPE: The rapist is the husband (or wife), fiancé, boyfriend (or girlfriend, casual friend, or on the first meeting of a blind date.

The stronger the attachment of the victim to the offender the more difficult it is to file a criminal complaint and to follow up on it. The offender knows this.

-DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL INDUCED RAPE: The use of alcohol and/or drugs is used by the rapist/s. In other cases the victim is unconscious or has passed out from her own alcohol and/or drug use; the rapist takes advantage of the situation. There is an element of opportunity here.

Date rape drugs can easily be slipped into drinks and are available at some campus parties. The drink does not have to contain alcohol, but alcohol tends to intensify the effects. Rape drugs are usually colourless, odourless and tasteless. Only a tiny quantity is needed to do the job. Factors including the size, weight and general health of the victim are crucial. Furthermore, over-the-counter medications taken before or immediately following the consumption of the spiked drink are also crucial. The most common date rape drugs are GHB, Rohypnol, Ketamine, and alcohol. The latter is by far the most dangerous and common. Alcohol is naturally ever-so-present in parties and social gatherings. Many rape victims were wasted right before they passed out.

Rape drugs are usually fast acting completely immobilizing/incapacitating the victim. Weakness, loss of motor control and memory, and passing out occur. Because the rapist is usually not a medical professional or nurse an overdose, seizures, or a lethal dose may result.

COMMON WARNING SIGNS RELATED TO DATE RAPE DRUGS (The Following Apply to Both Genders, Heterosexuals, Lesbians, Bisexuals, Men Raped by Women):

-You've had a rough night of partying, you're in the nude or semi-nude and you have a throbbing headache.

-You're in an unfamiliar place or in someone else's room.

-You were with your girlfriends but somehow you were split up and they're nowhere in sight.

-The party is long over.

-Your clothes have been tossed onto the carpet or are nowhere in sight.

- You feel pain in your vagina or rectum.
- Dried or fresh blood in and around your vagina and/or rectum.
- There's a stench in the air, like semen and/or vaginal fluid, and/or the scent of sweaty genitals.
- You have crusted semen on any part of your body, or on any article of your clothing.
- You puked your brains out but don't remember the details. The scent of puke and visible puke and no memory indicate that you lost consciousness.
- You left your drink unattended or were given a drink by someone. You probably don't remember who.
- Someone offered you a drug and you accepted it.
- If you can remember; you were with one or more men alone or you were conversing with them away from the crowd.
- You remember being the focus of attention of one or more men.

IMPORTANT FACTORS IN HELPING TO PREVENT BEING A VICTIM OF A DATE RAPE DRUG:

- Never accept a drink from a stranger.
- Never leave your drink unattended; if you forget this important rule, discard your drink. It is far better than getting raped.
- If someone (stranger or friend) asks if he or she can buy you a drink go to the bartender with the person; in other situations make sure that the waiter or waitress gives you the drink.
- Always beware of your surroundings.
- Know your limits when it comes to drinking, especially if you're alone. Being with friends isn't always a guarantee of safety, you can be dispersed.
- If your drink tastes unusual speak to the bartender or the waitress. Do not allow anyone around you to brush it off.
- Someone may be watching you or casting an evil look at you.
- Anyone can be drugged and raped, regardless of gender.
- Date rape drugs are almost always used by males against females, however, homosexual, lesbian, and woman on male rape also do occur.

THINGS TO KNOW AND DO IF YOU KNOW OR THINK THAT YOU MAY HAVE BEEN RAPED:

- Your personal safety and security is number one; if needed try to get to a safe place immediately.
- DO NOT take a shower, clean up, or even comb your hair (valuable evidence may be lost).
- If you were raped by a stranger in unfamiliar surroundings and he left after the rape, he may soon return for more.

-You need immediate medical care regardless of how you feel. Rape can sometimes make a victim numb. You may have serious medical injuries that need to be treated immediately.

-Call the police as soon as possible.

-Do not blame yourself.

-You are understandably fearful and anxious about having a physical examination performed on you; strangers gawking at you, and having a stranger touch your body. It will feel like another violation of your person, but please understand, it must be done.

-You will see men in the hospital or clinic.

-During the examination you have the right to say STOP at any time.

-DO NOT forget to inform the physician and nurse if you are on medication or if you have an addiction to alcohol or drugs, or allergies to certain medications.

-No one on the medical team or the police have the right to critique you, or to imply that you are somehow partly to blame. If this is the case, tell them how you feel and demand that the offender desist from this behaviour; demand another interviewer.

-If you have any suspicion whatsoever that you've been drugged tell the physician and nurse on duty.

-The examiner is trying to help you. A thorough examination can retain important evidence and can be used on your behalf in a court of law.

-Impregnation is a possibility.

-You may feel like the entire world will find out about your secret. It's normal to feel that way immediately after a rape.

-A feeling of a loss of control, numbness, extreme apprehension and anxiety, fear, and of degradation.

-You really want to take a shower, throw or wash all of the affected clothing, go home and cry like a baby.

-A rape counsellor or social worker can help you begin the healing process. She may be a rape survivor too.

-Vaccination for Hepatitis B, specific tests for STD's. If you have any STD medication will be prescribed to you. In the case of HIV more waiting time is required. A copy of all medical test results and the examination report should be sent to your family physician.

-The information pertaining to your rape is confidential and protected by law (U.S. Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Law). This law applies to adults. Minors need to know their rights in their respective jurisdictions.

-You will decide whether or not to press charges against the rapist, unless you are a minor. Know the statute of limitations for rape in your jurisdiction.

-Rape kits are used to collect valuable evidence relating to the rape; semen, body fluids, hair, skin, fibres, soil samples, etc. All items of evidence are carefully marked then stored in a secure place for easy retrieval. Rape kits contain little boxes, microscope slides and plastic bags.

-If someone is charged with your rape, understand that up to 90 percent of criminal cases that actually go to court in the United States are plea bargained. Civil cases are similar. These are the cases that actually make it this far into the system, countless others don't.

-Find out about billing and insurance. Laws and billing vary between jurisdictions. Rape recovery treatment should be free.

-Follow up care is imperative. You have suffered a horrible physical and mental trauma (Rape Trauma Syndrome).

David Wise, 52, of Indianapolis, Indiana, was sentenced to 8 years of home detention following his conviction for raping and allegedly drugging his wife while she was asleep. He was found guilty in a court of law of 6 felonies, 1 count of rape and 5 counts of deviate conduct.

"We had hoped for some prison time," said Peg McLeish, a spokesperson for the Marion County prosecutor's office. (Mary Wisniewski; HUFF POST CRIME, Updated July 18, 2014)

Under the terms of his conviction Wise will be allowed to be at home or at work, and he will be monitored by a GPS that will be attached to his person.

Wise was initially charge in 2011, when his wife at the time and now ex-wife told the police that she'd found 3 sex videos of her in Wise's cell-phone. His wife was sound asleep during the rapes. She also told the police that she believes that she had been drugged. She frequently awakened from sleep with a dissolved pill in her mouth.

In total Wise only served 24 days behind bars. He got away with repeated wife rape using a date rape drug. The judge and jury may have given Wise a lenient sentence, thinking that what he did couldn't have been that bad, she was his wife.

Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island has issued a warning to its students, asking them to be watchful and weary after a student tested positive for the date rape drug GHB. Another student is in the process of being tested for date rape drugs. Expectedly, it has become a criminal investigation. Brown University's response has been rapid, only a few days earlier new federal rules came into effect regarding the handling of sexual assault went out to schools throughout the country.

The student had been given a drink laced with GHB at a fraternity party the previous month. It is believed that another

student at the fraternity party could've been given GHB. One of the students disclosed that she had been sexually assaulted.

Brown University has sent out 4 updates and has hosted a sexual assault forum, 2 more are in the making.

"I think what we're seeing at Brown is really what the theme has been lately with campuses: Balancing transparency along with protecting victims' rights ... The idea is to fundamentally shift the way we think about sexual assault," said Allison Kiss of the Clery Center. (Mark Albert, November 9, 2014; CBS NEWS: Brown University Acts Swiftly in Date-Rape Drug Case)

This year (2014) 85 schools, including Brown University are being investigated by the Department of Education for its handling of sexual assault cases.

RAPE VICTIMS BEWARE OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS:

- It was your fault.
- You asked for it.
- It was your doing.
- You're worthless
- It is common for rapists to use derogatory words against their victims.
- I couldn't help it, baby.
- I really love you.
- I'm sorry I didn't mean to hurt you.
- I give you my word of honour I'll never do it again.
- I know you liked it deep down inside.
- No one cares
- It's my word against yours. Even so, if you were raped notify the police immediately and get medical help.
- You were sending me mixed signals.
- It was nothing, c'mon.

SYMPTOMS OF RAPE TRAUMA SYNDROME:

- A life that is suddenly turned upside down.
- Shock, anger, disbelief, frustration, denial, anxiety, fear, confusion.
- Inability to sleep, nightmares and night terrors.
- Mental and physical illness.
- Highly intrusive-uncontrollable flashbacks.
- Rapid pulse and elevated blood pressure; the victim may find her/himself in a frequent state of fight or flight.
- Gnawing regrets at not having been able to ward off or severely harm the attacker/s.

- Self-hatred, pity; feeling dirty and used (especially immediately following the rape).
- STDs, vaginal and/or anal ruptures; psychosomatic illnesses.
- Having to tell family and friends; or keeping the rape a secret.
- Possible pregnancy
- A generalized hatred, fear, distrust of males, may include male relatives too.
- If the rapist is from a different racial, ethnic, or religious group a generalized fear and/or hatred to all members of the particular group can arise.
- Sex may become a terrifying or repulsive act.
- Social skills, work, education, and basic life skills are noticeably affected.
- Marital problems or divorce.

RAPE VICTIMS NEED TO RECOVER:

- You must treat any medical problems associated with the rape.
- Rape therapy or counselling. It can be one-on-one or in a group. The victim should decide for him or herself. However, it is a good idea to get the opinions of a qualified professional/s, and perhaps family and friends.
- Talk to family and friends who are supportive. If you are in group therapy, choose a person/s that you get along with. Have your own personal meetings. Talk about your problems, ways to better protect yourselves, show empathy and understanding to each other. To be a lonely rape victim for an extended period of time is very unhealthy.
- Learn how to take care of yourself.
- Understand what Rape Trauma Syndrome is, and believe that it is true.
- Praying often helps, have faith in GOD.
- Learn how to drastically lessen the probability that it will ever happen again.
- Do not blame yourself, ever.
- Improve your diet.
- Exercise. Do whatever makes you burn off steam. Walking is a nice way to relax your nerves.
- When you are able to, try to improve your sleeping habits. Your mind and body can rest and recuperate.
- Write down what you feel in a diary, and date it. Review your notes on a regular basis.
- Be an activist for rape victims' rights. Call for stiffer penalties and enforced registries for all sex offenders. Doing this kind of activism will help you to vent off steam, give you a feeling that you're doing something constructive for yourself

and other rape victims, and helping to prevent future sexual assaults and rapes.

- Create a website or blog containing much valuable information encompassing rape. Inform the public.

- Inform the media outlets.

- Contact city, county, state (or provincial), and federal officials. Make rape an important issue, and the treatment of victims.

- Remember, every rape is not the same, and every victim doesn't react in the same manner; some victims develop an overwhelming feeling of depression, others anxiety, anger and agitation, vengeance, confusion, self-blame, extreme fear, feelings of loneliness, humiliation, numbness, apathy, despair, or any combination thereof.

PEOPLE WHO RAPE THEIR PARTNERS ARE OFTEN ALSO PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY ABUSIVE:

- Although physical abuse doesn't always leave a visible mark, and most physical marks do heal (disappear), the victim knows exactly how much it hurt at the time and for exactly how long it took to go away.

- Shoving

- Punching

- Kneeing

- Kicking

- Forcefully/painfully grabbing and/or twisting one or more body-parts.

- Pulling, yanking twisting of the hair.

- Spitting

- Biting

- Strangling or choking (using the hands or an inanimate object/s.

- Shaking

- Tripping

- Tossing objects at the victim.

- Flipping

- Bounding

- Gagging

- Restraining

- Physically forcing someone to perform sexual acts, or watch pornography.

- Deliberately infecting a person with an STD either by force or by simply not informing you that he's infected.

- Forcing a partner to consume alcohol or use drugs.

SOME WEAPONS OF CHOICE INCLUDE:

- Kicking with the shoes on.
- Personal size, strength, weight and fighting skills
- Sticks
- Knives
- Guns
- Belts
- Wet towels (less likely to leave any marks)
- other inanimate object/s

Kenneth Harden, 32, of Seymour Indiana, faces charges of raping and abusing his wife as part of a 'slave contract'. Having met his wife on Craigslist the torture began soon thereafter.

Lucky for his wife the case had come to light following a police response for a domestic disturbance in their domicile a month earlier.

Upon arrival at the scene, police found Harden's wife crying, with cigarette burns her body, and red marks on her neck caused by a tight, choke collar.

Later, police found a 'Slave Manual 2014' in the Harden home, which contained rules and punishments signed by both Harden and his wife on June 4. On occasions, Harden had choked his wife until she passed out, and performed painful sexual acts using toys. The sex toys were kept inside a 'bag of torture'.

Harden had also apparently shoved his wife's head and hands into a wooden box. His wife said that on different occasions he had strapped her to her bed and duct taped her hands, feet, and mouth forcing her to stay in that position for extended periods of time, causing her to urinate on herself. She also said that her husband controlled her diabetes medication and threatened to leave her. It's not always easy to leave an abusive relationship.

Seymour is currently facing 38 charges including rape, criminal deviate conduct, and criminal confinement.

When Harden's wife met him on Craigslist she had no idea he was a sadist. According to court records she thought Harden was 'godly' and he 'swept her off her feet'.

The rape charges alone carry between 3 to 16 years in prison. Unless he suddenly dies, Harden will soon know what it feels like to have little or no control over his own life, to be bossed around and to be confined against his will.

EMOTIONAL ABUSE:

In relationships where rape or sexual abuse occur some form of emotional and physical abuse are usually also present. In a

healthy relationship both partners can relate to each other as equals with love, empathy, and respect. One partner does not belittle or humiliate another either by words or by actions.

Abusive partners tend to isolate and blame their victims. The abuser is the aggressor, a bully of sorts who does not respect the inalienable rights of his or her partner. The victim may stay in a relationship out of love, fear, low self-esteem, for the sake of the children, economic need, or fear of not having a place to go. Some victims who are married want to stay that way, divorce for them is out of the question, either for moral or religious reasons. In many Third World Countries the victim has no legal, familial, or societal rights or recourse if abuse does occur.

-You feel like you're being emotionally raped.

-Your physical and emotional feelings are not taken into consideration. Your partner has little or no empathy or sympathy for you.

-Respect is the exception rather than the rule. When your partner conveys this right upon you he or she has made 'a big sacrifice' and you should be 'very thankful'.

-Condemnation, ridicule (sometimes in front of family or friends), contempt, humiliation, and derogatory terms are used against you.

-You are almost, or always to blame whenever something bad happens, regardless of the circumstances. It's your fault.

-You feel like a mental punching bag for your partner.

-Your partner is over-controlling, jealous, and envious.

-Your partner seems like he or she doesn't want you to succeed.

-Love is used as a powerful weapon that your partner uses to control you.

-Your partner's mood decides whether there is emotional abuse or not. Your mood is irrelevant.

-Mocks your physical appearance, work, or level of intelligence.

-Lies to you, your family and friends.

-Uses blackmail against you.

-Threatens you with physical, sexual, and/ or economic harm. Threats can also be made against your children. NOTE: All threats must be taken seriously.

-Downplays your pain, agony, and fears.

IF YOU ARE A RAPE VICTIM AND FALL INTO ONE OF THESE CATEGORIES YOU MAY HAVE ADDITIONAL OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME:

-Disabled and female.

-Belong to a racial, religious, or linguistic minority, or are unable to speak the language of the nation.

- Poor, uneducated or undereducated.
- Live in a poor Third World country.
- Live under a brutal or corrupt regime especially when medical and social services are inadequate.
- Live in war-torn or civil war-torn region or country.
- Live in a misogynistic country or region.
- You are a member of an indigenous group.

In order to preserve and safeguard the safety and integrity of Native American women the tribal council must be granted the legal rights to arrest, try, and convict rapists regardless of whether the perpetrator was a Native American or non-native. Tribal councils used to have this right but it was removed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Rapes of Native American women on tribal areas by non-natives, is a problem. The number of rapes against Native American women on upstate reservations in Minnesota rise during the hunting season. Non-native men have entered a Minnesota reservation and committed rape, then left. Tribal police can't make an arrest. For non-native rapists, native lands are lawless lands; do what you want to and then leave.

Even partial jurisdiction over non-natives suspected of sex crimes is too disturbing for some members of congress. The logic behind this continued injustice is quite racist and colonialist.

"You've got to have a jury that is a reflection of society as a whole, and on an Indian reservation, it's going to be made up of Indians, right ... So the non-Indian doesn't get a fair trial," said Senator Charles Grassley of Iowa. (By Louise Erdrich, February 26, 2013; The New York Times Opinion Pages: Rape on the Reservation)

Native Americans charged with a crime outside of tribal areas face non-native juries. More so, Native American rape victims often face a cruel and racist society and justice system.

When she was 14 years-old, Bonnie, a Cherokee Indian living near Tahlequah, Oklahoma was in the home of her friend, 5 men, including her friend's husband raped her. She never reported the crime because hardly anyone in the justice system gives a damn about a raped Native American. Worse yet, Bonnie has heard men bragging about raping a Native American women; apparently, the word has gotten around about freebie rapes.

"I was in the other room, and they came in and threw me on the bed ... And they all held me down ... I just didn't figure anyone would believe me - a child against five white men," said Bonnie. (By Laura Sullivan, July 26, 2007; NPR: Legal Hurdles Stall Rape Cases on Native Lands)

"Many of the criminals know Indian lands are almost a lawless community, where they can do whatever they want," said Chickasaw Tribal Police Chief Jason O'Neal. (ibid)

"The fact that I am not allowed to prosecute felonies that occur on tribal land irritates me. It angers me. I don't understand that," said tribal prosecutor David Hall. (ibid)

On October 4, 2013 throughout Canada and around the world thousands of people united together in more than 200 vigils, to honour and remember the multitudes of indigenous women whose murders and disappearances have not been solved. People who were unable to attend the vigils in person could participate in an online Virtual Candlelight Vigil.

"October 4 is {the annual Sisters in Spirit Day of Remembrance} a day for the entire country {of Canada} to honour the memory of the far too many indigenous women and girls that have lost their lives or remain missing, knowing that for many families they live with the memories of their loved ones every day of the year," said Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn A-in-chut Atleo. (By ICTMN Staff, October 4, 2013 Indian Country Today Media Network: Thousands Gather Worldwide at More than 200 Vigils for Indigenous Women Missing or Murdered in Canada)

This is not the first time that a call is being made for a Canadian national inquiry into 600 unsolved cases involving indigenous women; the United Nations has also requested a national inquiry from Canada. In Canada, violence against indigenous women is a big problem that must be dealt with.

"It's a Canadian issue now ... For years we have been saying this is not a women's issue, this is not a native problem. This is a Canadian human-rights issue that impacts all of us and we are seeing that support now," said Jennifer Lord, the strategic policy liaison with the Native Women's Association of Canada, told *The Globe and Mail*. (ibid)

In August of 2014, Prime Minister Stephen Harper rejected calls for a national inquiry into the hundreds of murdered and missing indigenous women. The renewed calls came following the discovery of a 15 year-old indigenous girl, Tina Fontaine, who was pulled out of Winnipeg's Red River on August 17, 2014.

Prime Minister Harper said that Tina's death was terrible, but stressed that this kind of a case is a matter for law enforcement. As expected, First Nations leaders promptly condemned the statement.

Prime Minister Harper said, "We should not view this as a sociological phenomenon," indicating that the Canadian Government has passed legislation aimed at protecting all Canadians. "We should view it as crime." (By Kathryn Blaze

Carlson and Jill Mahoney, August 21, 2014; the Globe and Mail: Harper Rejects Calls for Aboriginal Women Inquiry)

"Why are there so many aboriginal women that are murdered compared to other women ... Doesn't he {Prime Minister Harper} think that racism and sexism and colonialism play a part in all that?" said Claudette Dumont-Smith, Executive Director of the Native Women's Association of Canada. (ibid)

Alaska is the rape capital of America. Rape statistics for adult women is 3 times the national average. Worse yet, for children it is 6 times the national average. No wonder, Governor Sean Parnell refers to it as 'an epidemic'. And as is the case, the vast majority of rapes are not reported.

As for those rapes that are reported in Alaska, according to the Alaska Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Study only 29 percent result in an arrest, and only 69 percent of these cases lead to a prosecution. (By Brionne Elkins; Alaska Dispatch News: Alaska's 'Rape Problem' is an Alaska Men Problem).

Anchorage in particular, has been infested by forcible rape and sexual assault. Accentuating this problem is the high use of Alcohol, mixed with illicit drugs, and meth. Conjugal violence against women is another problem, with some studies indicating 50 percent of women claiming they've been physically assaulted by their male partner.

Shockingly, while Sarah Palin was Governor of Alaska she permitted her police department to charge rape victims for the price of a forensic rape kit. Now, this is adding major insult and callousness to injury. Worse yet, it was a woman who was doing it to other women. Where's the empathy? During this period a rape kit could cost a victim up to 1200 dollars.

The smaller northern communities in Alaska are tight-knit, with little or no roads therein or in the surrounding areas, and law enforcement may be far away. It's a rapist's dreamland.

RAPE VICTIMS WITH DISABILITIES:

- Almost always profoundly weaker than the rapist.
- May have mobility problems.
- Severely disabled females may be a target for a rapist who wants an easy rape or a rape without any resistance.
- Difficulty conveying or reporting the abuse or getting to the police station.
- Rape cases involving disabled persons require additional, more intricate work; experts may be called in to help. The prosecutor's office must be extra diligent in their follow-up. The disabled victim may be viewed as a less credible witness or simply not believed outright.

- If they are partners the victim may need the rapist for economic, and every day support and basic survival.
- The justice system can be quite cold and assembly-like in structure, even to otherwise healthy victims.
- A disabled person who is intellectually challenged may not be able to convey what happened.
- Severely disabled victims have low self-esteem to begin with. 'Nobody will care; nobody will believe that anyone could do that to me', 'I'm unattractive'.
- Rape victim organizations cater to non-disabled rape victims.
- Self-defence for women caters to physically and mentally capable females.

RAPE PREVENTION:

- Follow your gut instincts. If someone scares you or gives you the creeps don't be alone with this person; creeps can be male or female. Do not accept gifts, drinks or anything from this person.
- If you attend a function or a party go with trusted friends, have a designated driver and try to stay together. Watch each other's backs.

I was once told a story about a woman who was semiconscious in a respectable downtown Des Moines, Iowa bar (I will not mention the name of the establishment). A couple of guys practically dragged her out to their car and no one gave them a second look. Onlookers may have assumed that she was married to one of the perpetrators, or maybe they didn't care.

- If one of your friends leaves the party or goes off with a stranger meet the person just in case your friend 'disappears' or suffers from an attack.
- Try to go to familiar places.
- Don't convey the impression that you're weak and vulnerable. Rapists, even those who want their victims to struggle want to win in the end. Look and behave confidently.
- Have a communication device on hand at all times.
- Tell your family or friends if you plan to attend a party or event especially if it lasts into the late hours of the night.
- Nightly walks should be done with a trusted friend; better yet two or more friends, the more the better. Large dogs repulse potential attackers, but these bodyguards need to be well-trained and disciplined.
- If you jog or walk alone outdoors on a daily or regular basis, change your route frequently. If you don't the potential attacker can plan his rape to the last detail, in advance. He'll catch you off guard. Headphones will deeply impair your auditory sense and will distract you from your surroundings.

-Don't walk in dark secluded places, near or around abandoned buildings or near tall grasses and hedges. These are places where you can be quickly and violently pulled into and hidden from the public's eye; never place yourself in that situation, if you can help it.

-Stay on the alert. If you're a passenger on public transport, every-so-often scan the area with your eyes. Be aware of your surroundings; someone may be following you or eyeing you a bit too intently.

-Populated well-lit areas are places rapists don't like.

-Mace or pepper spray can help, but it takes time and coordination to remove the canister from your purse or pocket.

Meanwhile you're in a terrifying situation; the rapist isn't going to wait until you're ready to pepper spray him. Nevertheless, practice at home until you've perfected the needed actions. Even your keys can be used as a powerful weapon but you need to jab a sensitive area. Know the laws in your area regarding the carrying of mace, pepper spray, or other weapon.

-If you think that you're being followed casually confront the pursuer by asking him or her for the time, but this must not be done if you're walking on a dark and deserted street, the more people and lamination the better. If you're out of harm's way take his picture for future reference if needed.

-Try to use more than one self-defence method if attacked. Screaming and yelling is natural and very effective, unless the assailant has somehow muffled your mouth or gagged you. You must hurt him, DO NOT delay your response. Hit sensitive areas, without pulling back your blows. If you get free run to a lit/populated area, then scream your head off. Make it known to everyone in the area what is happening.

-Always respond quickly and with full force.

-Almost all rapes are committed by acquaintances.

-If you live alone tell your landlord or apartment manager that you don't want your complete name posted on your mailbox. The first initial of your first name and your last name is sufficient.

-Don't judge a person solely on his/her looks. Good looks and cuteness don't necessarily mean sweetness. Judge a person by his/her behaviour. There's no use in marrying or being with a nice looking rapist or wife beater.

-The eyes are always good targets to strike. If a rapist is fully clothed and you try to strike his genitals you could miss or hit his penis instead. The most sensitive areas in a male are his eyes and testicles.

-Bite, scratch, and pull and yank if you can.

-If you're pinned to the ground or to a bed and are overpowered calculate your strike and make it devastating. Gouge the eyes or

you can grab the testicles tightly and then twist. For this to happen you may have to wait until he's naked. Sometimes, you have to be patient, like a lioness.

-Failed attacks on your part may enrage your attacker.

-Wearing high heels will offset your balance, reduce your ability to kick, and will hinder your running speed.

-Pregnant women especially in their third trimester need to take special precautions. Some rapists don't have a problem punching or striking a pregnant woman in the abdomen, especially if she tries to defend herself. A strike in this area is extremely dangerous.

-If the rapist forces a pregnant woman on her back or stomach, it'll be incredibly difficult to get him off.

-Third trimester pregnancy may impede running speed.

-Talking your way out, in a calm and polite manner can be used; use your discretion. This method may be a last option if all others fail.

-Urinating in your panties, vomiting (if you can), or telling the rapist that you have an STD, or having your period are other options.

SELF-DEFENSE FOR WOMEN:

-Ask a trusted relative, friend, social services, or the local police where you can find an organization that offers self-defence classes specifically catered for women.

-You should learn the street fighting method first, crude but often effective. Chances are the rapist will not fight clean; you're fighting for your safety and well-being.

-Martial arts can be taken, after or simultaneously with self-defence for women. If you're small and the rapist is a big strong man, one punch to his face or shoulder may have little or absolutely no effect on him. You must learn how to properly attack sensitive areas such as the eyes, nose, ears, groin, shins, ear drums, knees, etc.

-Remember, mastery of martial arts take years. In a rape situation there's no time to stretch out or get into position. You must fight dirty, dirtier than the attacker.

-You must learn how to scream and shout 'No', and more.

-Your self-defence instructor must be qualified. Don't be embarrassed to check his/her credentials.

-Find out the price for a full course.

-It may be more difficult for a victim to fight dirty against an attacker who she loves or is closely related to, but if you're being attacked you must defend yourself at all costs if needed.

-High kicks and fancy moves are easier to perform in the privacy of your own home or in the gym with other friends and

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