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A Survey of Myths Concerning the Crime of Rape

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A SURVEY OF MYTHS CONCERNING
THE CRIME OF RAPE

by

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A practicum submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK

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TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES:

The members of the Committee approve the practicum of Marilyn Hammon, Joyce Jerabek and Michèle Mairesse presented February 1, 1976.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In view of the proliferation of recent publicity on the topic of rape via the news media and popular publications, the researchers decided that a study concerning rape would be timely and informative. An examination of the literature resulted in the discovery that there were only two principal studies published. These were by John MacDonald, Rape Offenders and Their Victims, 1971, and Menachem Amir, Patterns in Forcible Rape, 1971. Other sources invariably used the results of these studies as a basis for their comments and conclusions.

The recurring emphasis on the commonly held myths (as described later in this study) became obvious as progress was made into a review of the literature. Nowhere in the literature was reference made to any studies which had been done to substantiate the existence of the myths cited. References to the myths were made in generalities only. The researchers determined to investigate the validity of the assumptions that the stated myths were, in fact, commonly held beliefs.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Because the study deals with the myths concerning rape and the attitudes of the subject population of men from one Portland community service organization, the following review of the literature will focus on those misconceptions and on the confirmation of them. It should be noted that myth and misconception shall be used interchangeably. The Webster Dictionary defines myth as "a story invented as a veiled explanation of truth" A misconception is defined as "wrongly interpreted, misunderstood," by the same source. Thus, both words refer to that which is believed but is not factual in nature.

Within the past few years, rape has been given increasing attention. According to Sue Crawford of Portland's Rape Relief Hotline, there is a mass effort in force to educate both men and women about the facts and realities regarding the crime (Crawford: 1975). Sergeant Glenn Griffitt, Morals Detail, Portland Police Bureau, states that the crime of rape has been steadily increasing, or at least the reporting of it has increased. Thus continued education is most important (Griffitt: 1975).

Articles and books have been written which are aimed at dispelling misconceptions about rape. The misconceptions have been outlined by Portland's Rape Relief Hotline pamphlets in "Rape: The All-American Crime," by Susan Griffin, and in Menachem Amir's Patterns of Forcible Rape. Facts which disprove the misconceptions are located in these sources as well as in John MacDonald's Rape: Offenders and Their Victims, in "Do You Believe The Myths About Rape?" by Susan Brownmiller, and in Margaret Mead's Sex and Temperament.

It is commonly thought, according to Amir, that rape takes place in a dark alley or dead end street. His studies, however, show that over one-half of all rapes occur in a residence and over one-third take place after a man forces his way into the victim's home (Amir: 1971; pp. 145-48, 213-14, and 242-45. MacDonald also states, "More rapes occur in homes and in apartments than any other place." (MacDonald: 1971; p. 32).

The idea that rape is predominantly an explosive act is also contradicted by Amir and MacDonald. Amir says that 75 per cent of all rapes are planned events; 90 per cent of all group rapes and 58 per cent of all single rapes are planned (Amir: 1971; p. 143). MacDonald writes, "The majority of rapes are planned, although the victim may not be included in the original plans." (MacDonald: 1971;

pp. 57-58). If the victim is not included in the original plan, then what is included? According to MacDonald, the only consistent factor in selection is the scene of the crime. Thus, the misconception that a woman "asks for it" is not a factor. If a rapist has picked a particular victim, it is usually because her age, appearance or mannerisms remind the rapist of a familiar person in his background (MacDonald: 1971; p. 58). Or, as one of Rape Relief Hotline's pamphlets states, "Anything a woman does can be interpreted by a rapist as 'asking for it,' depending on the character of the rapist" (Rape Relief Hotline: 1973).

To further disprove the myth that women "ask for it," is Susan Griffin's comment:

The theory that women like being raped extends itself by deduction into the proposition that most, or much of rape is provoked by the victim. But this is only myth. Though provocation, considered a mitigating factor in a court of law, may consist of only "a gesture," according to the Federal Commission on Crimes of Violence, only 4 per cent of reported rapes involve any precipitative behavior by the woman (Griffin: 1971; p. 28).

Susan Brownmiller states that in a study conducted by the National Commission on the Cause and Prevention of Violence, the Commission

. . . discovered victims of rape were responsible for LESS provocative behavior or unwitting collusion than victims of murder, assault or robbery. Rape victims turn out to be the most innocent (Brownmiller: 1975 [a]; p. 178).

A factor often involved when a rapist has chosen the victim while planning the rape is that he is already acquainted with her. Amir says that in 48 per cent of rape cases, the rapist knew the victim either as a casual acquaintance, friend or relative. Even though she is not included in the original planning, the victim may be known because most victims live in the same neighborhood as the rapist (Amir: 1971; pp. 88, 90-92).

The misconception that women ask for it is closely related to the myth that the majority of rape victims have "bad reputations." Amir cites only 20 per cent of the rape victims in Philadelphia as having "bad reputations." Having had a bad reputation meant that the victim had had a history of sexual promiscuity or arrest records for sexual misconduct (Amir: 1971; pp. 116-18). A study included in Susan Griffin's article, conducted in Washington, D.C., showed that 82 per cent of the rape victims had "good reputations" (Griffin: 1971; p. 32).

Another set of myths surround the supposed portrait of a rapist. They are that men have greater sexual needs than women, that most rapists are frustrated men with high sex drives, and that rapists are sick men who need some type of psychiatric counseling. Margaret Mead, in Sex and Temperament, states that it is a myth that men have greater sexual needs and that their sexuality is more urgent than

that of women (Mead: 1935; p. 140). Her conclusion is in agreement with the studies of Julia Heiman and Masters and Johnson. Julia Heiman wrote in her article, "Women's Sexual Arousal," that women's sexual drives are as strong as those of men and that "women fire up as men do in response to erotic material" (Heiman: 1975; pp. 91-94). Masters and Johnson state that "Aside from their obvious anatomic variants, men and women are homogeneous in their physiologic responses to sexual stimuli" (Masters and Johnson: 1966; p. 285). Amir revealed that convicted rapists had normal sexual personalities deviating from the norm only in their tendency to express violence and rage. In fact, a significant number of rapists were married men with normal sexual lives (MacDonald: 1971; p. 55). Or, as a quote from Griffin's article says, "Those men [rapists] were the most normal men there [prison in San Luis Obispo, California]. They had a lot of hang-ups but they were the same hang-ups as men walking out on the street had" (Griffin: 1971; p. 27).

The statement that rapists mainly come from low levels of society may or may not be a myth. MacDonald maintains that most rapists come from the lower class levels (MacDonald: 1971; p. 55). Amir, however, contradicts MacDonald's contention when he states that rapists come from all classes and that they usually rape a woman from the same

class. This occurs mainly because they rape an individual who resides in the same neighborhood (Amir: 1971; pp. 69-73). Sue Crawford (Crawford: 1975) and Sergeant Glenn Griffitt (Griffitt: 1975) concur that the statistics from their agencies uphold Amir's position. Thus, for the purpose of this study, we chose to consider it a myth that rapists come from the lower class levels.

That a woman intent upon defending herself cannot be raped is another myth frequently cited. Susan Brownmiller presents a most vivid picture which negates this myth:

According to the odds, a rape victim is three inches shorter and twenty-four pounds lighter than her male assailant. This works to her disadvantage psychologically as well as physically. But worse than the difference in size is the lifelong difference in mental attitude toward strength. He has been encouraged from childhood to build his muscles and toughen his fists. She has been encouraged to value her soft skin, her slender wrist, her smooth unmuscled thigh and leg. His clothing gives him maximum mobility. His shoes are sturdy; thick heels give him power. Her clothing hampers movement by design and fragile materials add to her vulnerability. One yank and her blouse is ripped. A stumble and her stockings are torn. Her skirt allows for easy access. One gesture, one motion and she is humiliatingly exposed. Her flimsy shoes have straps that break and heels that come loose. She cannot run. Force, or the threat of force is the method used against her, a show of force is the prime requisite of masculine behavior that she as a woman has been trained from childhood to avoid. She is unfit for the contest. Femininity has trained her to lose" (Brownmiller: 1975 [a]; p. 178).

MacDonald comments that the best opportunity for escape is often at the onset of the attack, yet it is at this time

that the victim is paralyzed by fear. Resisting the rapist who is armed with a weapon may have fatal consequences (MacDonald: 1971; p. 322).

Closely related to the myth concentrating on the woman's self-defense is the misconception that the majority of women who are raped are also beaten. A variation is that rape is always a violent crime in which brutality is inflicted upon the victim. In 87 per cent of the cases, "only temptation and verbal coercion were used initially to subdue the victim; and in almost 50 per cent of the cases when force--in one degree or another--was used, the victim was only manhandled" (Amir: 1971; p. 336).

Finally, women are usually thought to be the victim in the crime of rape, since it is assumed that a man cannot be raped. MacDonald argues against this assumption. He maintains that a man can be raped by a woman, a group of women or by another man. Two specific cases are cited in his book (MacDonald: 1971; pp. 74-75). However, the problem of reporting the crime to the authorities in these cases is even greater than in the cases where the rape victim is female.

The review of the literature has established, to the satisfaction of the researchers, that the statements about rape set forth and labeled as myths are, in fact, untrue. The task to be undertaken at this point in the study is to try to determine whether the myths are, in fact, commonly held beliefs.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

I. DETERMINATION AND FOCUS OF STUDY

In reviewing all available literature on the crime of rape, it became apparent that an attitudinal survey, particularly about the myths and misconceptions surrounding this controversial issue was not readily available. No statistical data was found relating to the area of misconceptions. Consequently, it was decided that an attitudinal survey of the young Portland male should be done regarding his views, knowledge and attitude with regard to the crime of rape, particularly dealing with the prevalent and recurring myths which are continually mentioned and documented in the literature. Consideration was also given to testing women's attitudes but the researchers chose to narrow the focus specifically to the male segment of the Portland population due to an interest in assessing attitudes of those individuals who fall within the same sex and age range of "most" rapists. The majority of rapists are young men who range in age from the latter teens to the mid-thirties (Amir: 1971; p. 180). It appeared that this particular focus would provide interesting parallels between men in general and

rapists in particular, especially with regard to the knowledge they have of their male counterpart, his victims and any feelings they might have regarding the "masculine ego" represented in particular rape situations. The researchers also wished to investigate the education and knowledge the men possessed concerning the crime. The literature review had suggested that most educational endeavors had been aimed at women who are usually the victims of rape.

II. POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

After considering several Portland community and religious organizations for testing, selection of one service organization was finally made because its membership appeared to be an excellent and accessible segment of the young male population.

The majority of the membership constituted males who ranged in age from eighteen to thirty-five years. They were mostly White, middle class and from a variety of backgrounds, types of education, incomes and geographical locations within metropolitan Portland. At that time their active membership totaled 174. Two of the members were women, one was a Black male and the remainder were all Caucasian males. Approximately 70 to 80 per cent were white collar workers, while the rest were blue collar tradesmen or skilled laborers. The goal of the organization is to develop leadership

abilities in young men and to serve mankind through productive community involvement; therefore, the members would have been involved in a great many worthwhile community projects. Their community activities may well have increased the possibility that they would be aware of public issues and concerns within the Portland area such as the increasing crime of rape.

III. INITIATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE PRETEST AND SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Prior to approaching the service organization chosen for the survey, three Portland agencies presently assisting rape victims were contacted. These included the Rape Victim Advocacy Program, Rape Relief Hotline and the Men's Resource Center. The researchers inquired whether they might be interested in the results of such a survey and asked for their support. They appeared to be very interested and verbally indicated that their names could be used in initiating our survey to the service organization. Also, they were interested in receiving the final results of our test.

In early March, 1975, a telephone call was made to the president of the Portland organization to schedule a meeting to discuss the possibility of surveying the attitudes and views of a portion of their membership regarding the crime of rape. It was explained that the researchers wanted to

survey a representative young group of Portland men and why it was believed that their service organization would be an excellent one. He was further informed that the researchers wished to send a questionnaire to 25 per cent of their active membership. Confidentiality, it was explained, would be strictly maintained; no names would be requested except those selected at random from their membership files to receive the questionnaire. Additional assurance was given that if they did not wish to have the organization's name connected or publicized with the results of the study, they would simply be referred to as a Portland service organization.

The president stated that there would most likely be no difficulty in initiating the survey, but that he would bring it before their board and active membership for approval. When approval was received, a meeting was scheduled with the president to discuss the survey in more detail. He was shown a copy of the opening cover letter (see Appendix A, page 51) which would accompany the questionnaire. The questionnaire itself was not shown to him because his name might be one of those randomly chosen to receive the questionnaire. However, he was briefed as to the type of questions that would be asked.

Permission was granted to randomly select 25 per cent of the names on the active membership list from their office

members out of a possible thirty-five present at this meeting. Three were from the Salem, Oregon area. In addition to the verbal comments concerning the questionnaire, space was provided at the end of the questionnaire (see Appendix A, page 50) for written comments.

Encouragement was given to respond as to the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the instrument and what possible changes could be made to assure better return results. The researchers also wished to gauge general reactions of interest or hostility. Some of the comments were regarding the "too general" nature of the questions, being forced into a true or false position, and poor wording resulting in ambiguity. Changes were made accordingly in the final questionnaire.

Both the pretest and the final questionnaire asked the same demographic data: age, education, occupation, marital status, income and race, which was explained would be used for comparative studies and which would be held in strictest confidence. The pretest questionnaire contained eighteen questions, fifteen of which pertained to the myths dealing with the rape victim, the rapist or the general crime of rape. The remaining three questions were general interest and knowledge questions. Originally, the researchers had intended the questionnaire to contain sixteen questions. Consequently, two additional questions were included in the

pretest. Those questions not clearly stated or illiciting good responses were later either eliminated or reworded for better understanding and clarity. The final questionnaire contained sixteen questions. Questions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 13 were about the victim; 7, 8, 9, 10 and 12 were about the rapist, and 1, 6 and 11 were about the general crime of rape. Numbers 14 and 15 were general interest questions, testing their inner feelings. Question 16 inquired of their knowledge and awareness about Portland agencies which help rape victims.

The participant was requested to answer the questions according to his first impulse as to whether it was generally true or generally false, because it was realized that none of the questions could be either true or false all of the time. Also, it should be noted that the strength of emotion which prompted any particular answer through this means of response could not be measured. The final questionnaire was designed so that the more sensitive areas concerning rape would be dealt with toward the end of the schedule rather than at the beginning, with the assumption that it would be less threatening to the individual and hoping to encourage him to complete the questionnaire and return it to us. Additional space was left for comments and participants were thanked for their effort and cooperation. Also, it was

explained that the number on the schedule would be used for coding purposes only and would be removed as soon as the questionnaire was returned.

The questionnaires and cover letters were sent to the forty-three members of the random sample group on May 6, 1975. Three weeks were allowed for the return of the survey. A handwritten, self-addressed, stamped envelope bearing a post office box number, was enclosed for the respondent's convenience. The service organization indicated they would make an announcement about the community survey on rape at their bimonthly meetings on May 6th and 20th. Also, a short reminder was placed in the organization news letter on May 15th and in mid-June.

By May 26th, twenty-eight questionnaires (65 per cent) had been returned. At this time a follow-up letter was sent to the fifteen nonresponders, reminding them of the first letter and questionnaire and of the importance of their response to facilitate more accurate tabulation of the survey results. One and a half weeks (to June 4th) were allowed for another return. By June 19th, thirty-four questionnaires had been received (79 per cent). Eight of the remaining members were contacted by personal phone calls and only one of these members could not be reached. The ninth member was not called because of prior knowledge that due to an extreme illness, he was unable to complete the survey. Of those

contacted, three men related that they would make a special effort to send it to us. The remaining four indicated that they had never received the questionnaire for reasons unknown to the researchers. Please refer to the Appendix for the follow-up letters sent on June 23rd and on July 11, 1975. By July 11th, four more questionnaires were received and the final one was received on July 29, 1975.

A total of thirty-nine responses out of forty-three was received--a 90.69 per cent return. Appreciation was expressed to the service organization and to the past president (his term had expired) who had given us such excellent cooperation.

Data from the questionnaire was compiled by hand tabulation. Responses were tallied into various categories and tables were then developed from the tabulated information to show the data analysis by frequencies and percentages.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

I. DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

The basic aim of the following information is to provide a general description of the service organization and their responses to the survey questions.

The first set of questions (1-6) on the survey were designed to secure demographic data and the second set of questions (1-13) were comprised of these items directed toward attitudes regarding myths about the crime of rape. The remainder questions (14-16) consisted of general interest and knowledge information. Additional tables regarding the demographic data are found in the Appendix.

Thirty-nine of the forty-three questionnaires sent to the survey population were returned. This constitutes a return of 90.7 per cent and a nonresponse of 9.3 per cent. Of the four subjects who did not reply, the only information available to the researchers was their occupations: a business college student, service clerk, employee of a large department store and a bank employee. Of these four persons, the reason for the nonresponse of three of them is unknown.

The fourth person is the bank employee whose company called to inform us that he was unable to complete the questionnaire due to hospitalization.

Of the thirty-nine respondents, 49 per cent were between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-nine; and 51 per cent were of the ages between thirty and thirty-eight. The mean age is twenty-nine years.

Of the survey population, 5.1 per cent (two respondents) have completed high school; 25.7 per cent (ten respondents) have completed three years of college or vocational school; 41 per cent (sixteen respondents) have college degrees, and the remaining 28.2 per cent (eleven respondents) have had postgraduate work. The range of education was no lower than a high school education and no higher than a Master's degree. The mean score was 15.7 years and the mode was sixteen years of education.

TABLE I
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Occupation	Number	Per Cent
Accounting	9	23.0
Banking	5	12.8
Management	5	12.8
Engineering	4	10.2
Electronics	3	7.8
Real Estate	2	5.2
Insurance	2	5.2
Other	9	23.0
Total	39	100

As Table I indicates, occupations of accounting, banking and management comprise 48.7 per cent of our survey population and 51.3 per cent are in other occupations as listed above. "Other" consisted of one individual in each of the following varied occupations: attorney, missionary, marketing, restaurant, purchasing, retail buyer, roof salesman, line workman, secretary-treasurer of mobile park. A large number of the survey population could be called white collar workers and nearly one-fourth of the respondents are in accounting.

Slightly over three-fourths (76.9 per cent) of the respondents were married. The remaining 20.5 per cent of the respondents were single (12.8 per cent) and divorced (7.7 per cent).

TABLE II
INCOME DISTRIBUTION

Income	Number	Per Cent
0-4,999	0	0.0
5,000-9,999	4	10.0
10,000-14,999	12	31.0
15,000-19,999	9	23.0
20,000-24,999	12	31.0
25,000-29,999	1	2.5
30,000-34,999	1	2.5
Over 35,000	0	0.0
Total	39	100

Before beginning the survey, it was anticipated that the annual income of the service organization would have been approximately \$13,000-\$14,000. However, the researchers found that the income distribution was slightly higher than anticipated.

The average annual income was \$17,115 and the median income was \$17,500. There are 41 per cent of the respondents who earn an annual income of 0-\$14,999 and 59 per cent who earn \$15,000 or above.

The last question in the demographic section asked for the respondent's race and all thirty-nine (100 per cent) were Caucasian.

Summary of the demographic data reveals that the typical respondent is twenty-nine years of age, Caucasian, married and has completed 15.7 years of education. He is a white collar worker earning an average annual income of \$17,115.

II. INCORRECT RESPONSES REGARDING MISCONCEPTIONS OF RAPE

This section presents the responses given to questions (1-13) dealing with attitudes concerning myths about the crime of rape. The decision whether the answers were correct or incorrect was based upon information summarized in the literature review. Incorrect responses indicate the current misconceptions that the survey population possesses. Since the purpose of the study was to investigate myths that the subjects held concerning the crime of rape, Tables III and IV will focus specifically on incorrect responses.

TABLE III
DISTRIBUTION OF INCORRECT RESPONSES
BY QUESTION

Question number	Incorrect Responses		Nonresponses	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
1	12	30.8		
2	6	15.4		
3	6	15.4		
4	10	25.7		
5	6	15.4		
6	18	46.2		
7	28	71.8	1	2.5
8	4	10.3		
9	31	79.5		
10	19	48.8		
11	11	28.2	2	5.1
12	16	41.1	1	2.5
13	20	51.3		

There was a total possibility of 507 answers on Questions 1-13 by the thirty-nine respondents. However, there were only 503 answers given due to four questions not being answered. Of these answers received, 187 were incorrect,

which constitutes 36.9 per cent of the total answers, and 316 were correct answers or 62.3 per cent of the totals. The remaining four nonresponses were equal to .8 per cent. As Table III shows, the questions which received 50 per cent or more incorrect responses were 7, 9 and 13. Questions 7 and 9 deal with the rapist and 13 with the victim. The highest of these three was Question 9 which states, "Rapists are 'sick men who need some type of psychiatric counseling.'" The four questions that received 25 per cent or less incorrect answers were 2, 3, 5 and 8. Questions 2, 3 and 5 deal with the victim and 8 deals with the rapist. The one question that received the least amount of incorrect answers was Question 8 which states, "Rapists come from all class levels of society."

TABLE IV
 INCORRECT RESPONSES BY SUBJECT EMPHASIS:
 CRIME OF RAPE, VICTIM, RAPIST

Subject	Question number	Incorrect Number	Responses Per Cent
Crime of rape	1	12	
	6	18	22
	11	11	
Victim	2	6	
	3	6	
	4	10	26
	5	6	
	13	20	
Rapist	7	28	
	8	4	
	9	31	52
	10	19	
	12	16	
Total	13	187	100

Number of questions for each subject emphasized:

- 3 - Crime of rape
- 5 - Victim
- 5 - Rapist

Questions 1-13 divided the study of the myths regarding rape into three subject areas: namely, crime of rape, the victim and the rapist. A majority of the incorrect responses pertained to questions about the rapist.

TABLE V
COMPARISON: TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS
AND THEIR TOTAL NUMBER OF
INCORRECT RESPONSES

Total number of incorrect responses	Total number of individuals
0	1
1	0
2	6
3	7
4	5
5	4
6	6
7	6
8	2
9	0
10	2
11	0
12	0
13	0
Total	39

From the perspective of answers given by the individual, the mode was ten correct and three incorrect. The response range was zero to ten incorrect. It's interesting to note that one respondent answered all thirteen questions correctly.

III. GENERAL INTEREST AND KNOWLEDGE INFORMATION

Questions 14 and 15 deal with men and women's fantasies connected with rape. Question 14 states, "A majority of women fantasize about being raped." Question 15 states, "A majority of men fantasize about raping a woman." Neither question has a correct or incorrect response.

Question 16 probes into the knowledge that the respondents have about Portland agencies that help the rape victim.

TABLE VI
RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS 14 AND 15

Question Number	True		False		No Response	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
14	11	29	27	69	1	2
15	12	31	25	64	2	5

There does not seem to be a substantial difference in the subjects' responses as to whether men or women fantasize about rape. However, it is noted that over half of the responses concluded that no fantasy takes place for either men or women.

TABLE VII
 RESPONDENTS' INDICATION OF AWARENESS
 OF PORTLAND RAPE RELATED
 AGENCIES

	Number	Per Cent
Aware of Portland agencies	12	30
Not aware of Portland agencies	26	67
No answer	1	3
Totals	39	100

TABLE VIII
 QUESTION 16: IDENTIFIED
 PORTLAND AGENCIES

Source	Number of times listed
Rape Victim Advocacy Program	2
Rape Relief Hotline . . .	3
Portland Police Department	2
Phone number exists . . .	2
Clinic	1
Heard of agency but couldn't remember name .	3
Total	13

Table VII indicates that two-thirds of the community service organization were not aware of any Portland agency which helps the rape victim. All of the Portland agencies that do assist the rape victim were named (Table VIII) by the 30 per cent who were aware of these available services. Each of the twelve individuals was able to name one Portland agency with the exception of one person who identified two.

TABLE IX
 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS
 WHO IDENTIFIED PORTLAND RAPE
 RELATED AGENCIES

Demographic Characteristics	Number
Age: 21-29	5
Age: 30-38	7
Total:	12
Income: \$5,000-\$14,999	7
Income: \$15,000-\$24,999	5
Total:	12
Marital Status: Married	9
Marital Status: Single	2
Marital Status: Divorced	1
Total:	12
Education: 12-15 years	4
Education: 16 years	5
Education: 17-18 years	3
Total:	12

The researchers investigated the possibility that either the age, income, marital status, education or occupation of the respondents might be a variable regarding those who are aware of an agency providing service for the rape victim. This possibility did not exist as the distribution on all variables was similar to that of the total sample.

At the end of the questionnaire, a space was allowed for comments and there were six responses. They were as follows:

1. "A majority of all men and women need and enjoy sex. Many women who are raped are either somewhere they shouldn't be or not that determined to defend themselves."
2. "Some questions I really didn't know the answers-- I simply marked my best guess."
3. "Question 3 - She may be intent, but not entirely capable. Question 6 - Not planned in terms of choosing time and place--but the rapist seeks an opportunity. Question 9 - I seriously doubt the power of psychiatric help."
4. "Too many all inclusive questions. Questions 3, 8, 9, 12 - flat True and False don't really apply. Question 9 - Many rapists or most may need some counseling. Question 8 - There is a lack of social consciousness at lower class levels; also the stigma of being a 'rapist' could be a strong deterrent at some upper social levels. Question 3 - There are methods of defense a woman can employ to protect herself--a good kick in the balls could be pretty discouraging to a rapist. Also total relaxation--don't fight--removes the stimulation for the rapist."
5. "The following questions were answered on pure 'gut' reaction and not out of any informal knowledge or feeling, Questions 4, 12, 13, 14, 15."

6. "Few questions were answered with any definite belief or knowledge. Questions could have been answered as 'No opinion.'"

IV. SUMMARY OF DATA ANALYSIS

The literature suggests that there are widely held myths and misconceptions concerning the crime of rape. The researchers' survey negates this stated assumption, supported by the fact that only 36.9 per cent of the responses were incorrect. When a misconception was believed, it usually involved the myths concerning the rapist.

Another finding was that a majority of the surveyed population were unaware of agencies that provide assistance to the rape victims in Portland.

It should be noted that all the researchers' findings are based upon a 25 per cent sample of one Portland service organization and the perspective is constricted by relatively high income distribution and high educational status. Other factors which limit the findings are that the survey population is all Caucasian and within the age group of the 20's and 30's. Because of the even distribution of our survey population and their responses to the survey questions, no further testing was deemed necessary.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The literature suggests that there are widely held myths and misconceptions concerning the crime of rape. It was noted by the researchers that the myths and misconceptions could be divided into three categories; namely, the myths which concern the rapist, the victim and finally, those pertaining to the crime of rape itself.

The myths stated in the literature are assumed to exist, but in fact, this assumption is not supported by specific data. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to begin the gathering of statistical information and to encourage further research into the crime of rape and the myths surrounding it. The results of our survey indicate that the myths we used in the questionnaire are not commonly held. Only 36.9 per cent of the questions were answered incorrectly, indicating that the majority of the surveyed population did not believe the myths.

In our survey, the five questions pertaining to the myths which focused on the rapist were responsible for 52 per cent of the incorrect responses. The questions referred to are as follows:

7. Most rapists know their victims.
9. Rapists are "sick men who need some type of psychiatric counseling."
10. Most rapists are frustrated men with high sex drives.
12. "Men have greater sexual needs than women."

It is interesting to note that the remaining question in this category, question 8, "Rapists come from all class levels of society," received the least number of incorrect responses. The two remaining categories combining the myths related to the victim and the crime of rape itself, account for 48 per cent of the incorrect responses. Within these categories, the questions most often answered incorrectly were:

6. [Crime of rape] Most rapes are planned.
13. [Victim] Most women who are raped are also beaten.

Two interest questions were contained in the questionnaire. Those dealt with the possibility of a man or woman fantasizing about the crime of rape. The surveyed population did not believe that a majority of men or women engaged in such fantasizing.

The final question on the survey pertained to awareness of agencies in Portland that provide assistance to the

rape victim. Before reviewing the results of the question, it is perhaps useful to identify the agencies that have been established:

1. Rape Relief Hotline: The first agency that began "hotline crisis intervention." It offers counseling to women who do not wish to report the crime to the police.
2. Rape Victim Advocacy Program: Established by the Portland District Attorney's Office. It has a staff of three women who support and assist the victim from the time the crime is reported through the judicial court system (if the rapist is apprehended and the victim wishes to bring charges against him).
3. Men's Resource Center: Also an advocate for the rape victim. It provides services to men who are personally close to the victim.
4. Holladay Park Hospital: Offers free medical services for rape victims.
5. Portland Police Department: Investigates the crime when it is reported and also has been involved in public education concerning the crime.

Even though these agencies have attempted to educate the public through the media of television, radio and newspapers as well as through public speaking engagements, 67 per cent of the surveyed population were unaware of their existence. In view of this data, the researchers question the effectiveness of this education.

I. IMPLICATIONS

Based on the results of the survey, the following conclusions were drawn by the researchers. The myths that the literature states exist have not been documented by any specific data. The writers assumed their existence, stating the assumptions as facts. It is therefore conceivable that these assumptions may be incorrect. All or some of the myths may not have been believed at any time. This could account for the low number of incorrect responses by the surveyed population.

Another factor which may be responsible for the knowledgeability of the respondents is the effectiveness of the educational endeavors of the Portland agencies which were aimed at dispelling myths concerning the crime. At one time the myths may have been believed but the false beliefs may have been corrected by education.

An additional reason why the surveyed population indicated that they did not believe the majority of the myths may be because while education has taught them new socially acceptable beliefs, the surveyed men may, in fact, believe more of the myths than their answers reveal. Because they have heard that these beliefs are incorrect, they may have answered the questions accordingly, disregarding their true inclinations. This may be especially true for question 8,

"Rapists come from all class levels of society " which was answered correctly most often. Had the respondents indicated that they believed that rapists come from lower class levels only, they would perhaps have had to acknowledge class or racial prejudice within themselves.

Also pertinent to the accuracy of the responses to the questions is that the public education aimed at dispelling myths may be more effective with certain segments of the population than with others. The population group chosen for this survey may be receiving, or be more receptive to, educational efforts directed toward the crime of rape and is, therefore, more knowledgeable about the subject. The possibility of increased receptivity to education may be attributable to the relative homogeneity of the educational levels of the survey population. This possibility must be considered in any attempts to generalize the results from the survey group to the rest of the population.

Closely aligned with the foregoing implication is the inference that because all the respondents are members of the same service organization, their ideas may not be as diversified as they might otherwise be. They would tend to share a concern with community service and would have ample opportunity to communicate their attitudes and knowledge with one another.

According to the data, the myths most often believed were those referring to the rapist. A possible reason for this is that education has focused most often on facts concerning the victim and the crime of rape itself. Thus, misconceptions about the rapist have not been dispelled.

Another conceivable variable involved in the belief of the myths centering around the rapist may be the fact that our survey group was entirely male. The men may have had difficulty in identifying with the offender. In identifying with another person, one generally concludes that these are shared characteristics between oneself and that person. The possibility of having personality traits similar to those inherent in the rapist may be too repugnant for most men to consider. It seems that the men would tend to view the offender as a person distinctly different from themselves and from the average male. Such an approach would make it possible to divide men into two groups: those who would be capable of rape and those who would be incapable of committing the crime. The group capable of raping would then tend to be viewed as "sick men who need some sort of psychiatric counseling," or as "frustrated men with high sex drives."

With regard to the questions, "A majority of women fantasize about being raped," (question 16) and "A majority of men fantasize about raping a woman," (question 17), the respondents indicated that they believed these statements to

be false. The researchers postulate that such fantasies do occur; however, public acknowledgement of their occurrence may be too threatening to the individual. Had the respondents agreed that the majority of men and women fantasize about rape, they may have felt that they would thereby be admitting to having fantasies of their own. Disclosure of having rape fantasies may thus initiate uncomfortable fears and guilt feelings within the individual. One possible fear is that having fantasies may be socially unacceptable because society might assume that people who engage in them either unconsciously desire to commit the crime of rape or secretly wish to be raped. Of course, another reason the answers, in the majority of cases, were negative concerning fantasies may be that the individuals were unsure and therefore guessed. Most fantasies can be considered secrets belonging to the fantasizer, so that the individual may not have heard anyone discuss engaging in fantasies pertaining to rape.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

Further studies need to be conducted for the purpose of securing more statistical data. Following the studies, a needs assessment should be formed to provide a broader basis for educational direction. This should include the myths and misconceptions that are believed and the level of

public awareness of the rape related services. Education based on such a needs assessment would then be more likely to achieve its purpose. Further, studies of this type would be especially useful for the rape related agencies which are designed to serve the community as they would be better informed about their constituents.

Rape related agencies need to be involved in more effective advertisement. According to data obtained by our survey, the majority of the male sample population are not aware of their existence. Therefore, it may be useful to direct a certain portion of the publicity toward men.

It is hoped that follow-through on the recommended studies, needs assessment and advertisement would result in more effective education with a better understanding of the crime of rape and the myths surrounding it.

CHAPTER VI

EPILOGUE

Upon completion of this survey, in November of 1975, the researchers became aware of a new publication on the crime of rape: Against Our Will--Men, Women and Rape, by Susan Brownmiller. This book was not available for purchase at the time; however, several articles and interviews about the author and her book were located in popular magazines. The majority of the information found in the articles supported the review of the literature; however, Brownmiller disagrees with the myth that men can be raped. In "Rape Is a Crime Not of Lust, But Power," Brownmiller states that she thinks it is a biological impossibility for a woman to rape a man. In response to the question, "Can a man rape a man?" she states that, "In prison, when men 'rape' men, it is oral, or anal, and technically sodomy." She based both of these statements on the legal definition of rape, which she states is ". . . forcible entry by the male penis at least one inch into the vagina, against the woman's will and without her consent" (Brownmiller: 1975 [b1, p. 68).

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APPENDIX A

DOCUMENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please do not write your name on this form. The first section of this questionnaire concentrates on personal information necessary for comparative studies.

1. AGE _____

2. EDUCATION:

YEARS COMPLETED _____

If your answer was above 12 years, please specify: (Please check one or both of the following:)

College _____ Vocational _____

3. OCCUPATION:

TYPE OF WORK _____

4. MARITAL STATUS: (Check one.)

Single 5 Widowed 0

Married 30 Separated 0

Divorced 3 Other 0

(1 - No response)

5. INCOME: (Check one.)

\$ 0 - 4,999	<u>0</u>	20,000 - 24,999	<u>12</u>
5,000 - 9,999	<u>4</u>	25,000 - 29,999	<u>1</u>
10,000 - 14,999	<u>12</u>	30,000 - 34,999	<u>1</u>
15,000 - 19,999	<u>9</u>	Over 35,000	<u>0</u>

6. RACE: (Check one.)

Indian _____ White 39
 Negro _____ Other _____
 Oriental _____

FOR THE PURPOSE OF OUR STUDY, PLEASE CHECK THE FIRST ANSWER THAT COMES TO YOUR MIND AND DO NOT CONSULT WITH ANYONE ELSE. MARK "TRUE" THOSE QUESTIONS THAT YOU FEEL ARE GENERALLY TRUE AND MARK "FALSE" THOSE QUESTIONS THAT YOU FEEL ARE GENERALLY FALSE.

- (F) 1. Rape is generally a crime that takes place in the streets or dark alleys. TRUE 12 FALSE 27
- (F) 2. Many women try to get revenge on men by accusing them falsely of rape. TRUE 6 FALSE 33
- (F) 3. A woman intent upon defending herself cannot be raped. TRUE 6 FALSE 33
- (T) 4. The majority of rape victims have "good reputations." TRUE 29 FALSE 10
- (F) 5. Most "women ask for it" by their actions or appearance. TRUE 6 FALSE 33
- (T) 6. Most rapes are planned. TRUE 31 FALSE 18
- (T) 7. Most rapists know their victims.
TRUE 10 FALSE 28 (No answer - 1)
- (T) 8. Rapists come from all class levels of society.
TRUE 35 FALSE 4
- (F) 9. Rapists are "sick men who need some type of psychiatric counseling." TRUE 31 FALSE 8
- (F) 10. Most rapists are frustrated men with high sex drives. TRUE 19 FALSE 20
- (T) 11. Men can be raped. TRUE 26 FALSE 11
(No answer - 2)
- (F) 12. "Men have greater sexual needs than women."
TRUE 16 FALSE 22 (No answer - 1)

- (F) 13. Most women who are raped are also beaten.
TRUE 20 FALSE 19
- 14. A majority of women fantasize about being raped.
TRUE 11 FALSE 27 (No answer - 1)
- 15. A majority of men fantasize about raping a woman.
TRUE 12 FALSE 25 (No answer - 2)
- 16. Are you aware of any Portland agencies that help rape victims? YES 12 NO 26
(No answer - 1)

If your answer was Yes, please specify: _____

COMMENTS?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.

This number shall be used for coding purposes only and shall be removed when the questionnaire has been returned.

(Questionnaires numbered 1 through 43.)

PORTLAND JAYCEES

824 S.W. Fifth - Portland, Oregon 97204 - phone
(503) 227-5656

May 6, 1975

Dear Sir:

We are three graduate students from the School of Social Work at Portland State University, who are conducting a community research survey on rape. Gary Parks, past President of the Portland Junior Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Directors have granted us permission to gather data from the members in the Portland Chapter.

Your name was among the 25% randomly chosen from the list of members so your opinions are especially important to us. Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by May 26, 1975. We ask that you do not sign the form, and all information shall be confidential. The survey data will be used for informational purposes and the results will be made available to the Portland Jaycees.

We greatly appreciate your prompt response and cooperation in helping us with this survey. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Hammon (Signed)

Joyce Jerabek (Signed)

Michèle Mairesse (Signed)

Gary Parks, Past President
(Signed)

PORTLAND JAYCEES

824 S.W. Fifth - Portland, Oregon 97204 - phone
(503) 227-5656

May 26, 1975

Dear

On May 6, we mailed a questionnaire to you which was a community survey relating to the subject of rape. To date, we have not received your response. In order for our survey to be complete, we very much need your response.

Enclosed is another copy of the cover letter and questionnaire. We would appreciate if you would fill it out immediately and send it to us by June 4. In the event you have mislaid the original self-addressed, stamped envelope, our address is: Community Survey
P.O. Box 25024
Portland, Oregon 97225

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Hammon (Signed)

Joyce Jerabek (Signed)

Michèle Mairesse (Signed)

June 23, 1975

Mr.

Dear Sir:

Enclosed is another copy of the survey questionnaire which you had previously received. We're sorry to cause you the inconvenience of completing another one but apparently the one you returned to us was lost in the mail for we did not receive it.

Another self-addressed stamped envelope has been enclosed for your convenience and we do appreciate your response as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Joyce Jerabek
Portland State University
School of Social Work

(Also sent July 11, 1975)

June 23, 1975

Dear Sir:

Enclosed please find copies of original letters and the questionnaire sent to your old address. We're sorry they must have gotten lost in the mail, but we would greatly appreciate if you would take just a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it to us in the self-addressed stamped envelope. It is very important to us to get as many questionnaires returned as possible so that our survey can be as accurate as possible.

I think the letters are self-explanatory and we do appreciate your time and cooperation in completing this survey. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,

Joyce Jerabek
Portland State University
School of Social Work

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL TABLES

TABLE X
AGE DISTRIBUTION

Age	Number	Per Cent
21	1	
22	3	
23	1	
24	1	
25	1	49
26	3	
27	2	
28	3	
29	4	
30	8	
31	2	
32	3	
33	1	
34	2	51
35	3	
36	0	
37	0	
38	1	
Total	39	100

TABLE XI
EDUCATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Completed years of education	Number	Per Cent
12	2	5.1
13	3	10 } 25.7
13-1/4	1	
14	2	
14-1/2	1	
15	3	
16	16	41.0
17	7	11 } 28.2
18	4	
Total	39	100

TABLE XII
MARITAL STATUS

Marital Status	Number	Per Cent
Married	30	76.9
Single	5	12.8
Divorced	3	7.7
No answer	1	2.6
Total	39	100

TABLE XIII
 DISTRIBUTION OF ANSWERS
 BY RESPONDENTS

Respondent	Responses		
	No. incorrect	No. correct	No. no answer
1	2	11	
2	3	10	
3	2	11	
4*			
5	8	5	
6	3	10	
7	4	9	
8	6	7	
9	3	10	
10	3	10	
11	5	8	
12*			
13	10	3	
14	7	6	
15	4	9	
16	7	5	1
17	8	5	
18	3	10	
19	4	9	
20	6	7	
21	2	11	
22	4	9	
23	4	9	
24	5	7	1
25	6	7	
26	7	6	
27	7	6	
28	2	11	
29	10	3	
30	2	11	
31	7	6	
32	3	10	
33	2	11	
34*			
35	3	10	
36	6	7	

TABLE XIII--Continued

Respondent	Responses		
	No. incorrect	No. correct	No. no answer
37	0	13	
38	7	6	
39	5	8	
40	5	6	2
41*			
42	6	7	
43	6	7	
Total	43	187	316
			4

*Did not return survey.