

RAPE IN AMERICA

A R E P O R T T O T H E N A T I O N

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Prepared by



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1.3
per Minute

683,000
per Year

78
per Hour

FORCIBLE RAPES

56,916
per Month

1,871
per Day

What is Forcible Rape?

Attempts to discuss the topic of rape are often frustrating because everyone defines rape differently. *The National Women's Study* used a very conservative definition of rape—one which would be legally defined as forcible rape or criminal sexual assault in most states. Specifically, rape was 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.”

Women were asked whether such experiences had occurred

anytime during their lifetimes, whether or not they reported it to police, and whether the attacker was a stranger, family member, boyfriend, or friend.

Clearly other types of sexual assault exist that do not involve force, threat of force, or penetration. Such sexual assaults occur frequently and often have a major negative impact on victims. However, this *Report* focuses on the forcible rape of women; other types of sexual assault (including assaults against men and boys) will not be addressed.

INTRODUCTION

Rape In America

The past year has witnessed unprecedented interest in crimes against women, from Congressional hearings to several high profile rape trials to media scrutiny of rape issues. This intense public concern has produced more questions than answers about crimes against women:

- What is forcible rape?
- How much rape is there in the United States?
- What are rape victims' key concerns?
- How many rapes are actually reported to police, and does media disclosure of rape victims' names affect such reporting?
- What has been the impact of recent high profile rape cases on reporting of rapes?

Rape In America: A Report to the Nation addresses these and other pertinent questions, providing the first national empirical data about forcible rape of women in America. The results of two nationwide studies conducted by the National Victim Center and the Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina are summarized in this *Report*.

The National Women's Study, funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse, is a three-year longitudinal study of a national probability sample of 4,008 adult women. In *The State of Services for Victims of Rape*, sponsored by the National Victim Center, 370 agencies which provide crisis assistance to rape victims were survey respondents.

The National Women's Study is a longitudinal survey of a large national probability sample of 4,008 adult American women (age 18 or older), 2,008 of whom

represent a cross section of all adult women and 2,000 of whom are an oversample of younger women between the ages of 18 and 34. Eighty-five percent of women contacted agreed to participate and completed the initial (Wave One) telephone interview. At the one year follow-up (Wave Two), 81% of *The National Women's Study* participants (n = 3220) were located and re-interviewed. The two year follow-up (Wave Three) is currently in progress, but preliminary data from the first 2,785 women who completed the 45-minute Wave Three interview are included in this Report. In addition to gathering information about forcible rapes that occurred throughout women's lifetimes, *The National Women's Study* also assessed such major mental health problems as depression, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, suicide attempts, as well as alcohol and drug-related problems and consumption. *The National Women's Study* was supported by National Institute of Drug Abuse Grant No. RO1DA05220.

The State of Services for Victims of Rape survey was conducted with respondents from a national probability sample of agencies that provide crisis counseling services to rape victims, at least some of whom have not reported rapes to police. Since police or prosecutor-based agencies have little or no contact with rape victims who decide *not* to report, they are limited in what they can say about why victims do not report or whether there has been any change in rape victims' willingness to report. In contrast, agencies that provide services to rape victims who either did *not* report or are deciding whether to report are in an excellent position to

provide information about factors related to non-reporting. Out of 498 agencies that screened eligible, 370 completed the 25 minute telephone interview. The survey collected information about: the number of rape victims served in 1990 and 1991; agency opinions about the types of rape victims' concerns they see; and agency opinions about the extent to which certain laws, services and policies could increase victims' willingness to report rapes. Agency respondents were also asked about the impact on willingness of rape victims to report after the 1991 West Palm Beach, Florida, and 1992 Indianapolis, Indiana trials. A more detailed description of the methodology of these two studies is provided in the Appendix of this *Report*.

Both studies were directed by Dr. Dean G. Kilpatrick, Director of the Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, Chairperson of the National Victim Center's Research Advisory Committee, and co-author of this *Report*. The National Victim Center's Director of Program Development, Christine N. Edmunds, and Director of Communications, Anne Seymour, also co-authored this *Report*. In addition, both studies were conducted by Schulman, Ronca and Bucuvalas, Inc. (SRBI), a national survey research organization in New York City under the direction of Dr. John Boyle.

Together, these groundbreaking studies provide valuable information about the scope and nature of rape in America. From these remarkable findings, America can learn about what we must do to address rape victims' concerns, and how our nation can remove barriers that prevent victims from reporting rapes to police. ■

SECTION I

The National Women's Study

"...rape in America is a tragedy of youth..."

During Wave One of the study, information was gathered about forcible rape experiences occurring *any time* during a woman's lifetime. Thirteen percent of women surveyed reported having been victims of *at least one completed rape* in their lifetimes. Based on U.S. Census estimates of the number of adult women in America, one out of every eight adult women, or at least *12.1 million American women*, has been the victim of forcible rape sometime in her lifetime.

Many American women were raped more than once. While 56%, or an estimated 6.8 million women experienced only one rape, 39%, or an estimated 4.7 million women were raped more than once, and five percent were unsure as to the number of times they were raped (See Figure 1).

Prior to this study, national information about rape was limited to data on reported

rapes from the *FBI Uniform Crime Reports* or data from the *Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Survey (NCS)* on reported and non-reported rapes occurring in the past year. However, the *NCS* provides no information about rapes occurring over the lifetime of a victim, and has been recently redesigned due to criticisms that it failed to detect a substantial proportion of rape cases. Therefore, the results of these two new surveys fill a large gap in current knowledge about rape at the national level.

Information from *The National Women's Study* indicates that 0.7% of all women surveyed had experienced a completed forcible rape in the past year. This equates to an estimated 683,000 adult American women who were raped during a twelve-month period (See Figure 2).

The National Women's Study estimate that 683,000 adult American women were raped in a

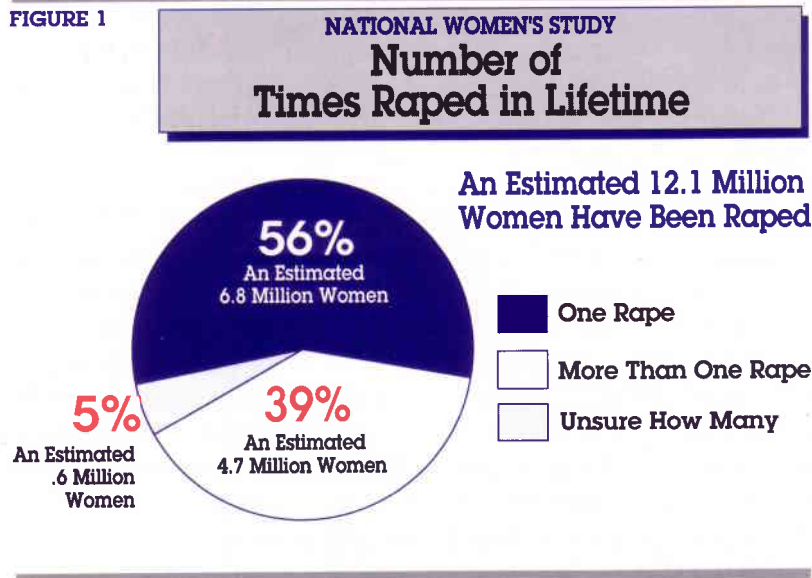
one year period *does not include all rapes that occurred in America that year*. Rapes that occurred to female children and adolescents under the age of 18—which comprised more than six out of ten of all rapes occurring over women's lifetimes—were not included, nor were any rapes of boys or men.

Thus, the 683,000 rapes of adult women probably constitute well less than half of all the rapes that were experienced by all Americans of all ages and genders during that one year period.

How do these estimates from *The National Women's Study* compare with those from the *FBI Uniform Crime Reports* and from the *National Crime Survey*? The FBI estimate of the number of attempted or completed forcible rapes that were reported to police in 1990 was 102,560. The *National Crime Survey* estimates include both reported and non-reported rapes that are either attempted or completed. The *NCS* estimate for 1990 is 130,000 attempted or completed rapes of female Americans age 12 or older. *The National Women's Study* estimate was based on completed rapes of adult women (age 18 or older) that occurred between Wave One (conducted in the fall of 1989), and Wave Two (conducted in the fall of 1990). Thus, the time periods were not identical, but were roughly comparable for these three estimates. Although it did not include attempted rapes or rapes of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 18 as did the *NCS*, *The National Women's Study* estimate was still 5.3 times larger than the *NCS* estimate.

In *The National Women's Study*, information was gathered regarding up to three rapes per person: the first rape she ever experienced, the most recent rape, and the "worst" rape if other than the first or most

FIGURE 1



recent. Information was available from Wave One about 714 such cases of rape that 507 victims of rape had experienced. The survey found that rape in America is a tragedy of youth, with the majority of rape cases occurring during childhood and adolescence. Twenty-nine percent of all forcible rapes occurred when the victim was less than 11 years old, while another 32% occurred between the ages of 11 and 17. Slightly more than one in five rapes (22%) occurred between the ages of 18 and 24; seven percent occurred between the ages of 25 and 29, with only six percent occurring when the victim was older than 29 years old. Three percent of the respondents were not sure or refused to answer (See Figure 3). ■

“...one out of every eight adult women, or at least 12.1 million American women, has been the victim of forcible rape sometime in her lifetime.”

FIGURE 2

CURRENT NATIONAL ESTIMATES
Number of Forcible Rapes per Year

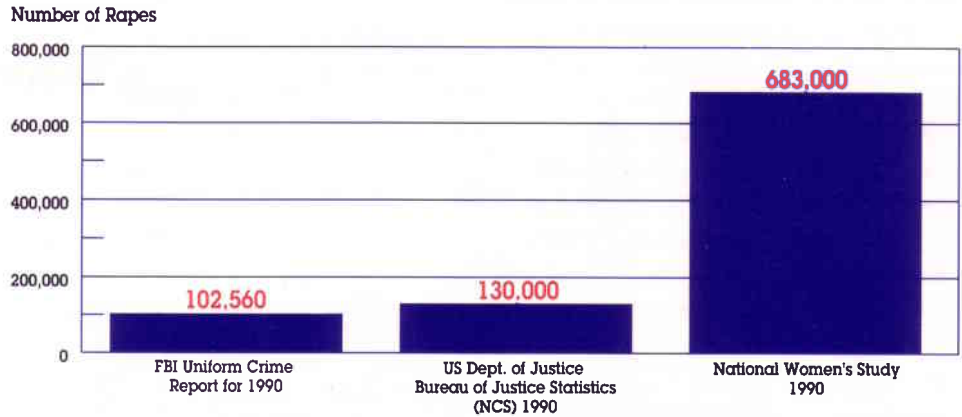
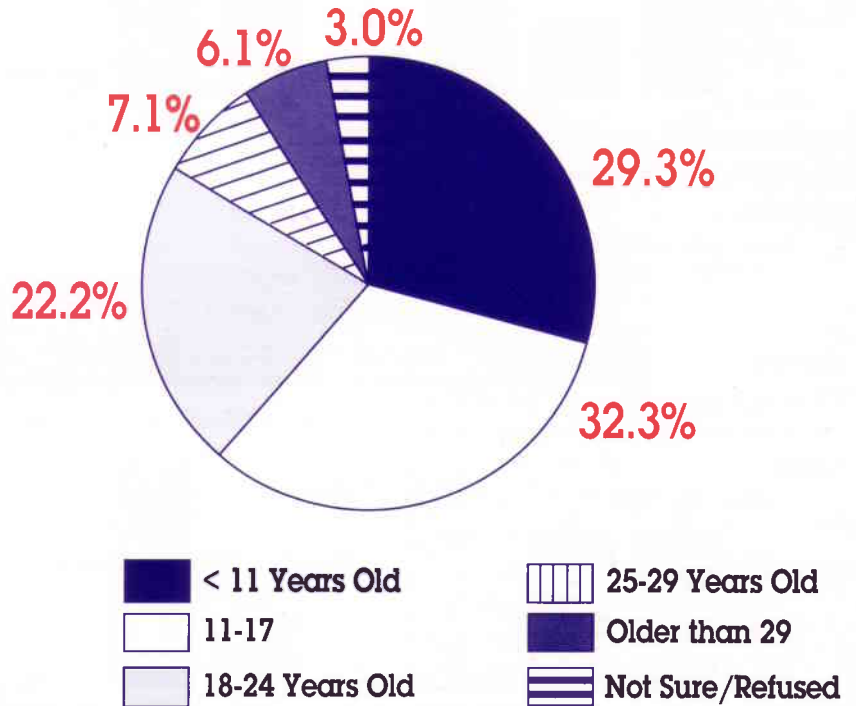


FIGURE 3

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY (N=714 Cases)
Age at Time of Rape



Characteristics of Rape

The National Women's Survey clearly dispels the common myth that most women are raped by strangers. To the contrary, only 22% of rape victims were assaulted by someone they had never seen before or did not know well. Nine percent of victims were raped by husbands or ex-husbands; eleven percent by their fathers or step-fathers; ten percent by boyfriends or ex-boyfriends; sixteen percent by other relatives; and twenty-nine percent by other non-relatives, such as friends and neighbors. Note: Three

percent of the respondents were not sure or refused to answer (See Figure 4).

Another common misconception about rape is that most victims sustain serious physical injuries. Over two-thirds (70%) of rape victims reported no physical injuries; only 4% sustained serious physical injuries, with 24% receiving minor physical injuries. Of considerable importance is the fact that many victims who did *not* sustain physical injuries nonetheless *feared being seriously injured or killed* during the rape. Almost half of all rape victims (49%) described being fearful of serious injury or death during the rape (See Figure 5).

The information about rape characteristics noted previously was from Wave One of the study that identified 714 rape cases. Wave Two of the study provided information about the number of new rape cases between Wave One and Wave Two. Wave Three provides more descriptive information about *all* rape cases detected in Wave One and Two, including any new rape cases that have occurred since Wave One.

Without accurate information about victims' concerns after rape, it is difficult to create and implement policies and programs to meet their most critical needs. Therefore, rape victims were asked about the extent to which they were concerned about issues specific to their personal rape experiences.

Rape victims were at least somewhat or extremely concerned about the following:

- Her family knowing she had been sexually assaulted (71%);
- People thinking it was her fault or that she was responsible (69%);
- People outside her family knowing she had been sexually assaulted (68%);
- Her name being made public by the news media (50%);
- Becoming pregnant (34%);
- Contracting a sexually transmitted disease not including HIV/AIDS (19%); and
- Contracting HIV/AIDS (10%) (See Figure 6).

The combination of concerns about being blamed (which reflect the stigma still associated with rape) and people finding out they had been victims (which reflects confidentiality concerns) may explain why more than half of rape victims in America express concern about the news media disclosing their names.

It is clear that rape victims are extremely concerned about people *finding out* and *finding reasons* to blame them for the rape. If the *stigma* of rape was not *still* a very real concern in victims' eyes, perhaps fewer rape victims in America would be concerned about invasion of their privacy and other disclosure issues.

FIGURE 4

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY (N=714 Cases) Relationship Between Victim and Perpetrator

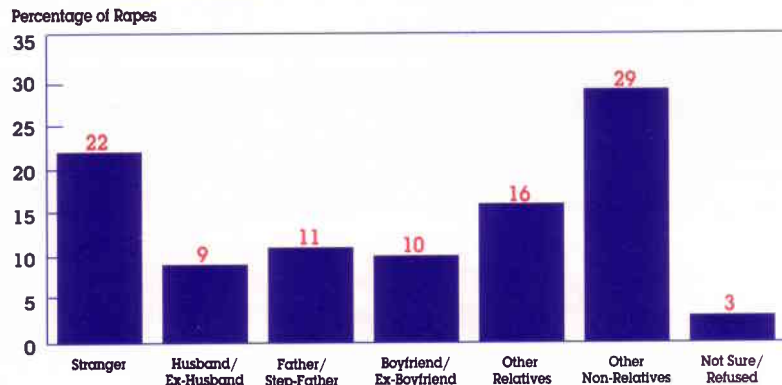
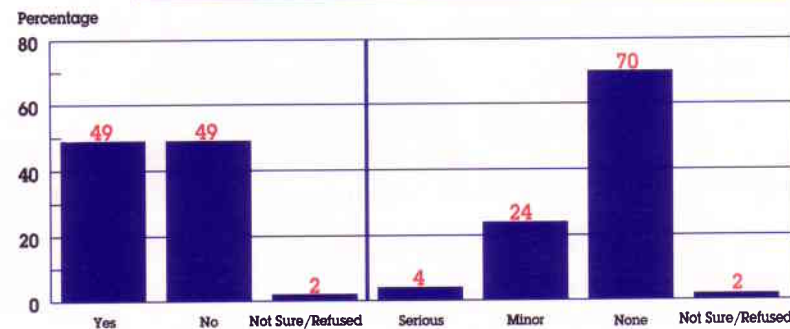


FIGURE 5

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY (N=714 Cases) Life Threat and Degree of Physical Injury Sustained During Rape



Somewhat surprisingly, concerns about exposure to sexually transmittable diseases and HIV/AIDS were lower than might be expected. However, many victims were raped years ago as children, prior to America's AIDS epidemic.

Victims were asked if they had a medical examination following the assault. In *only 17%* of all rape cases did such an exam occur. Of these, 60% of rape victims who did receive a medical examination had it within 24 hours of the assault. However, in 40% of the cases, the exam occurred more than 24 hours *after* the assault. Victims told their doctors in only two-thirds of rape cases that they had been sexually assaulted; the doctor was never told about the rape in one-third of such cases.

Results of the survey indicate that many recommended practices and protocol did *not* occur in all rape examinations:

- Six out of ten rape victims (60%) were *not* advised about pregnancy testing or how to prevent pregnancy;
- More than seven out of ten (73%) were *not* given information about testing for exposure to HIV/AIDS; and
- Almost four out of ten (39%) were *not* given information about testing for exposure to sexually transmitted diseases.

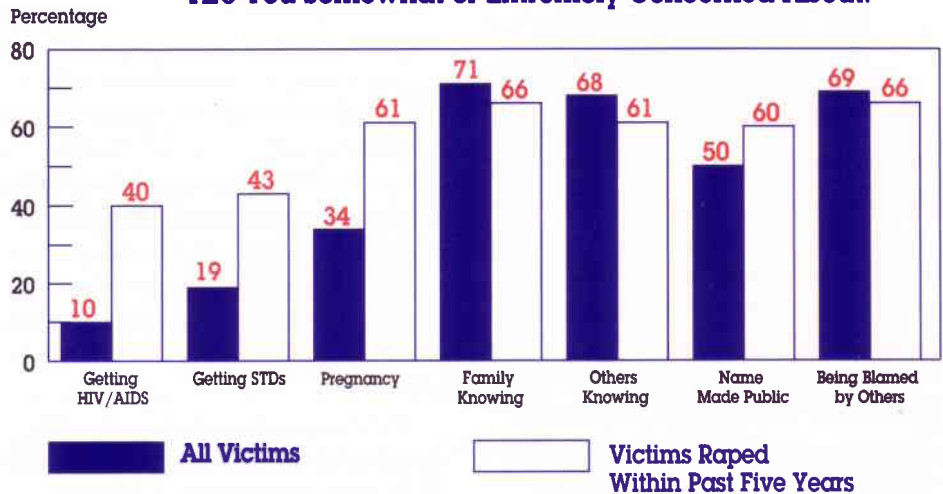
Concerns about HIV/AIDS are more salient in recent years as America has become aware of the prevalence of this disease and its modes of transmission. Therefore, *The National Women's Study* looked at major concerns of rape victims who had been assaulted within the five years prior to interview. In addition, the study also assessed whether a higher percentage of victims of more recent rapes was concerned about public disclosure of rape because of media attention on the recent high profile cases in West Palm Beach and Indianapolis.

- Recent rape victims were four times more likely to be concerned about getting HIV/AIDS as a result of the rape than all rape victims, regardless of the recency of the rape (40% vs. 10%);

FIGURE 6

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY (N=579 Rape Cases)
**Important Concerns of Rape Victims:
Recent Rapes vs. All Rapes**

Are You Somewhat or Extremely Concerned About:



- More than twice as many recent rape victims were concerned about the development of sexually transmitted diseases than all rape victims (43% vs. 19%); and
- Women who had been raped within the past five years were more likely to be concerned about the possibility of their names being made public than all rape victims (60% vs. 50%) (*See Figure 6*).

Rates of concerns about family members knowing about the rape (66% vs. 71%), people outside the family finding out (61% vs. 68%), and victims being blamed for the rape (66% vs. 69%) were similar among recent and all rape victims.

Because of the increased awareness among health professionals about HIV/AIDS and the obvious increased concern among victims within the past five years, *The National Women's Study* also examined rates of information provided during examinations for rapes within the past five years. There have been slight improvements in the dissemination of information about testing for pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases to rape victims; however:

- *Non-provision* of information about pregnancy prevention to recent rape victims

was similar to the rate reported overall (55% vs. 60%);

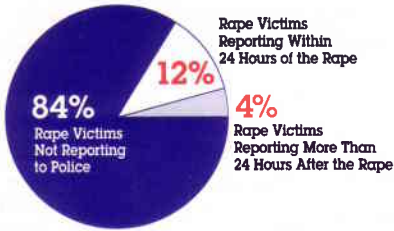
- One third (33%) of recent rape victims were *not* given information about testing for exposure to sexually transmitted diseases as opposed to 40% of all rape victims; and
- Five out of ten (50%) of recent rape victims were still not being given information about testing for HIV/AIDS, despite the fact that rape clearly constitutes an unprotected exposure to bodily fluids of assailants with unknown HIV/AIDS status.

Rape remains the most underreported violent crime in America. *The National Women's Study* found that only 16%, or approximately one out of every six rapes, are ever reported to police. Of reported rapes, one-quarter (25%) were reported to police more than 24 hours *after* the rape occurred (*See Figure 7*).

Rape victims were asked about the likelihood of reporting to police if a similar incident happened in the future. The surprising (and encouraging) responses indicated that 61% definitely would report and 25% probably would report a future rape to the police.

FIGURE 7

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY
Percentage of All Rape Victims Reporting to the Police



The National Women's Study findings show that 84% of rape victims do not report to the police. What implications does this have for public safety and public policy?

If the assumption is made that each rapist in America rapes only once in his life, then each unreported rape results in an injustice to that victim, but has no further impact on public safety. However, there is clear evidence that most rapists are recidivists. A respected study of unincarcerated sex offenders provides dramatic evidence of the extent of recidivism

and why it is so important for rape victims to report. Dr. Gene Abel* and his colleagues studied 561 unincarcerated sex offenders, of whom 126 admitted to having committed rape. *These 126 rapists had committed a total of 907 rapes involving 882 different victims. The average number of different victims per rapist was seven.*

Unreported rapes are a threat to public safety in America. After all, rapists cannot be apprehended, indicted, prosecuted, and incarcerated if the criminal justice system does not know that a rape has occurred. Such undetected rapists remain invisible to the criminal justice system. If rape victims are reluctant to report, then rapists will remain free to continue raping America's women, men and children.

Therefore, the dire need for public safety dictates what America's public policy should be: to do everything possible to encourage reporting of *all* alleged rapes to police.

During the past year, several high profile rape cases received vast publicity, with several respected news agencies straying from their

standard wise policies of *not* disclosing rape victims' names. The argument has been made that disclosing rape victims' names would "destigmatize" the crime of rape and encourage victims to report rapes to police. It is extremely significant that rape victims appear to strongly disagree with this argument.

Half of rape victims surveyed (50%) stated they would be *a lot more likely* to report rapes to police if there was a law prohibiting the news media from getting and disclosing their names and addresses, with an additional 16% *somewhat more likely* to report (See Figure 8).

Opposition to media disclosure of rape victims' names is *not* limited to victims themselves. All participants in *The National Women's Survey* were asked if they personally favored or opposed laws which prevent the disclosure of the names and addresses of sexual assault victims. More than three-quarters (76%) of American women strongly favor or somewhat favor such laws.

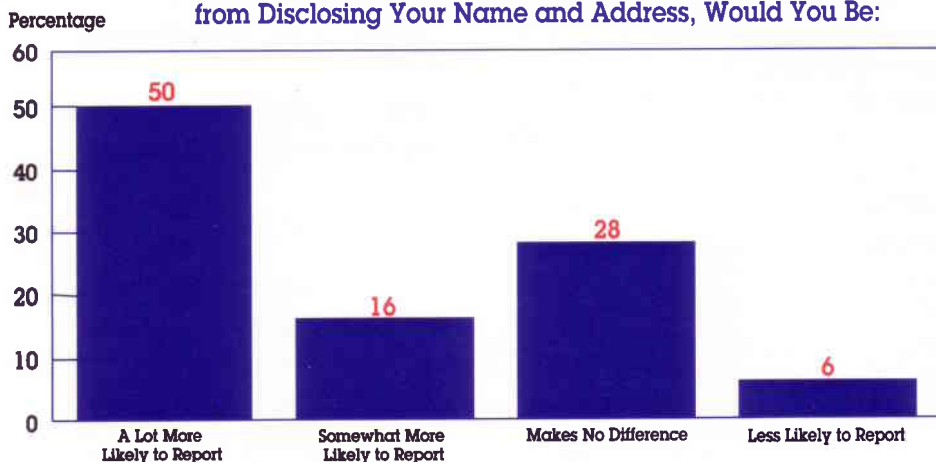
When asked how they think the risk of being identified in the news media affects rape reporting to police, almost nine out of ten American women (86%) felt victims would be *less likely* to report rapes if they felt their names would be disclosed by the news media.

A disturbing pattern emerges when one looks at shifts of concerns of rape victims over these years. It appears that women are *just as likely* in recent years to fear negative evaluation by others if a rape is disclosed, and are *more concerned* about the possibility of their names being made public. In addition, they are more likely to be concerned about their risk of developing sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Finally, even in the minority of cases where victims *do* seek information and health care, their legitimate concerns are frequently not addressed. At the very least, these women should be encouraged to feel comfortable and should be supported in seeking adequate health care and information to quell fears about exposure to disease, regardless of the criminal justice or civil justice consequences of cases. ■

FIGURE 8

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY (N=391 Rape Victims)
Impact on Rape Reporting of Laws Prohibiting Disclosure of Victims' Names

If There Was a Law Prohibiting the News Media from Disclosing Your Name and Address, Would You Be:



*Abel G., Becker, J., Mittelman, M., Cunningham-Rathner, J., Rouleau, J., & Murphy, W. (1987). Self-reported sex crimes of nonincarcerated paraphiliacs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 2 (1), 3-25.

The Mental Health Impact of Rape

The National Women's Study produced dramatic confirmation of the mental health impact of rape by determining comparative rates of several mental health problems among rape victims and women who had never been victims of rape. The study ascertained whether rape victims were more likely than women who had never been crime victims to experience these devastating mental health problems.

The first mental health problem examined was Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), an extremely debilitating mental health disorder occurring after a highly disturbing traumatic event, such as military combat or violent crime. Almost one-third (31%) of all rape victims developed PTSD sometime during their lifetimes, and more than one in ten rape victims (11%) still has PTSD at the present time. Rape victims were 6.2 times more likely to develop PTSD than women who had never been victims of crime (31% vs. 5%). Rape victims were also 5.5 times more likely to have current PTSD than their counterparts who had never been victims of crime (11% vs. 2%) (See Figure 9).

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that there are approximately 96.3 million adult women in the United States age 18 or older. If 13% of American women have been raped and 31% of rape victims have developed PTSD, then 3.8 million adult American women have had Rape-related PTSD. Moreover, if 11% of all rape victims have current PTSD, then an estimated 1.3 million American women currently have RR-PTSD. Finally, if 683,000 women are raped each year, then approximately 211,000 will develop RR-PTSD each year.

Major depression is a mental health problem affecting many women, not just rape victims. However, 30% of rape victims had experienced at least one major depressive episode in their lifetimes, and 21% of all rape victims were experiencing a major depressive episode at the time of assessment. In contrast, only 10% of women never victimized by violent crime had ever had a major depressive episode and only six percent had a major depressive episode when assessed. Thus, rape victims were three times more likely than non-victims of crime to have ever had a major depressive episode (30% vs. 10%), and were 3.5 times more likely to be currently experiencing a major depressive episode (21% vs. 6%).

"...3.8 million adult American women have had Rape-related Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and an estimated 1.3 million American women currently have RR-PTSD..."

Some mental health problems are life-threatening in nature. When asked if they ever thought seriously about committing suicide, 33% of the rape victims and 8% of the non-victims of crime stated that they had seriously considered suicide. Thus, rape victims were 4.1 times more likely than non-crime victims to have contemplated suicide. Rape victims were also 13 times more likely than non-crime victims to have actually made a suicide attempt (13% vs. 1%). The fact that 13% of all rape victims had actually attempted suicide confirms the devastating and potentially life-threatening mental health impact of rape.

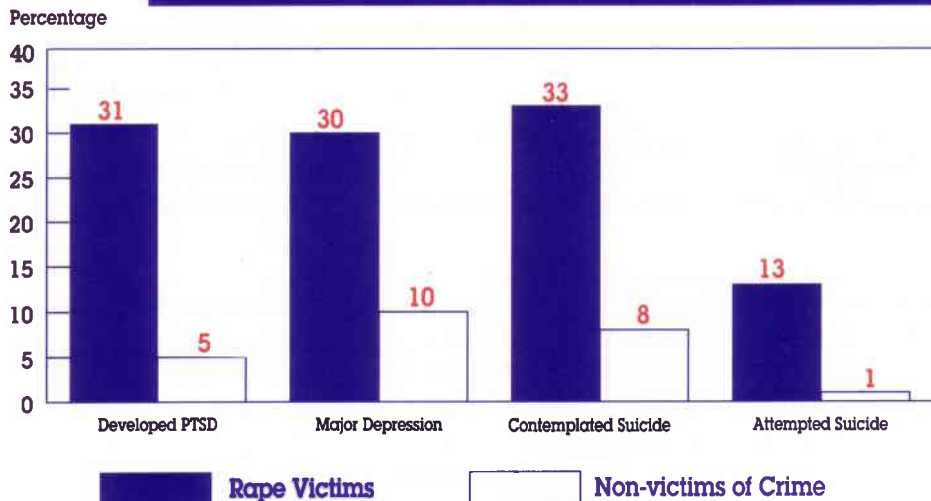
Finally, there was substantial evidence that rape victims had higher rates of drug and alcohol consumption and a greater likelihood of having drug and alcohol-related problems than non-victims of crime (See Figure 10).

Compared to non-victims of crime, rape victims were:

- 5.3 times more likely to have used prescription drugs non-medically (14.7% vs 2.8%);
- 3.4 times more likely to have used marijuana (52.2% vs 15.5%);
- Six times more likely to have used cocaine (15.5% vs 2.6%);
- 10.1 times more likely to have used hard drugs other than cocaine (12.1% vs 1.2%); and
- 6.4 times more likely to have used hard drugs or cocaine (19.2% vs 3.0%).

FIGURE 9

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY Rates of Mental Health Problems Among Rape Victims and Non-victims of Crime



For most rape victims, the age at which the first rape occurred was younger than the age at which they first became intoxicated or began using marijuana or cocaine (recall that over 60% of all rapes occurred before age 18). For rape victims:

- Only 21% first became intoxicated at an earlier age than the age at which they were first raped;
- Only 32% of those having used marijuana did so earlier than their age at first rape; and
- Only 11% of those ever using cocaine did so at an age earlier than the age at which they were first raped.

American women were asked whether they had ever had the following problems because of alcohol or drug consumption: trouble at work or school; difficulties with family or friends; health problems; trouble with police; auto accidents; or accidents at home. Because many trauma victims consume alcohol or drugs to deal with their emotional pain, rape victims were separated into those who had developed RR-PTSD and those who never developed it. Next, the percentage of rape victims with and without PTSD who had two or more alcohol related and drug related problems was determined. Compared to rape victims without PTSD, rape victims with RR-PTSD were:

- 5.3 times more likely to have two or more major alcohol-related problems (20.1% vs 3.8%); and
- 3.7 times more likely to have two or more serious drug-related problems (7.8% vs 2.1%).

Compared to women who had *never* been crime victims, rape victims with RR-PTSD were:

- 13.4 times more likely to have two or more major alcohol problems (20.1% vs 1.5%); and
- 26 times more likely to have two or more major serious drug abuse problems (7.8% vs 0.3%) (See Figure 11).

The National Women's Study findings provide compelling evidence about the extent to

FIGURE 10

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY Drug Use: A Comparison of Rape Victims and Non-victims

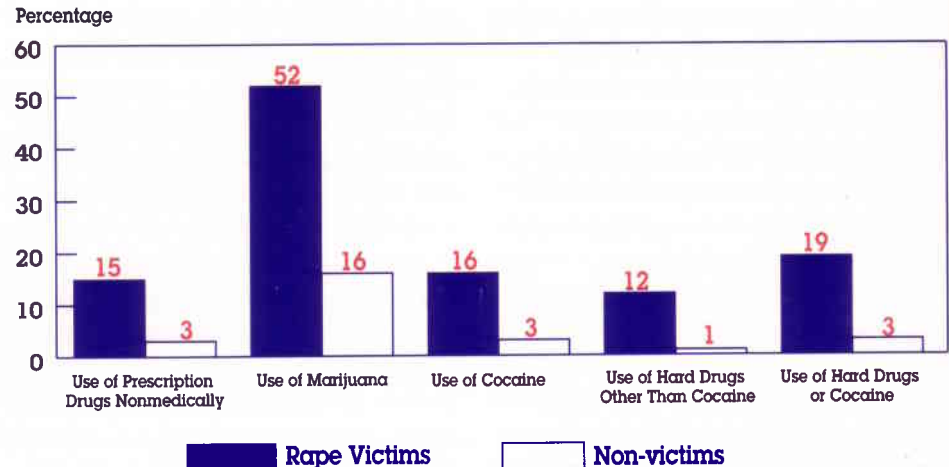
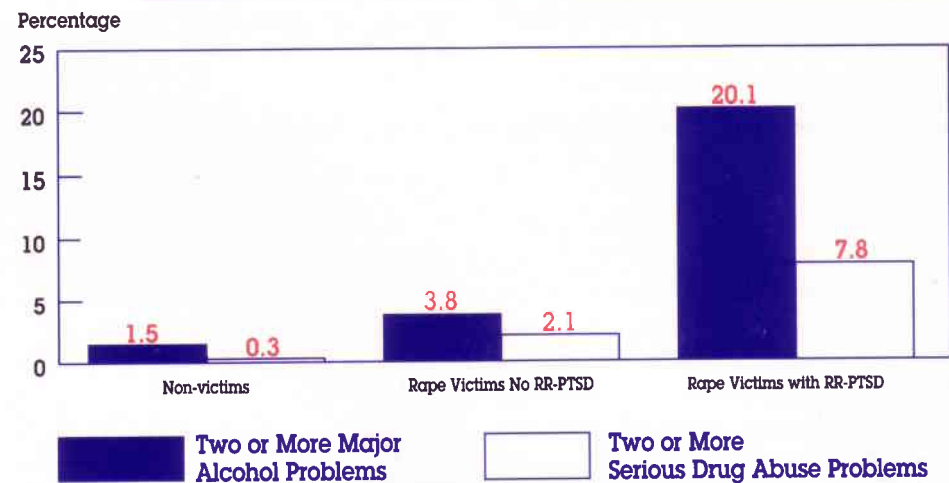


FIGURE 11

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY Two or More Alcohol or Drug Abuse Problems: A Comparison of Victims and Non-victims



which rape poses a danger to American women's mental health and even their continued survival because of the increased suicide risk. Thus, rape is a problem for America's mental health and public health systems as well as for the criminal justice system.

The dramatically higher risk of substance abuse problems among American women who have been raped and develop PTSD suggests that America may need to commit greater resources to the war on rape, as it has to win its war on drugs. ■

SECTION II

State of Services for Victims of Rape

The tragedy of rape is confronted daily by a remarkable group of advocates nationwide who devote their collective energies to crisis intervention, victim assistance and support, and rape prevention. Over two thousand organizations have emerged in the past twenty years to support rape victims.

Often, victims rely on these agencies for advice about whether or not to report rape to police, and how to deal with the devastating physical and emotional aftermath of sexual assault. At many agencies, reporting to police is *not* a prerequisite to victims receiving support and services. Almost two-thirds (63%) either strongly or somewhat encourage victims to report; over one-third of the agencies (36%) neither encourage nor discourage victims to report their rapes to police. Furthermore, *no agencies surveyed* said they discourage victims from reporting their rapes to police.

Because of their contact with rape victims, including those who choose not to report to police, such agencies are in a unique position to help determine the scope and nature of both rape in America and, more specifically, rape victims' most prevalent concerns. *The State of Services for Victims of Rape* included responses from staff at 370 agencies that provide crisis counseling to rape victims, including those who may not report to police.

This survey asked respondents about victims' key concerns following a sexual assault. Agencies were asked about whether victims' concerns had increased over the past year (1991) about the following issues:

- Contracting HIV/AIDS (71%);
- Their names being made public (40%);
- Contracting a sexually transmitted disease (30%);
- Obtaining appropriate mental health counseling (23%);

FIGURE 12

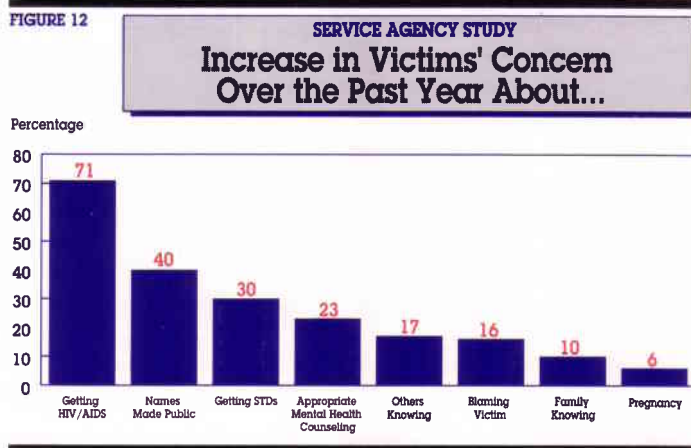
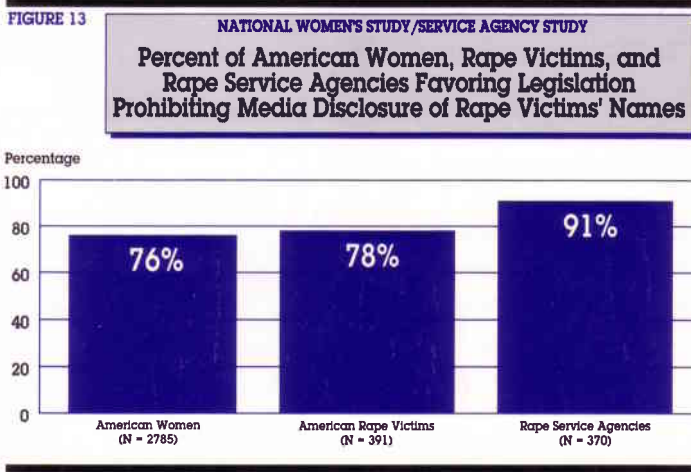


FIGURE 13



- Persons outside their family knowing they had been sexually assaulted (17%);
- People thinking that it was their fault or that they were responsible (16%);
- Their family knowing they had been sexually assaulted (10%); and
- Becoming pregnant as a result of the assault (6%) (See Figure 12).

Parallel to the questions posed to participants in *The National Women's Study*,

agencies were asked whether they favored laws which prohibit news media disclosure of the names and addresses of sexual assault victims. More than nine out of ten agencies (91%) strongly favored or somewhat favored such legislation. Thus, model legislation proposed by the National Victim Center relevant to protecting the privacy rights of rape victims from the news media is supported by the vast majority of *American women, American rape victims, and American rape service agencies* (See Figure 13).

Furthermore, agencies were asked what would be the likely impact of rape victims' willingness to report the crime to police if they felt their names would be released to the news media. An overwhelming 96% of survey respondents indicated that such media disclosure would make victims *less likely* to report crimes to the police. *Not one agency* thought that involuntary media disclosure of rape victims' names would increase rape reports to police (See Figure 14).

The results of this *Report* clearly refute the assertion that media disclosure of rape victims' names would *increase* victims' willingness to report to police. To the contrary, almost all respondents to both studies highlighted in this *Report* felt that rape victims' privacy rights should not only be respected, but protected by law.

The privacy rights of persons accused of rape were also addressed in this survey. A majority of rape crisis centers (63%) favored laws that would prohibit the disclosure of the names of persons accused of rape until *after* an arrest is made. However, support for protecting the privacy of persons *indicted* for rape decreased significantly, with 40% of respondents strongly or somewhat favoring laws prohibiting media disclosure of *indicted defendants'* names. Support for protecting the privacy for persons *convicted* of rape was even less, with less than one-fourth (24%) believing that convicted rapists' privacy rights in the news media should be protected by law (See Figure 15).

Agencies were asked what percentage of rape victims they served were unwilling to report the crime to police. Forty-two percent of the agencies said that *more than half* of all their sexually assaulted clients were unwilling to report to the police.

What do agencies see as the major barriers to reporting and how effective would removing these barriers be toward increasing victims' willingness to report? Agencies indicated that the following policies, programs and services would be very effective or somewhat effective in increasing sexual assault victims' willingness to report:

FIGURE 14

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDY / SERVICE AGENCY STUDY Media Disclosure of Rape Victims' Names and the Likelihood of Victims to Report to Police

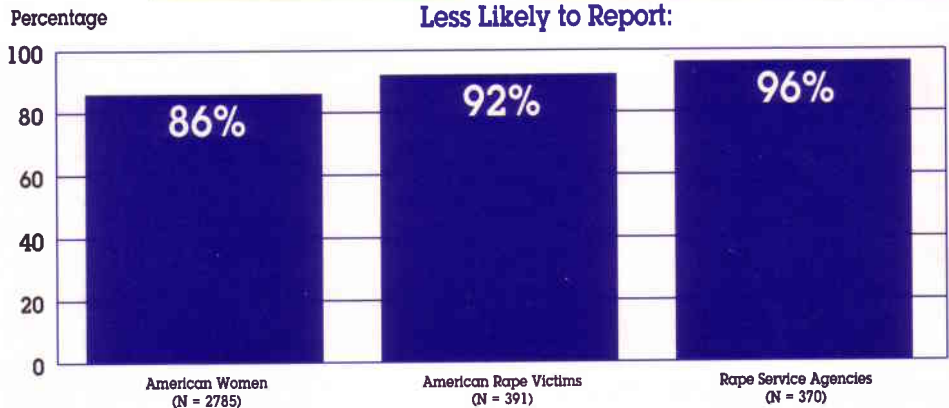
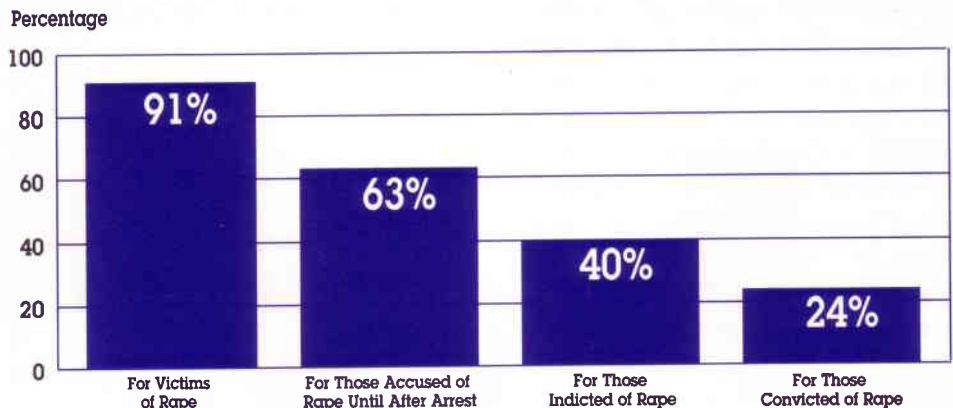


FIGURE 15

SERVICE AGENCY STUDY Respondents Favoring Privacy Laws



- Public education about acquaintance rape (99%);
- Laws protecting sexual assault victims' confidentiality and prohibiting disclosure of their names and addresses by the news media (97%);
- Expanding counseling and advocacy services for sexual assault victims and their family members (97%);
- Availability of free pregnancy counseling and abortion for rape victims who get pregnant (77%);
- Mandatory HIV testing of persons indicted on sexual assault charges (80%); and
- Providing confidential free testing for HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted diseases to victims (57%) (See Figure 16).