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## 50 Actual Facts About Rape

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Remember facts? Remember facts about rape? Because it turns out that a whole lot of people know less than nothing about the subject. Indeed what they think they know is a whole lot of something that is wrong and dangerous to our health, safety and well-being. Republican nominee for Senate Richard Mourdock's recent "misspeaking" is unexceptional. Despite what he may have meant when he said "even when life begins in that horrible situation of rape that... is something God intended to happen," he is unexceptional. He's not an outlier. Not a radical. In no substantive way different from his conservative peers in this regard (see below if you disagree). Indeed, he and others, like Todd Akin and Paul Ryan, are part of an age-old tradition of men with power defining when women are raped. And others who enable them to do it for their own gain. But, they are not just the Republican party's legislative norm, they are a fair reflection of our cultural tolerance, one without party affiliation, for rape and its qualifications. For months now we've been subjected to surreal revelation when it comes to what people think and understand about rape, god and women's magical bodies. Here is some real, fact-checked information from a list originally published last week in RHRealityCheck. *And this is trigger warning*. You may want a strong cup of coffee. Or a drink. Or an empty stomach. There is nothing remotely divine about rape. But steeping our selves in denial or happy oblivion is hurting too many people and has the potential to hurt a lot more.

### 50 Facts About Rape

Low estimate of the number of women , according to the Department of Justice, raped every year: 300,000

High estimate of the number of women raped, according to the CDC: 1.3 million

Percentage of rapes not reported: 54 percent

A woman's chance of being raped in the U.S.: 1 in 5

Chances that a raped woman conceives compared to one engaging in consensual sex: at least two times as likely

Number of women in the US impregnated against their will each year in the U.S. as a result of rape: 32,000

Number of states in which rapists can sue for custody and visitation: 31

Chances that a woman's body "shuts that whole thing down": 0 in 3.2 billion

Rank of U.S. in the world for rape: 13th

A woman's chance of being raped in college: 1 in 4 or 5

Chances that a Native American woman in the U.S. will be raped: 1 in 3

Percentage of women in Alaska who have suffered sexual assault: 37 percent

Number of rape kits untested by the Houston police force: 6,000-7,000 (Texas ranked second in nation for "forcible rape")

Number of adult men accused of repeatedly gang raping 11-year-old girl in Texas: 14

Quote in the New York Times regarding the rape: "They said she dressed older than her age."

Age of woman raped in Central Park in September, 2012: 73

Number of rape kits left untested in Detroit, listed by Forbes as one of two the most dangerous places for woman to live in the US: 11,303

U.S. state in which, in September 2012, mentally disabled rape victim was required to provide evidence of her "kicking, biting, scratching" in objection to her rape: Connecticut

State seeking to reduce childcare welfare benefits to women cannot provide proof of their pregnancy-causing rapes: Pennsylvania

Percentage of sexual assault and rape victims under the age of 12: 15 percent

Percentage of men who have been raped: 3 percent

Percentage of rapists who are never incarcerated: 97 percent

Percentage of rapes that college students think are false claims: 50 percent

Percentage of rapes that studies find are false claims: 2-8 percent

Number of rapes reported in the military last year: 16,500

Pentagon's estimated percentage of military assaults not reported: 80-90 percent

Percentage of military rape victims who were gang raped/raped more than once: 14%/20%

Percentage of military rape victims that are men: 8-37 percent

Percentage of military victims who get an "involuntarily" discharge compared to percentage of charged and accused who are discharged *with honor*: 90 percent involuntary to 80 percent with honor

Chances an incarcerated person is raped in the U.S.: 1 in 10

Increase in chance that LGBTB prisoner is raped: 15x greater chance

Number of men raped that could be counted as legally raped before the FBI changed its definition in December of 2011: 0

Number of rapes noted in commonly used World War II statistics: 0

Number of rapes of WWII concentration camp inmates: Untallied millions

Number of rapes of German women by Russian soldiers at the end of WWII: between 1m and 2m

Number of women raped in 1990s Bosnian conflict: 60,000+

Number of women raped per hour in Congo during war: 48

Country where 12 year old was forced to participate in the rape of his mother: U.S.

Country where women are imprisoned for being raped: Afghanistan

Age of Moroccan rape victim who committed suicide after being forced to marry her rapist: 16

Worldwide number of "child brides" under the age of 18 forced to marry every day: 25,000

Ages of girls forced to marry a 59-year-old at the Tony Alamo Christian Ministry in Arkansas: 8, 14, 15

Estimated number of people, primarily children, sexually abused by priests in the U.S. versus the number of senior Catholic officials found guilty of sexual abuse related crimes in the U.S.: 10,667 to 1

Chances that a woman in the U.S. is raped versus gets breast cancer: 2 to 1

Chances that a victim is "Emergency Raped" by a stranger versus percentage of victims who consider their rapes emergencies: 7 percent versus 100 percent

Percentage of victims of rape who report the use of a weapon: 11 percent

Prison sentences for four men found guilty of participating in gang rapes of two teenage girls in France over two years: one year, six months, suspended sentence

State where in 2012 a doctor is facing the loss of her medical license for providing an abortion to a pregnant 10-year old incest rape victim: Kansas

Country where doctors (but not the rapist) were excommunicated for performing a life-saving abortion to nine-year-old incest rape victim: Brazil

Country where major party's vice-presidential candidate wants to criminalize all abortions including rape-related ones, because rape is just "another method of conception": U.S.

Had enough? Me, too. And, believe me, this is the Cliff Notes version. Some people are offended by frank conversation about violence, especially sexualized violence. I'm offended by tolerance for these assaults, scientific denialism, entertainment at the expense of people's safety and bodily integrity, and shame-infused legislation that hurts children and women and is based on the belief that all men are animals at heart.

Rape happens everywhere . All over the world rape acceptance, rape tolerance, rape denial and rape ignorance at best are used to restrict women's reproductive rights and impede women's equality. At worse, rape is used strategically and with violence and malevolence as a weapon in war and as a tool of active oppression. Keeping the reality of rape in the shadows has obviously done us a massive disservice and provided cover for rapists and their apologists. So, even though it's not easy information to digest, it's important. Maybe *information* is part of god's divine plan.

In an excellent and thorough overview of our problem, Ending Rape Illiteracy, published yesterday in the *Nation*, Jessica Valenti, coauthor along with Jaclyn Friedman of Yes Means Yes!: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape, wrote: "Every day, the severity, violence and criminality of what rape is -- its very definition -- is distorted in a way that makes it more difficult for survivors to come forward and for anti-violence advocates to do their work, while making the world easier for victim-blaming and for rapists themselves."

Akin, Mourdock, Ryan, et al are the distortions. If men like Mitt Romney really doesn't agree with them then he should grow some ovaries, so to speak, and stop playing in the same political sand box. And, please, these men are not alone: "legitimate rape" versus non legitimate rape. "Forcible rape" as "stock language," "lemons from lemonade." Women "should make the best of a bad situation," "horribly created gifts from God," "husbands can't rape their wives, because of science and technology no woman ever needs an abortion," "emergency rape," "women lie about rape legislation," "honest rape," "rape blackmail," "the sodomized virgin" rape, "rape is like auto theft." But, again, all of this goes hand-in-hand with Facebook rape pages, Daniel Tosh rape jokes, Reddit rapist threads, music, videos, movies, ad infinitum. This recent political display of religiously convoluted rape "reasoning" in legislation is a national shame with deadly consequences for women here and abroad. But, just as these legislators want to decide for themselves when a woman is raped, they also want to control when a woman can and cannot be pregnant and they infuse the same level of malignant know-nothingness into those decisions, too. And, no, it does not make me feel any better that Republican Representative Steve King has "never heard of a girl getting pregnant from rape or incest." At least he cleared this up for me, I used to think "ignorant buffoon" was spelled with 15 letters.

#### Resources

If you want to understand more about the continued use of rape and its role in culture here are some suggested books.

Yes Means Yes!: Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape

Jaclyn Friedman (Author), Jessica Valenti (Author)

Transforming a Rape Culture [ Emilie Buchwald (Editor), Pamela Fletcher (Editor), Martha Roth (Editor)

The Macho Paradox: Why Some Men Hurt Women and and How All Men Can Help

Jackson Katz

The Color of Violence: The Incite! Anthology

I Never Called It Rape by Robin Warshaw

Voting is a resource, too. Please, don't vote for these people who fundamentally believe that women are essentially incubators first and foremost and that our rapes are of marginal importance to our breeding capabilities. As Jill Filipovic put it in the Guardian:

"Rape treats women as vessels, disregarding our autonomy and our right to control what happens to us physically and sexually. The Republican position is that women are not entitled to make fundamental decisions about our own bodies and our own sexual and reproductive health. When that position is written into the GOP platform and is a legislative priority, can we really be surprised when it's further reflected in Republican legislators' comments on rape?"

**Follow Soraya Chemaly on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/schemaly](http://www.twitter.com/schemaly)**

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