

# **SECTION 1**

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## **Historical and Global Perspectives on Sexual Violence**



# THE IMPACT OF SOCIALIZATION

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## INTRODUCTION

Though individuals within a society may hold very diverse perspectives, social groups as a whole tend to share many common beliefs, attitudes, and values. These are developed and reinforced by influences in the environment such as family, community, schools, and the media.

Cultural beliefs seep into every level of thinking. It is important for advocates to acknowledge that everyone carries assumptions that, to some extent, influence actions. Awareness of these assumptions will prepare advocates to avoid them when speaking with callers.

## Gender

Across all types of sexual violence, heterosexual men perpetrate the majority of known incidents of sexual violence against children, women, and other men (Truman & Planty, 2012). Despite this, the fact remains that women also commit sexual violence against men, other women, and children.

Cultural attitudes about gender play an important role in shaping violence and our beliefs about it. In every culture, beginning at birth, individuals learn society's expectations about acceptable behavior and gender roles for males and females. In mainstream American culture, most men have been taught characteristics that lead to power in society. Some examples of these characteristics are strength, assertiveness, and aggression. Men are typically praised for being in control of themselves and their emotions. In line with this, boys are often told not to cry. Men may also be expected to be in control of those around them. For example, husbands and fathers are often assumed to be the "heads of the household."

Jackson Katz, in his documentary film *Tough Guise: Violence, Media and the Crisis in Masculinity* (1999), identifies the struggle men face. He defines the "tough guise" as:

the front that so many men put up that's based on an extreme notion of masculinity that emphasizes toughness and physical strength and gaining the respect of others through violence or the implicit threat of it. Boys and young men learn early on that being a so-called real man means you have to take on this tough guise. In other words, you have to show the world only certain parts of yourself that the dominant culture has defined as manly.



## Considerations for Advocates

**Cultural beliefs seep into every level of thinking. It is important for advocates to acknowledge that everyone carries assumptions that, to some extent, influence actions.**

The socialization of women, on the other hand, has historically taught passivity and compromise. Women are socialized to take care of the needs of others, especially those of men, before their own. They are taught that to be feminine is to be quiet, polite, passive, and dependent. A woman who is assertive or aggressive is believed to be “bitchy,” a negative trait. Men, in contrast, are teased for having these “feminine” qualities.

These messages extend into our ideas about sexuality. Males are socialized to always want sex and to be good at it. They are taught that it is their right to have sex and that they should want to do so as much as possible. Men also learn that they are expected to be the aggressor when it comes to initiating sex and that they should try to overcome resistance. Women are socialized to be the sexual gatekeepers, and are expected to set the limits on how far to go during sexual encounters. Those who participate in sexual activities outside of a relationship are considered easy or promiscuous. Society views women as being of lesser value if they have had many sexual partners. These social messages about sexuality can be particularly difficult for individuals who struggle with their own gender identity.

### **Rape Culture**

“Rape culture” is a term that is commonly understood to describe a society in which shared attitudes, practices, and media condone sexual violence and support stereotypical myths and victim-blaming behaviors. According to an expert in the field of media literacy,

[We live in] a culture in which sexualized violence, sexual violence, and violence-by-sex is so common that it should be considered normal. Not normal in the sense of healthy or preferred, but rather an expression of the sexual norms of the culture, not violations of those norms. Rape is illegal, but the sexual ethic that underlies rape is woven into the fabric

of the culture. (Jensen, 2007)

Sexual violence is often glamorized in the news or presented as a crime of passion. Survivors are often objectified, with an emphasis on their physical characteristics and sexual histories. On television shows, in movies, and in books, sexual violence is often depicted as either romantic, erotic, or without serious consequences. Sex is often closely connected with violence and is frequently presented to the viewer as passionate rather than threatening.

Individuals within rape culture are socialized to believe that the victim of a crime is partly responsible for the crime that has been committed against them. Although society places blame on victims of all crimes, people are especially likely to blame victims of sexual violence because of the myths that have been reinforced through rape culture.

Although sexual violence is a gender-neutral crime, and women and men both can be victims or offenders, a rape culture reinforces the stereotype that men do not need to respect the sexual boundaries of women, and that sexual violence is normal, and even acceptable.

### **The Role of Media**

Sexual violence plays an intense role in all media formats, and media is an influential teacher in our society.

- The average child spends approximately 6.5 hours per day being exposed to, and interacting with, various forms of media including television, movies, video games, the internet, etc. (Roberts, Foer, Rideout, & Brodie, 1999).
- Of the roughly 140,000 references to sex a teen would see on television each year, only a small fraction (165) include any reference to abstinence or delay of sex, birth control, risk of pregnancy, or sexually transmitted infections. Girls bear the risk of pregnancy that boys do not, and also

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are more likely to contract sexually transmitted infections than boys (American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), 2001).

- Some studies show that repeated exposure to media with sexual content may influence teens to have sex earlier, and also show that the younger a girl is when she has sex, the more likely it is that she acted under pressure or even force (AAP, 2001).
- A study by the American Psychological Association (2007) suggests that the proliferation of sexualized images of women and girls is harmful to their self-image, leading to eating disorders, low self-esteem, and depression.

Violence presented as entertainment is projected every day through television programming, movies, video games, music, and other media. Most often, males and females are depicted in stereotypical roles where the men are strong, macho, and violent and the females are often regarded more for their beauty and sexual appeal. Women and young girls are commonly portrayed as victims of sexual violence while men are commonly portrayed as offenders. Many companies use depictions of sexual violence as shock tactics to attract attention to their products. These stereotypes are simply not fair to men or women.

For example, a television commercial for the popular magazine “Maxim” depicts two males getting their girlfriends to dump them so they can be free to view the magazine and contact sexy, hot “babes.” This suggests that men would rather have stereotypical women as shown in these images, than a woman with intellect and personality. It also suggests that all men are looking for women who look a certain way. This may affect the self-confidence of both men and women. Women may feel that they need to be slender, beautiful and like the images they see in the media. Men may feel they need to be tough, strong, and athletic to attract women. These types of commercials often impact individuals and how they feel about themselves, and may be shaping expectations from

relationships. As two experts in the sexualization of advertising point out:

It certainly is true, in fact it's more true than ever, that advertising is the foundation of mass media. The primary purpose of the mass media is to sell products. Advertising does sell products of course, but it also sells a great deal more than products. It sells values. It sells images. It sells concepts of love and sexuality, of romance, of success and perhaps most important, of normalcy. To [a] great extent advertising tells us who we are and who we should be. (Kilbourne & Jhally, 2000)

In addition, witnessing sexual and physical violence repeatedly through the media desensitizes viewers. In many instances, acts of violence are trivialized. Research clearly indicates that viewing violence in the media can, and often does, lead to aggressive behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs, especially in children (Anderson et al., 2003). In other words, media plays a significant role in shaping how people view themselves and others and also how they determine what is right and wrong:

Twenty years ago I spoke about the increasing violence against women in advertising...it trivializes the very serious issue of violence against women, something that is truly epidemic in our society. It not only trivializes that violence – it eroticizes it... Often violence, hostility, dominance is presented as erotic, as attractive, as appealing in an ad and throughout the culture.

One thing that has changed dramatically in recent years is the increase in ads that objectify men. However, this doesn't happen nearly to the extent that it does with women. And, it's often misinterpreted as a kind of equality. Whereas the truth is that there are no consequences for men as a result of being objectified. Men don't live in a world in which they are likely to be raped, harmed, or beaten – or at least straight men don't live in such a world – whereas women do. (Kilbourne & Jhally, 2000)

While media in all its forms may not directly cause violence, it is a major part of a cultural climate that objectifies women and encourages men to be violent towards them.

[Men] learn from their families, their community, but one of the most important places they learn...is [from] the powerful and pervasive media system, which provides a steady stream of images that define manhood as connected with domination, power and control. This is true across all racial and ethnic groups, but it is even more pronounced for men of color because there is so little diversity of images of them to begin with in the media culture. (Katz, 1999)

Many other aspects of everyday life represent both influences in, and symptoms of, the rape culture. One example is the culture of sports:

One important part of the culture that teaches boys and men how to be men is the sports culture. Sports is an incredibly important institution, it's pervasive in our society and young boys and girls learn a whole lot from an early age about life, about teamwork... There's some positive lessons...[But there are] ways in which the sports culture has grown increasingly aggressive and violent and we see that in hockey fights and baseball fights. We'd be naive to think that the way grown men act on the field or off has no impact on how boys learn to think of themselves as men. But it's important to remember that what's being taught in a lot of modern sports is not just violence and aggression, but the even more powerful idea that being a real man is connected with being intimidating and controlling (Katz, 1999).

Living in a rape culture means that society has a shared belief that it is acceptable for one to use whatever power they have to get what they want, even if it means hurting another person in the process. Stronger and more powerful individuals are expected to control those who are less powerful, whether by manipulation or sheer physical force.

## MYTHS

We are socialized to believe myths about sexual violence – why it happens, when it happens, who the survivors are, and who is affected. Myths about sexual violence help us to feel safe. They allow us to believe that we will not experience sexual violence as long as we follow the rules to avoid dangerous situations. However, this provides a false sense of security because the beliefs upon which it is based are not reflections of reality.

There are several reasons to examine myths about sexual violence. Advocates working for sexual assault support centers also grew up in a society that supports these myths. It is therefore crucial that advocates examine these myths and make certain that they are not influenced by them when helping callers.

Additionally, advocates need to be prepared to respond to a survivor or concerned other who has misinformation about sexual violence. By recognizing these myths, advocates can help to guide the person toward accurate, supportive information.

**Myth:** Sexual assault does not happen very often.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- 1 in 5 Mainers are the victim of rape or attempted rape in his or her lifetime (Rubin, 2011).
- The Senate Judiciary Committee of the United States cited the United States as having the highest rate of sexual assaults per capita in the [developed] world (Sebastian, 2002).
- In 1971, the first rape crisis center was established in Oakland, California. Bay Area Women Against Rape was the nation's first rape crisis center, having been founded as the direct result of the rape of a teenage girl (Bay Area Women Against Rape, n.d.).

### **Fact:**

- According to the 2011 National Crime Victimization Survey, there were 243,800 survivors of "rape, attempted rape, or sexual assaults" in 2011 (Truman & Planty, 2012).

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- The National Intimate Partner & Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) found that 22.2 million women and 1.6 million men in the United States have been sexually assaulted at some time in their lives (Black et al., 2011).

**Myth:** The typical sexual assault takes place in an alley, after dark, by a stranger.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- For most of history, and until the early 1970's in the U.S., sexual assault was the sole "sex crime" recognized in law. In the 1970's, Maine law had defined "rape" as forced intercourse requiring penile penetration of a vagina, with someone not your spouse. Under this law, "rape" did not include marital sexual assault, same-sex rape, anal or oral sexual assault, and a host of other kinds of sexual violence.
- The tradition of using the sexual assault of women and children as a weapon of war has long been documented across the globe. Mass sexual assaults continue to be reported in 21st century conflicts, including those in Algeria, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Liberia, Rwanda, and Uganda. In Bosnia and Herzegovina alone, estimates of the numbers of women raped during the conflict in the 90's range from 10,000 to 60,000 (National Sexual Violence Resource Center [NSVRC], 2004).

### **Fact:**

- Acquaintance sexual assault is much more prevalent than stranger sexual assault. A majority of survivors were sexually assaulted by someone they knew - an acquaintance/friend, intimate, or relative (Black et al., 2011).

**Myth:** Men are not victims of sexual assault. They have the physical strength to overpower any potential attacker and are rarely sexually assaulted.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- Traditionally, patriarchal societies hold gender-based inequalities of male entitlement and privilege (NSVRC, 2004). With these ideals in such societies, it is expected that some men will commit sexual acts, but not to be sexually

assaulted themselves.

- Currently and formerly incarcerated men widely report rape by fellow inmates, prison officials, and police in many countries (NSVRC, 2004).
- In a few population-based studies conducted with adolescents in developing countries, the percentage of males reporting ever having been the victim of a sexual assault ranges from 3.6% in Namibia, and 13.4% in the United Republic of Tanzania, to 20% in Peru (NSVRC, 2004).

### **Fact:**

- 1 in 6 men are sexually assaulted before the age of 18 (Dube et al., 2005).
- It is not impossible for another male or a female to physically overpower a male victim. Physical force is not the only method used to commit a sexual assault. An offender may use threats, coercion, or drugs. In addition, the survivor may be too shocked, frightened, or ill to resist or fight back.

**Myth:** If you are married, your spouse cannot sexually assault you.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- As Chief Justice in 17th century England, Sir Matthew Hale wrote, "The husband cannot be guilty of a rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract, the wife hath given herself in kind unto the husband which she cannot retract" (Russell as quoted in Bergen, R.K., n.d.).
- Marital rape was not recognized as a crime in Maine until 1985 (Maine Revised Statutes, Title 17, Chapter 11, Section 253, 1985).
- Laws in Uganda do not mention marital rape. The general belief is that once a woman is married she has consented to sex at anytime with her husband (Asiimwe-Mwesige, 2003).
- Marital rape of a wife is explicitly excluded from the laws in India, Malaysia, and Tonga. There is no language in the law providing for sexual violence against males. Ethiopia, Lebanon, Guatemala, and Uruguay exempt men from any penalty for committing [sexual assault] if they

subsequently marry their victim (Neuwirth, 2004).

**Fact:**

- More than half of female victims of rape (51.1%) reported that at least one perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner (Black et al., 2011).
- Sexual assault can be committed within any type of relationship, including marriage, same-gender relationships, and dating relationships.

**Myth:** People are sexually assaulted because of an offender's sudden, uncontrollable sexual urges.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- One of the most prevalent misconceptions about sexual violence is that it is sexual and that offenders just cannot control their sexual urges. This implies that offenders are somehow biologically wired or genetically predisposed to have no control over their individual choices (The Advocates for Human Rights [TAHR], 2006).

**Fact:**

- Biological theories can perpetuate beliefs that excuse offenders from responsibility for their actions. These assumptions blame the victim and diminish their pain and suffering. Biological explanations for sexual violence also tend to "naturalize" the offender's behavior, leading to the conclusion that it is "acceptable and potentially unchangeable." This results in the belief that because men cannot control their biological urges, it is up to women to refrain from dressing provocatively (TAHR, 2006).
- "Careful clinical study of offenders reveals that [sexual assault] is in fact serving primarily nonsexual needs. It is the sexual expression of power and anger" (Groth & Birnbaum, 1990).
- Sexual excitement is not an uncontrollable force. Men are no more driven to complete a sexual act than are women.

**Myth:** Women are sexually assaulted because they dress provocatively and act in a promiscuous manner. These women were asking for it.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- In Afghanistan, during two decades of civil war and particularly between 1992 and 1995, armed guards have engaged in the rape and sexual assault of women and girls as a way of dishonoring them, their families, and their communities and as a way of reducing people's ability to resist military advances (Amnesty International, 1999).

**Fact:**

- This myth places blame on the survivor and does not hold offenders responsible for their actions. Survivors of sexual violence are not responsible for the assumptions or actions of others. No one asks to be sexually assaulted.

**Myth:** If a woman is drunk she deserves to be sexually assaulted.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- Literature supports the existence of traditional sexual scripts which rely on the belief that it is a woman's responsibility to protect her virtue at all times. These traditional scripts depict the man as the initiator of sexual activity and the woman as the gatekeeper. She decides how far sexual activity should advance, while the man is portrayed as having a higher sexual drive (Littleton, Axsom, & Yoder, 2003).
- Sexual violence is more likely to occur in societies with rigid and traditional gender roles in which concepts of male honor and entitlement are culturally accepted, and where sexual violence goes unpunished (NSVRC, 2004).

**Fact:**

- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs will impair a person's perceptions and judgments, and can cause them to be vulnerable to being hurt in many ways. Getting drunk is not an invitation for non-consensual sexual activity and is never a reason for sexual violence. Both women and men have a right to drink if they choose, without the threat of sexual assault as a punishment. Offenders are responsible for their choices; no one ever deserves to be sexually assaulted.

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**Myth:** If a woman agrees to a certain level of sexual interaction, she has agreed to have intercourse. Therefore, it is acceptable to force sex on a woman who is saying no because she actually means yes and is just afraid to say it.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- In the 1950's it was a commonly held belief that women were not sexual beings. Wives would be sexual with their husbands only as part of being a "wifely duty."
- In Ancient Babylonian and Mosaic law (and in many other cultures), slavery, private property, and the subjugation of women were facts of life.

### **Fact:**

- In a study of college male attitudes about sexual coercion, it was found that 74% of respondents believed that when a woman says "no" to sex, she really means "yes" (Sandberg, Jackson, & Petretic-Jackson, 1987).
- One in five female high school students reports being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner (Maine Centers for Disease Control, 2009).
- People are capable of deciding what should happen to their own bodies. No one else has the right to assume that no means anything other than no.

**Myth:** Women fantasize about and are aroused by sexual violence.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- Hundreds of thousands of women and girls throughout the world are forcibly trafficked into prostitution each year (NSVRC, 2004).

### **Fact:**

- 82% of women report that they fear rape and/or death more than anything else (Randell & Haskell, 1995).
- Sexual assault is a terrifying act of violence, not something that a survivor enjoyed. While some people may fantasize about rape, a fantasy is something that can be controlled at all times. During a sexual assault, a person has no control

and is often afraid for their life.

**Myth:** A victim who really resists the offender cannot be sexually assaulted; therefore, a victim should always fight back as hard as possible. If a victim did not fight back, they must have wanted to have sex.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- The belief that victims are expected to protect themselves against sexual violence is part of society's blame of survivors if they do not physically fight off offenders.
- Maine law "places no duty upon the victim to resist the [offender]." (Maine Revised Statute, Title 17, Chapter 11, Section 251). A survivor is not required to resist or fight back in order for the offender to be charged with a sexual violence crime.

### **Fact:**

- There are many reasons a survivor may not fight back:
  1. The offender is known to them.
  2. They are threatened with or without a weapon.
  3. They are unable to fight the offender due to either physical or mental limitations, dissociation, freezing, or trauma reactions.
- Refraining from fighting or resisting is not a form of consent.

**Myth:** If the survivor was not a virgin, the sexual assault was not as traumatic.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- The impact and trauma of sexual assault extends far beyond the attack itself. Survivors may experience emotional torment, psychological damage, physical injuries, disease, social ostracism, and many other consequences that can devastate their lives. Additionally, due to cultural injustices and patriarchal norms in many societies, loss of virginity and the inability to bear children make women unmarriageable, which is often punishable by death. Women who have been sexually assaulted are no longer perceived as "virtuous;" once lost, this perceived virtue can never be recovered (Amnesty International, 2004).

**Fact:**

- Sexual violence often has a profound impact on survivors' health and sense of well-being.
- All control and choice are taken away from the survivor during sexual assault. People who have had sex before an assault are no more prepared for a sexual assault than those who have not.

**Myth:** If the survivor was not physically hurt, they should not have a difficult time recovering from the sexual assault.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- The Japanese Imperial Army from around 1932 to the end of World War II sexually enslaved up to 200,000 "comfort women". Some survivors returned to their home countries but rarely to their hometowns. In most cases survivors kept silent for over 50 years during which they suffered isolation, mental and physical illness, and for the most part, extreme poverty (Amnesty International, 2005).

**Fact:**

- The longest lasting harm resulting from sexual violence is often the psychological and emotional trauma. In many cases, offenders use intimidation rather than physical force and leave few physical injuries. Whether sexual violence happens by physical or psychological force, it frequently represents a terrifying loss of control. Survivors will require time to heal from these emotional traumas and each will heal at their own pace.
- The chances that a woman will develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after being raped are between 50-90%. Sexual assault is also closely related to depression and anxiety disorders (Heise, Ellsberg, & Gottemoeller, 1999).

**Myth:** Offenders are "crazy" or "sick."

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- The classic feminist text, *Against Our Will*, states that sexual assault is a crime that is most often a pre-meditated, planned crime to exert power

and control. "Many [offenders] state that they could have had sex elsewhere, but preferred to rape" (Brownmiller, 1975).

- The American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders does not list rape as a sexual deviation, nor is it found in the World Health Organization's International Classification of Diseases (Groth & Birnbaum, 1990).

**Fact:**

- "The most striking characteristic of sex offenders, from a diagnostic standpoint, is their apparent normality. Sex offenders appear to come from every occupational and socioeconomic group" (Herman, 1990).

**Myth:** People who commit sexual violence usually do so only once.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- A 2002 study by Dr. David Lisak of Boston-area college men indicated that of those who admitted to committing acts that meet the legal definition of rape, 63 percent were serial rapists (Lisak, 2002).

**Fact:**

- Many offenders commit multiple acts of sexual violence before they are caught. In the Boston study above, it was found that of the 76 serial rapists, they had an average of 14 victims, and were responsible for 439 rapes and attempted rapes, 277 acts of sexual abuse against children, 66 acts of physical abuse against children, and 214 acts of battery against intimate partners (Lisak, 2002).

**Myth:** Women are always "crying rape," claiming that they were raped when they were not.

**Historical and Global Perspective:**

- According to an official British crime study conducted in 2000, an estimated one in 20 women in England and Wales has been raped since they were 16 years old. 61,000 women, between the ages of 16 and 59, had been raped

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in the past 12 months, about 10 times the number of rapes documented by police (Travis, 2002).

### **Fact:**

- 2-8% of all of the accusations of sexual assault reported to law enforcement are false reports, the same rate as other types of violent crime (Lonsway, Archambault, & Lisak, 2009).
- In 2011, only 27% of total rapes were reported to police (Truman & Planty, 2012).

**Myth:** “If there are so many people being sexually assaulted, why don’t I know any victims?”

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- In neighborhoods outside Paris, descendants of Algerian, Moroccan, and Tunisian workers who came from France’s ex-colonies primarily occupy neglected public housing projects. Violent gangs often rule these areas where rape is a constant occurrence. Samira Bellil, a survivor of repeated gang rapes reported, “I couldn’t say anything, because in my culture, your family is dishonored if you lose your virginity.” When Bellil’s family discovered that she had been raped, they threw her out onto the streets for causing such disgrace. She has since discovered that what happened to her was not an isolated incident (Amanpour, 2004).
- In Columbia, abuses of a sexual nature are often dismissed as “crimes of passion.” They are rarely recorded in official statistics. Sexual violence is viewed as bringing shame on the survivors rather than on the offenders. Survivors are often ostracized and stigmatized by their own communities, while the state has been unwilling to bring those responsible to justice. When a case of sexual violence is investigated by the judicial system, the treatment of survivors is often degrading; offenders are rarely identified, and even less often punished for their crimes (Amnesty International, 2004a).

### **Fact:**

- Survivors of sexual assault often suffer in

silence because they experience shame, embarrassment, and fear that no one will believe them. Offenders will often threaten to harm survivors or their families to guarantee their silence. Sexual assault is one of the least reported crimes in the United States (Truman & Planty, 2012). Everyone probably knows a survivor of sexual violence. However, many survivors are very selective about whom they tell and may not disclose their experiences. Sexual assault remains largely unreported and undisclosed because it is one of the only types of crimes for which survivors carry an undue burden of shame and guilt.

**Myth:** Society has a progressive attitude about sexual violence.

### **Historical and Global Perspective:**

- In 1978, the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault (NCASA) was formed to combat sexual violence and promote services for rape victims.
- In 1984, the Federal Victims of Crimes Act acknowledged the need to fund community-based programs for crisis intervention and counseling. In 1984, the first National Symposium on Sexual Assault was co-sponsored by the Office of Justice Programs and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, highlighting at the federal level the important needs of victims of rape and sexual assault.
- In 1988, the case of *State v. Ciskie* was the first case to allow the use of expert testimony to explain the behavior and mental state of an adult rape victim.
- In 1992, twenty-eight states passed anti-stalking laws. The next year, twenty-two states joined in passing the anti-stalking statutes, bringing the total number of states with such laws to 50 – plus the District of Columbia. In 1997, Congress enacted a federal anti-stalking law.
- In 1994, President Clinton signed a comprehensive package of federal victims’ rights legislation that included the Violence Against Woman Act. The Violence Against Woman Act was enacted to provide funding to enhance

investigation and prosecution of violent crime perpetrated against women, increase pre-trial detention of the accused, and allow women to more civil rights protection.

- In 1995, the Beijing World Conference on Women issued a landmark call for global action to end violence against women.
- In 1996, “Megan’s Law” – The Community Notification Act – was passed, providing for notification to communities of the location of convicted sex offenders by amendment to the national Child Sexual Abuse Registry law.
- Also in 1996, The Drug-Induced Rape Prevention Act was enacted to address the emerging issue of drug-facilitated rape and sexual assault.
- In October of 2000, Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act.
- Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs operate in a number of countries, including Canada, the United States, and Malaysia. Stepping Stones, originally developed in Africa, is now used globally linking HIV/AIDS prevention with sexual violence prevention.
- “Men’s collective involvement in sexual violence prevention is growing, with over 100 groups in the United States alone” (NSVRC, 2004).

### Fact:

- Despite all of this, 1 in 5 Mainers still experiences this devastating crime, and prevention is still seen as the responsibility of survivors (Rubin, 2011).
- Until there are no more survivors of sexual violence, there will continue to be a need for services, support, and prevention.

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