



### Some further examples of rape myths\* - **Rape is a**

#### **crime of passion** Implications:

- assumes that rape is impulsive and unplanned;
- assumes men to be incapable of delaying gratification or controlling sexual urges;
- assumes that rape is about uncontrollable lust;
- attempts to excuse, minimise and romanticise rape;
- assumes that only 'attractive' women are raped;
- disregards elements of power, aggression, violence, control and humiliation in rape; and
- attempts to remove the responsibility for the rape from the rapist.

#### **Facts:**

- research and evidence from rapists themselves suggests that most rapes are premeditated and planned;
- many rapists fail to get an erection or ejaculate;
- interviews with rapists reveal that they rape to feel powerful and in control, not for sexual pleasure;
- there is no typical victim of rape. Girls and boys and women and men of all ages can be victims; and
- many rapists are involved in sexually satisfying relationships with their partners at the time of the rape.

#### - **You can tell if she's 'really' been raped by how she acts**

#### **Implications:**

- disbelieves and re-traumatises the victim;
- invalidates the victims experience and individuality; and
- discourages her or him from seeking help.

#### **Facts:**

- reactions to rape are highly varied and individual; and
- many women experience a form of shock after a rape that leaves them emotionally numb or flat - and apparently calm. Male victims can exhibit a similar reaction. - **Prostitutes cannot be raped** Implications:
- further disempowers sex workers; and
- provides an excuse for abuse



**Facts:**

- prostitutes have the same rights with regards to consent as anyone else: the transactions they negotiate with clients are for consensual activities, not rape. The law does not distinguish between prostitutes who are raped and victims who are not prostitutes.
- **If the victim didn't complain immediately it wasn't rape**

**Implications:**

- disbelieves and re-traumatizes the victim;
- invalidates the experience of the victim; and
- discourages her or him from seeking help.

**Facts:**

- the trauma of rape can cause feelings of embarrassment, shame and guilt which might inhibit a victim from making a complaint. There are many other reasons for delayed reporting, too. For example, a victim might delay because she or he may seek support from someone she trusts such as a friend or family member before reporting.