

## **Common Rape Myths and the Questions to Test Them:**

### **Key:**

(PLF): **Payne, Diana L., Kimberly A. Lonsway and Lousie F. Fitzgerald. 1999.** "Rape Myth Acceptance: Exploration of Its Structure and Its Measurement Using the *Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale*". Journal of Research in Personality. 33. Pg. 27-68.

(Burt): **Burt, Martha R. 1980.** "Cultural Myths and Supports for Rape". Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Vol. 38, No. 2. Pg. 217 – 230.

### **She Asked For It**

1. If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control. (PLF)
2. When women go around wearing low-cut tops or short skirts, they're just asking for trouble. (PLF)
3. If a woman goes home with a man she doesn't know, it is her own fault if she is raped. (PLF)
4. When a woman is a sexual tease, eventually she is going to get in trouble. (PLF)
5. A woman who 'teases' men deserves anything that might happen. (PLF)
6. When women are raped, it's often because the way they said 'no' was ambiguous. (PLF)
7. A woman who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man tries to force her to have sex. (PLF)
8. A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on the first date is implying that she wants to have sex. (PLF)
9. A woman who goes to the home or apartment on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex (Burt)
10. When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops, they are just asking for trouble. (Burt)
11. Women who get raped while hitchhiking get what they deserve. (Burt)
12. A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson. (Burt)
13. If a woman gets drunk at party and has intercourse with a man she's just met there, she should be considered 'fair game' o other males at the party who want to have sex with her too, whether she wants to or not. (Burt)

### **It Wasn't Really Rape**

1. If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape. (PLF)
2. A rape probably didn't happen if the woman has no bruises or marks. (PLF)
3. If the rapist doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape. (PLF)

4. If a woman doesn't physically resist sex – even when protesting verbally – it really can't be considered rape. (PLF)
5. If a woman claims to have been raped but has no bruises or scrapes, she probably shouldn't be taken too seriously. (PLF)
6. Any healthy woman can resist a rapist if she really wants to. (Burt)

### **He Didn't Mean To**

1. When men rape, it is because of their strong desire for sex. (PLF)
2. Rapists are usually sexually frustrated individuals. (PLF)
3. When a man is very sexually aroused, he may not even realize that the woman is resisting. (PLF)
4. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away. (PLF)
5. Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control. (PLF)

### **She Wanted It**

1. Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally find being physically forced into sex a real 'turn-on'. (PLF)
2. Many women secretly desire to be raped. (PLF)
3. Many women find being forced to have sex very arousing. (PLF)
4. Some women prefer to have sex forced on them so they don't have to feel guilty about it. (PLF)
5. Many women actually enjoy sex after the guy uses a little force. (PLF)
6. If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her. (Burt)
7. Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked. (Burt)

### **She Lied**

1. Women who are caught having an illicit affair sometimes claim that it was rape. (PLF)
2. Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and 'changed their minds' afterwards. (PLF)
3. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men. (PLF)
4. A lot of women lead a man on and then they cry rape. (PLF)
5. A lot of times, women who claim they were raped just have emotional problems. (PLF)
6. One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves. (Burt)
7. Question: What percentage of women who report rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse? (Burt)
8. Question: What percentage of reported rapes would you guess were merely invented by women who discovered they were pregnant and wanted to protect their own reputation? (Burt)

### **Rape is a Trivial Event**

1. If a woman is willing to “make out” with a guy, then it’s no big deal if he goes a little further and has sex. (PLF)
2. Rape isn’t as big a problem as some feminists would like people to think. (PLF)
3. Being raped isn’t as bad as being mugged and beaten. (PLF)
4. Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them. (PLF)
5. If a woman isn’t a virgin, then it shouldn’t be a big deal if her date forces her to have sex. (PLF)

### **Rape is a Deviant Event**

1. Rape mainly occurs on the ‘bad’ side of town. (PLF)
2. Usually, it is only women who do things like hang out in bars and sleep around that are raped. (PLF)
3. Men from nice middle-class homes almost never rape. (PLF)
4. It is usually only women who dress suggestively that are raped. (PLF)
5. Rape is unlikely to happen in the woman’s own familiar neighborhood. (PLF)
6. In reality, women are almost never raped by their boyfriends. (PLF)
7. Rape almost never happens in the woman’s own home. (PLF)
8. Any female can get raped. (Burt)
9. In the majority of rapes, the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation. (Burt)