

Myths

Finally, legislators and other policymakers should adopt evidence-based policies to create offender-specific control or treatment methods that are not over-inclusive. Doing so, however, would require them to recognize that many of the widely-held beliefs regarding sex offenders are not based on empirical proof, but rather are myths. Only when policymakers reject commonly-held myths about sex offenders will effective control policies be designed and implemented.

Galeste, Marcus A., Henry F. Fradella, and Brenda Vogel. "Sex Offender Myths in Print Media: Separating Fact from Fiction in U.S. Newspapers." *Western Criminology Review* 13.2 (2012): 4-24. *Sex Offender Myths In Print Media*. Sonoma State University. Web. 11 Nov. 2013.

Empirical evidence does not support the widespread belief that women are extremely unlikely to make false accusations of male sexual misconduct. Rather the research on accusations of rape, sexual harassment, incest, and child sexual abuse indicates that false accusations have become a serious problem. The motivations involved in making a false report are widely varied and include confusion, outside influence from therapists and others, habitual lying, advantages in custody disputes, financial gain, and the political ideology of radical feminism.

Zepezauer, Frank S. ""Believe Her! The Woman Never Lies Myth"" Institute for Psychological Therapies, 1994. Web. 11 Nov. 2013. <http://www.ipt-forensics.com/journal/volume6/j6_2_4.htm>.

Fact: Most sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim or the victim's family, regardless of whether the victim is a child or an adult.

Adult Victims: Statistics indicate that the majority of women who have been raped know their assailant. A 1998 National Violence Against Women Survey revealed that among those women who reported being raped, 76% were victimized by a current or former husband, live-in partner, or date (Tjaden and Thoennes, 1998). Also, a Bureau of Justice Statistics study found that nearly 9 out of 10 rape or sexual assault victimizations involved a single offender with whom the victim had a prior relationship as a family member, intimate, or acquaintance (Greenfeld, 1997).

Child Victims: Approximately 60% of boys and 80% of girls who are sexually victimized are abused by someone known to the child or the child's family (Lieb, Quinsey, and Berliner, 1998). Relatives, friends, baby-sitters, persons in positions of authority over the child, or persons who supervise children are more likely than strangers to commit a sexual assault.

"Myths and Facts About Sex Offenders." *CSOM Publications*. Center for Sex Offender Management, Aug. 2000. Web. 11 Nov. 2013. <<http://www.csom.org/pubs/mythsfacts.html>>.