

# [Male on male rape](https://assignbuster.com/male-on-male-rape/)

The lack of tracking of sexual crimes against men and the | | lack of research about the effects of male rape are indicative of the attitude held by society at large -- that while male rape | | occurs, it is not an acceptable topic for discussion. | | Historically, the rape of males was more widely recognized in ancient times. Several of the legends in Greek mythology involved | | abductions and sexual assaults of males by other males or gods. The rape of a defeated male enemy was considered the special right of | | the victorious soldier in some societies and was a signal of the totality of the defeat.

There was a widespread belief that a male who| | was sexually penetrated, even if it was by forced sexual assault, thus " lost his manhood," and could no longer be a warrior or ruler. | | Gang rape of a male was onsidered an ultimate form of punishment and, as such, was known to the Romans as punishment for adultery and| | the Persians and Iranians as punishment for violation of the sanctity of the harem (Donaldson, 1990). | | Nicholas Groth, a clinical psychologist and author of Men Who Rape: ThePsychologyof the Offender, says all sexual assault is an act | | of aggression, regardless of the gender or age of the victim or the assailant. Neither sexual desire nor sexual deprivation is the | | primary motivating force behind sexual assault. It is not about sexual gratification, but rather a sexual aggressor using somebody | | else as a means of expressing their own power and control. | | Much has been written about the psychological trauma associated with the rape of female victims. While less research has been | | conducted about male rape victims, case research suggests that males also commonly experience many of the reactions that females | | experience.

These reactions include: depression, anger, guilt, self-blame, sexual dysfunctions, flashbacks, and suicidal feelings | |(Isley, 1991). Other problems facing males include an increased sense of vulnerability, damaged self-image and emotional distancing | |(Mezey & King, 1989). Male rape victims not only have to confront unsympathetic attitudes if they choose to press charges, they also | | often hear unsupportive statements from their friends, familyand acquaintances (Brochman, 1991). People will tend to fault the male | | victim instead of the rapist. Stephen Donaldson, president of Stop Prisoner Rape (a nationaleducationand advocacy group), says that | | the suppression of knowledge of male rape is so powerful and pervasive that criminals such as burglars and robbers sometimes rape | | their male victims as a sideline solely to prevent them from going to the police. | | There are many reasons that male victims do not come forward and report being raped, but perhaps the biggest reason for many males is | | the fear of being perceived as homosexual. However, male sexual assault has nothing to do with the sexual orientation of the attacker | | or the victim, just as a sexual assault does not make the victim survivor gay, bisexual or heterosexual.

It is a violent crime that | | affects heterosexual men as much as gay men. The phrase " homosexual rape," for instance, which is often used by uninformed persons to | | designate male-male rape, camouflages the fact that the majority of the rapists are not generally homosexual (Donaldson, 1990). | | In a well-known study of offenders and victims conducted by Nicholas Groth and Ann Burgess, one-half of the offender population | | described their consenting sexual encounters to be with women only, while 38 percent had consenting sexual encounters with men and | | women. Additionally, one-half of the victim population was strictly heterosexual. Among the offenders studied, the gender of the | | victim did not appear to be of specific significance to half of the offenders. Instead, they appeared to be relatively indiscriminate | | with regard to their choice of a victim -- that is, their victims included both males and females, as well as both adults and children| |(Groth & Burgess, 1980). The choice of a victim seemed to be more a matter of accessibility than of sexual orientation, gender or age.

| | Many people believe that the majority of male rape occurs in prison; however, there is existing research which shatters this myth. A | | study of incarcerated and non-incarcerated male rape victims in Tennessee concluded that the similarities between these two groups | | would suggest that the sexual assault of men may not be due to conditions unique to a prison and that all men are potential victims | |(Lipscomb et al. , 1992). | Research indicates that the most common sites for male rape involving post-puberty victims are outdoors in remote areas and in | | automobiles (the latter usually involving hitchhikers). Boys in their early and mid-teens are more likely to be victimized than older | | males (studies indicate a median victim age of 17). The form of assault usually involves penetration of the victim anally and/or | | orally, rather than stimulation of the victim's penis. Gang rape is more common in cases involving male victims than those involving | | female victims.

Also, multiple sexual acts are more likely to be demanded, weapons are more likely to be displayed and used, and | | physical injury is more likely to occur, with the injuries that do occur being more serious than with injured female rape victims | |(Porter, 1986). | Definition | | Sexual assault and rape include any unwanted sexual acts. The assailant can be a stranger, an acquaintance, a family member, or | | someone the victim knows well and trusts. Rape and sexual assault are crimes ofviolenceand are used to exert power and control over | | another person. The legal definitions of rape and sexual assault can vary from state to state (National Center for Victims of Crime, | | GetHep Series: Sexual Assault Legislation). However, usually a sexual assault occurs when someone touches any part of another person's| | body in a sexual way, even through their clothes, without that person's consent. Rape of males is any kind of sexual assault that | | involves forced penetration of the anus or mouth by a penis, finger or any other object.

Both rape and sexual assault includes | | situations when the victim cannot say " no" because he is disabled, unconscious, drunk or high. | | In some states, the word " rape" is used only to define a forced act of vaginal sexual intercourse, and an act of forced anal | | intercourse is termed " sodomy. " In some states, the crime of sodomy also includes any oral sexual act. There are some states that now | | use gender-neutral terms to define acts of forced anal, vaginal or oral intercourse. Also, some states no longer use the terms " rape" | | and " sodomy," rather all sex crimes are described as sexual assaults or criminal sexual conduct of various degrees depending on the | | use and amount of force or coercion on the part of the assailant (National Center for Victims of Crime, GetHep Series: Sexual Assault | | Legislation). | | Victims' Response | | It is not uncommon for a male rape victim to blame himself for the rape, believing that he in some way gave permission to the rapist | |(Brochman, 1991). Male rape victims suffer a similar fear that female rape victims face -- that people will believe the myth that they| | may have enjoyed being raped.

Some men may believe they were not raped or that they gave consent because they became sexually aroused,| | had an erection, or ejaculated during the sexual assault. These are normal, involuntary physiological reactions. It does not mean that| | the victim wanted to be raped or sexually assaulted, or that the survivor enjoyed the traumatic experience. Sexual arousal does not | | necessarily mean there was consent. | | According to Groth, some assailants may try to get their victim to ejaculate because for the rapist, it symbolizes their complete | | sexual control over their victim's body. Since ejaculation is not always within conscious control but rather an involuntary | | physiological reaction, rapists frequently succeed at getting their male victims to ejaculate. As Groth and Burgess have found in | | their research, this aspect of the attack is extremely stressful and confusing to the victim.

In misidentifying ejaculation with | | orgasm, the victim may be bewildered by his physiological response during the sexual assault and, therefore, may be discouraged from | | reporting the assault for fear his sexuality may become suspect (Groth ; Burgess, 1980). | | Another major concern facing male rape victims is society's belief that men should be able to protect themselves and, therefore, it is| | somehow their fault that they were raped. The experience of a rape may affect gay and heterosexual men differently. Most rape | | counselors point out that gay men have difficulties in their sexual and emotional relationships with other men and think that the | | assault occurred because they are gay, whereas straight men often begin to question their sexual identity and are more disturbed by | | the sexual aspect of the assault than the violence involved (Brochman, 1991). | Male Rape as an Act of Anti-Gay Violence | | Unfortunately, incidents of anti-gay violence also include forcible rape, either oral or anal. Attackers frequently use verbal | | harassment and name-calling during such a sexual assault. Given the context of coercion, however, such technically homosexual acts | | seem to imply no homosexuality on the part of the offenders.

The victim serves, both physically and symbolically, as a " vehicle for | | the sexual status needs of the offenders in the course of recreational violence" (Harry, 1992, p. 115). | If You Are a Victim | | Rape and sexual assault include any unwanted sexual acts. Even if you agree to have sex with someone, you have the right to say " no" | | at any time, and to say " no" to any sexual acts. If you are sexually assaulted or raped, it is never your fault -- you are not | | responsible for the actions of others. | | Richie J. McMullen, author of Male Rape: Breaking the Silence on the Last Taboo, encourages seeking immediate medical attention | | whether or not the incident is reported to police.

Even if you do not seem injured, it is important to get medical attention. | Sometimes injuries that seem minor at first can get worse. Survivors can sometimes contract a sexually transmitted disease during the | | sexual assault, but not suffer immediate symptoms. Even if the symptoms of that disease take weeks or months to appear, it might be | | easily treated with an early diagnosis. (If you are concerned about HIV exposure, it is important to talk to a counselor about the | | possibility of exposure and the need for testing. For more information about HIV transmission and testing, contact the Centers for | | Disease Control National HIV/AIDS Hotline. Check the contact list at the end of this bulletin for the phone number and address | | information.

| | Medical considerations making immediate medical attention imperative include: | | Rectal and anal tearing and abrasions which may require attention and put you at risk for bacterial infections; | | Potential HIV exposure; and | | Exposure to other sexually transmitted diseases. | | If you plan to report the rape to the police, an immediate medical examination is necessary to collect potential evidence for the | | investigation and prosecution. | Some of the physical reactions a survivor may experience in response to the trauma of a sexual assault or rape include: | | Loss of appetite; | | Nausea and/or stomachaches; | | Headaches; | | Loss of memory and/or concentration; and/or | | Changes in sleep patterns. | | Some of the psychological and emotional reactions a sexual assault survivor may experience include: | Denial and/or guilt; | | Shame or humiliation; | | Fear and a feeling of loss of control; | | Loss of self-respect; | | Flashbacks to the attack; | | Anger andanxiety; | | Retaliation fantasies (sometimes shocking the survivor with their graphic violence); | | Nervous or compulsive behavior; | | Depression and mood swings; | | Withdrawal from relationships; and | | Changes in sexual activity. | | Survivors of rape, and often of attempted rape, usually manifest some elements of what has come to be called Rape-Related | | PosttraumaticStressDisorder (RR-PTSD), a form of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) . Apart from a small number of therapists and | | counselors specializing in sexual assault cases, few psychotherapists are familiar with the symptoms and treatment of RR-PTSD. For | | this reason, a rape survivor is usually well-advised to consult with a rape crisis center or someone knowledgeable in this area rather| | than relying on general counseling resources.

The same applies to those close to a rape victim, such as a partner, spouse or parent; | | these persons become secondary victims of the sexual assault and have special issues and concerns that they may need assistance in | | dealing with effectively. | | Local rape crisis centers offer male sexual assault victims direct services or referrals for services, including: counseling, crisis | | services and support services. Victims may contact their local rape crisis center, no matter how long it has been since the rape | | occurred. Counselors on staff can either provide support, or help direct the victim to trained professionals who can provide support. | | Most rape programs are staffed by women; however, some programs have male and female counselors. If you prefer one or the other, make | | that preference known when you initially contact the program. Whether or not they have male staff on call, almost all rape crisis | | centers can make referrals to male counselors sensitive to the needs of male sexual assault survivors.

In addition, many communities | | across the country have support groups for victims of anti-gay violence. | | Counseling can help you cope with the physical and emotional reactions to the sexual assault or rape, as well as provide you with | | necessary information about medical and criminal justice system procedures. Seeking counseling is an important way to regain a sense | | of control over your life after surviving a sexual assault. Contact your local rape crisis program even if services are not expressly | | advertised for male rape survivors. The number can be found in your local phone book listed under " Community Services Numbers," | |" Emergency Assistance Numbers," " Survival Numbers" or " Rape. " | | Sexual assault and rape are serious crimes. As a sexual assault survivor, you have the right to report the crime to the police.

This | | decision is one only you can make. But because authorities are not always sensitive to male sexual assault victims, it is important to| | have a friend or advocate go with you to report the crime for support and assistance.