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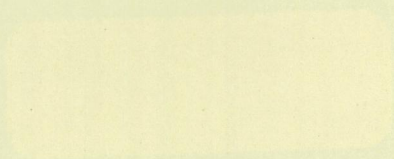
DATE-RAPE : AN EXAMINATION OF A CULTURAL BACKLASH

by

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INTRODUCTION : THE CRIME

Rape : Rapine Plunder, seizure : unlawful sexual intercourse (usually by force) with another person, without that person's consent : violation, despoliation - v.t. to seize and carry off : to commit rape upon : to ravish or transport, as with delight (obs) : to violate, despoil - ns ra'per, ra'pist adj ra'ping tearing prey (her) ravishing, delighting (obs)
- *Definition of rape from Chambers English Dictionary, page 1217 Published 1992*

Rape is a universal crime, mainly perpetrated against women by men. Rape is a complex issue and the above dictionary definition does not fully explain what rape is, but serves to almost romanticise the act of rape.

"...to seize and carry off...to ravish or transport, as with delight..."

The reality of rape is not a romantic one but instead, one of a real crime which has existed as long as men and women. Rape is one of the most mis-represented and misunderstood crimes. The widespread ignorance which surrounds the whole issue of rape which creates an environment in which it may flourish.

It is my hope to discuss the many ideas around rape with particular reference to date rape. I wish to attempt to "demystify" rape - and dismantle some of the many myths which surround this almost taboo issue. I will focus my discussion around the idea of date-rape, in a response to much current media debate on the validity and even existence of date-rape. I seek to prove that there is evidence of a backlash against the credibility of rape, date-rape and ultimately women.

I wish to show how society in its attempts to discredit date-rape, is in fact calling the whole question of the existence of rape into dispute, to examine the present backlash against

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date-rape and to prove that violence against women (specifically rape), is a form of social control of women. That the denial by our judiciary system and our culture that date-rape even exists is an attempt to incriminate women and to blame the victim for the crime.

Rape is inevitably connected with sexuality, due to the nature of the crime. Although, in essence, rape is an act of 'power-over' violence rather than a sex act. Society in general is not noted for its responsible attitude to human sexuality and thus, rape is a subject not openly discussed and to some, rape is just a taboo subject. The fact that the topic of rape often appears as a taboo subject in society encourages misrepresentation of the true facts and leads to a silence which prevails over its victims. This unwillingness for society to talk openly about such a traumatic crime further serves to create an environment in which its growth is assured. I hope to go some way to partly clarifying the nature of this crime, to examine its causes, its effects and how our culture does or does not deal with rape.

An examination of this topic must firstly seek to clarify the terminology used. Rape has many pseudo-names, terms include:

- Date rape (rape on a date, perpetrated by a boyfriend, or rape within a relationship).
- Acquaintance rape (rape by someone known to the victim, for example, boss, friend, neighbour).
- Marital rape (rape within a marriage perpetrated by a husband or separated husband).
- Stranger rape (rape by someone unknown to the victim,

- for example, being attacked in a park by a stranger).
- Gang rape (being raped by two or more assailants can be either strangers or acquaintances).
 - Male rape (rape by one man perpetrated upon another - for example, prison rape).

Within these categories there are yet again more forms of rape, such as rape with an object, anal rape and forced oral sex. All the factual information I wish to discuss in greater detail in Chapter I.

So apparently, rape is not as clear-cut as it may first appear; these unavoidable terms further manage to confuse the issue. One fact which is important in any discussion centred around date rape is that 79% of all rape victims are raped by someone they know (*Dublin Rape Crisis Centre Statistics, - 1991*). These statistics distinctly tell us that date-rape, acquaintance rape and marital rape, is rape. This dispels the unfounded myth that rape is a stranger in a dark alley, pouncing on a young girl. The fact is that most women (79%) are raped by someone they know and often by someone they trust.

I also wish to examine what defines rape legally and what the media and mass-populace deem as 'real-rape'.

In Chapter II, I wish to fully discuss date-rape, with particular reference to the media's misrepresentation of rape, this current media debate surrounding date-rape and the backlash which the media has helped create. The media's portrayal of date-rape has further added fuel to the fire of the debate on what is 'real-rape'. This debate manages to discredit many victims and makes semi-heroic the criminals who perpetrate these crimes.

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The backlash has further been fuelled by feminist debate from such writers as Camille Paglia (Sex, Art and American Culture) and Katie Roiphe (The Morning After). I wish to discuss their arguments and prove their opinions on the subject of date-rape to be flawed. I wish to challenge their opinions by pointing out faults in their arguments supported by reference to Susan Brownmiller (author of Against our Will) and rape statistics.

In Chapter III, I will examine sex roles and the female stereotypes which our culture panders too, with particular reference to the importance of such misrepresented sex roles in the trying of rape (and date-rape) cases in court. I wish to also examine some causes for rape - adopting the opinion that rape is caused by a need by a largely male dominated society to flex its muscles and keep women in line - with reference to the idea that rape is a means of social control or, at least, the fear of rape is an effective way of controlling women.

Is rape a male society's response to more dominant women in the 20th century?

Finally, in my conclusion, I would like to summarise my points and examine what may be done to reduce the shocking rise of the number of rapes occurring worldwide - how do we as a society begin to combat this problem?

Rape is a crime which is seriously on the increase, the widespread ignorance of the realities of rape lead to low sentencing and little community support for victims. The silence surrounding rape further creates an unhealthy environment in which victims are often blamed for their attack. The reality is that rape can and does happen, to anyone, by anyone, at any time

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and at any age. You cannot distinguish a potential rapist from a 'normal' man; there are no telltale signs. Society's understanding of rape must be updated; it is crucial if the ever-increasing problem of rape is to be combatted; the myths which exist around rape must be dismantled and both sexes must begin communicating on a better level.

I hope to go some way to destroying myths and make clear the realities of rape and date-rape; to create a clear and concise understanding of rape through this thesis.

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CHAPTER I

DEFINING RAPE, WHAT CONSTITUTES RAPE?

To fully understand a discussion on rape we must first look at the many definitions of rape. In the Introduction I referred to a dictionary definition of rape which only gives surface information but legally speaking what constitutes rape? Until recently, the definition of rape in Ireland was extremely narrow. It excluded rape within marriage, rape with an object, anal rape or male rape. Recent reforms in Irish law have broadened the legal definition of rape and sexual assault. The 1990 Criminal Law (Rape) (Amendment) Act gives four categories of sexual offence. They are as follows:-

1. "Rape" - "unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman who at the time does not consent to it". Where the assailant "knows that she does not consent...or that he is reckless as to whether she does or does not consent to it"
(D.R.C.C.'93, p.2)
2. "Rape under Section 4" - which is a sexual assault that involves "penetration (however slight) of the anus or mouth by a penis or penetration (however slight) of the vagina by any object manipulated by another person" (D.R.C.C. '93)
3. The "Aggravated Sexual Assault" Charge, which is an attack which involves the use of serious violence which may cause injury, humiliation or degradation to the victim.
(D.R.C.D.).

4. "Sexual Assault" which is a sexual attack involving a less serious use of violence. (D.R.C.D.)

These four categories are the legal definitions of rape but it also shows that rape under Section 4 (e.g. anal rape) is not considered as serious a crime as vaginal rape. This is an important point as here is an example of prejudice within the judicial system. A point on anal rape is, though anal rape is a more usual crime perpetrated against men by men (often in prison) it is not solely a male crime - anal rape of women also occurs in more violent rape (often with vaginal rape also). This prejudice again disallows anal rape as being considered as important or as serious as vaginal rape.

The whole issue of anal rape is even more taboo than vaginal rape as, previously anal intercourse (buggery) between consenting adults was a criminal offence - although the law still stands in Ireland it is not enforced. Anal rape or rape with an object is often far more traumatic to a victim of such an attack due to simple fact that the anal passage was not designed to hold a penis, etc. This can lead to much injury and the failure to recognise anal rape as being legally as important as vaginal often leaves the victim more traumatised.

An understanding of these terms is vital, as many rape cases are reduced to being defined as "sexual assault" depending on how a defendant may plea. (If a defendant is charged with rape but pleads sexual assault, the charge will be less severe).

Since 1991, a woman may now charge her husband with aggravated sexual assault or sexual assault (Rape under Section 4) but again, she cannot charge her husband with rape

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under the Criminal Law Act (rape in its most serious legal definition). Prior to 1991, a woman could not charge her husband with any type of rape or sexual assault, so this development is commendable but many countries still refuse to admit rape within marriage, as an actual crime. Further developments in Irish law also include (under Section 4) that a man may now bring a charge of rape (aggravated sexual assault) against an assailant.

Although these terms do clarify in some way the legal standing of rape, a closer examination of rape and its prosecution is required. The legal definitions seem clear but many courts often refuse to prosecute many cases of rape due to their own private agenda. This agenda can be influenced by many things. Often many judges subscribe to outmoded views of what women should be (virgin, nurturer) and thus, one of the most stereotypical myths of what women should be, influences a court of law in their decisions in many rape trials. Due to the largely elderly judicial system, which is also largely male dominated (*S. Brownmiller*) these myths are heavily subscribed to, media myths and how a society at large view rape and its victims affects sentencing to a large degree. One must bear in mind that many Irish and English judges are in their 60's or 70's and thus, subscribe to different mode of thinking and beliefs about sexuality and women - coming from an era when women had less power and were less obviously sexual.

Evidence of judicial acceptance of 'rape myths' is such that a victim may be (if it is thought relevant to the case) questioned about her previous sexual history and/or criminal past but also insinuations are often made about her mode of dress,

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make up and lipstick, etc. Questions such as "do you usually wear short skirts and red lipstick"? (*Dispatches - Jenny Cuffe, Channel 4 - 16/2/94*).

Many judges, lawyers and police (and much of society in general) still have a very narrow definition of what rape is; they have fallen prey to believing media-myths and out-dated beliefs of what proper behaviour for 'young ladies' is; seemingly, ignoring much of today's sex culture and freedom of expression which abounds in youth culture. The ideals of sexuality which a judge in his 60's may hold so obviously clash with the feelings of sexual behaviour in our culture today. This blinkered opinion of what female sexuality (and particularly prevalence of date rape) must be resisted.

The predominant image of rape being that of 'stranger-rape' is untrue. In reality most women are raped by someone they know (79%) (*D.R.C.C.*). This point is highly relevant as many such cases rarely result in a conviction (*D.R.C.C.*). Many people, due to misleading information, discredit the notion of date-rape, marital rape and acquaintance rape. Despite the 79% likelihood that it will be some sort of an acquaintance rape, but in court it will be more likely that a stranger-rapist will be convicted than a date-rapist or an acquaintance-rapist (*D.R.C.C.*).

These facts seem to show that our society and judicial system does not consider date rape to be "real rape". This invalidation of date rape cases is not confined to Ireland but also the UK. The recent debate on date-rape in the USA seems to have moved public opinion into accepting more readily the validity of date-rape, but much has yet to change. The

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'devaluation' of date-rape and low sentencing for acquaintance rape only serves to encourage women who have been raped by someone they know, not to report it. Many victims understand that it is unlikely they will be believed and even more likely - that the traumatic court case, will result in a conviction. This practice of low sentencing puts the blame on the crime's victim and not the criminal.

Although legally, most date-rape/acquaintance-rapes are tried as rape cases, the information that the complainant knew the victim heavily weighs the case in the defendant's favour. In a recent Channel 4 documentary on the subject of rape, it emerged that many serial rapists exist and that often the serial rapist begins as an acquaintance-rapist. Often the acquaintance rapist goes on to perpetrate more violent sex crimes or even murder. (*Channel 4 - Dispatches - Jenny Cuffe, 16/2/94*). Such cases were highlighted in this documentary, such as that of the notorious John Cannon who two years ago, killed Estate Agent, Jillie Banks. He had a previous charge of acquaintance rape but at the time was not suitably dealt with. There is much more evidence of similar cases where acquaintance rapists went on to become serial rapists or commit murders.

The programme also discussed three other cases: David Moloney, Nicholas Edwards and a Mr 'X' (name unavailable). Twenty women have charged these three men, but the twenty cases have resulted in only three convictions between the three men and the twenty rapes they have been accused of perpetrating. Surely seventeen women could not have all lied. surely this statistic shows the unfairness and unreliability of European judicial

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systems. Although statistics for Ireland in relation to the trial of rape cases are rare, one may assume that these UK statistics are similar to that of Irish statistics.

Rape is on the increase or, at least, the reportage of rape is on the increase (*D.R.C.C.*). Worldwide figures suggest more reported rapes and sexual assaults. Canadian figures state that one in four women can expect to be assaulted at some point in their lives; 50% before the age of 17 (*McLeod/Bunch, 90, p.15*)

Are these figures distinctly representative of other countries but not of Ireland? Figures in Ireland are few and far between. One may ask why?. I feel that this is the case due to many particularly Irish attributes; that in Ireland, rape is seen as a women's issue and therefore, does not receive the necessary funding and coverage that it deserves. Irish culture still perceives to some extent, that sexuality (particularly abusive use of sexuality), is taboo. This may be, in part, due to a largely male dominated government who view women's issues with less importance than other issues. The high profile of the Irish clergy and its belief on sexuality further serve to hide many serious issues in Ireland. This patriarchal view of women and women's issues is changing, but one feels that Ireland has a long way to go before rape, violence in the home, incest and many other of the sociological problems of Irish society can be discussed without the current naive titillation in which the Irish media revels.

Rape crisis centres receive little government funding and largely rely on fund-raising and charity - why is this? Is it simply a case of rape in Ireland really not being regarded as a

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serious issue or at least not an issue that the whole of society must deal with but merely a woman's problem? This denial of much State help in the area of combating rape serves to point out that a society which does not do its utmost to condemn such a crime must, in some way, condone it. Is this lack of state help due to a male dominated government or does Irish society perceive rape as a necessary evil of society? I feel the State's lack of support speaks for itself.

Ireland's understanding of sexuality is changing, the long history of patriarchal power and a mainly Catholic population has led to many sexual issues being brushed under the carpet. Recent media debate which highlighted many Irish problems include the Kilkenny incest case, the Kelly Fitzgerald affair, the Bishop Casey affair and fresh allegations of the paternal sideline which Fr Michael Cleary apparently engaged in, all serve to highlight the realities of sexual hypocrisy in Ireland.

The beliefs of the Catholic Church which perceives all sexuality outside marriage as a sin; and contraception, abortion, divorce as unnatural, seems to have created a false reality of what Irish society is. The prevalence of sexually active clergy seems to have unearthed some of the 'truth' of Irish Catholicism - "Do as I say, not as I do". The wide reportage of sexual abuse (Kilkenny Incest Case, Levina Kerwick) cases all over Ireland, the reappearance of another "Kerry babies" scandal seems to prove that Ireland has not progressed that much. Perhaps these new revelations of the hypocrisy and uncaring nature of Irish Catholicism and Irish society will further pave the way to allow Irish society to accept that abuse, date-rape and other

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undesirable issues do happen in Ireland and perhaps these slow revelations will allow a change to occur in how rape, (particularly date-rape) is perceived and dealt with in Ireland. Although there is an acceptance in Ireland that rape occurs, the lack of understanding and State support for rape and a widespread denial that date-rape even occurs in Ireland, points out the slow progress of Irish society's capacity to deal with this problem.

As the law stands, rape has its definition, but the enforcement of that definition and the law is rarely adhered to. The longest sentence available for a judge to hand down to a defendant for rape is a life sentence (25 years) but this is rarely administered. A usual sentence of between five and seven years may be given (*D.R.C.C.* '92). The maximum sentence for sexual assault is only five years. There are no real guidelines for judges for sentencing rape or sexual assault cases. The major factor in sentencing is as to the defendant's plea of guilty or not guilty. (A guilty plea may result in a reduction of the sentence) (*D.R.C.C.* '92)

Due to low sentencing for rape, it is important that an understanding of what rape is, exists. A date-rape in an Irish court would have little chance of a successful conviction and often victims are recommended not to pursue a date-rape case due to the unlikelihood of a conviction (*D.R.C.C.*). The myths surrounding rape are largely responsible for low sentencing and a lack of understanding about rape, date-rape, etc. An examination of rape myths (particularly regarding date-rape) and of media reportage is necessary to fully understand why so few assailants are convicted.

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DATE RAPE : OUR CULTURES, MYTHS AND MISREPRESENTATIONS OF DATE RAPE

The term 'date-rape' has been widely used to describe the American acquaintance rape phenomenon. The term was first used by Dr. Mary P. Koss, a clinical psychologist and professor at the University of Arizona, to describe rape which occurred on or by a date (Lacey, 1993, p.9). This American term has increasingly been used in Ireland and the United Kingdom and has been misinterpreted by the media who mistakenly use it to describe a woman who cries 'rape' after bad sex. 'Date-rape' has had some bad press and one must ask why?. Firstly, one must question the need for such a phrase and what problems come with this phrase.

I feel the phrase came about through increasing awareness on American college campus of the prevalence of date-rape. Dr. Mary Koss says that the awareness of this date-rape phenomenon came about through a sex survey which she conducted among 6,000 US college students in 1987. This 71 page survey (funded by The National Institute of Mental Health) found that 25% of the female students had experienced rape or an attempted rape. Dr. Koss says this came as no surprise and is quoted as saying:-

Date rape has probably been around as far back as you want to trace human history...it was the insult that had no name. I didn't create anything - I described it and gave it a name. (Lacey, 1993, p.9).

The prevalence of rape (25%), she goes on to say, did not surprise her either but the fact that eight out of ten women were raped by acquaintances on dates did. Hence, the term "acquaintance", or "date-rape". This, phrase came about out of a culture's sudden awareness of an apparently increasingly prevalent crime.

This phrase unfortunately, brings with it disadvantages; by coining a phrase, one inevitably creates a category. This

category of date-rape had to contend with the already understood crime of rape. This coining of a phrase immediately set apart one crime from the other and unnecessarily made one more important than the other. This, I feel was partly responsible for the debate which ensued. If date-rape was perpetrated by an acquaintance, it was thereby assumed that it was less serious than 'real rape'. I feel that the public and the media viewed 'real rape' as something quite different and here, I feel the trouble began.

The bad press which date-rape has received throughout the media, I contribute largely to this idea of one crime being less or more serious than the other. By defining 'true' rape in narrower terms, for example, the popular belief that 'real rape' is perpetrated by a stranger on a young, attractive woman, late at night, in a dark alley, at knife-point, Society deludes itself into believing that rape is not such a widespread problem. To admit that 25% of women may experience rape or attempted rape, is to admit the world is not such a safe place and with an unspoken belief of 'what you don't know can't hurt you', society and the media is affectively censoring the facts, through a desperate need for self-preservation.

This phrase which was first used in 1987 by Dr. Koss, gained currency in 1990 and the term has continued to be used in current debate. The backlash, according to Dr. Koss, began about 1990 but increased particularly after the Austen Donnellan case (which I shall refer to at a later point).

Should the term "date-rape" be used in Ireland as an American term, from an American culture? Certainly, there are

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large differences in the two cultures; American culture being more violent and more sexually liberal than Irish society. Regarding the whole notion of 'dating', Irish people do not 'date' as in the American use of the word 'date'. This may be partly the reason why date-rape has been misrepresented in the Irish and British media. Certainly rape by a boyfriend or an acquaintance exists in Ireland but perhaps the term 'date-rape' in Ireland may be misleading. The facts of date-rape, American or otherwise, are important for Irish women. American statistics state that one in four female college students have had an experience of rape or attempted rape (*Dr. Mary Koss : 1987*) and that 57% of the acquaintances were dates. Although Ireland is not America, one cannot fail to wonder how alien these statistics really are to Irish society? Another American study (*P. Levy 1984, ps. 87-89*) states that one out of ten young women interviewed stated that they had experienced forced sexual encounters while dating. Statistics state that a large percentage of young women experience rape or violence of some degree in their lives. The problem of violence against women seems engrained in our culture; this silent acknowledgment that violence and rape happens seems to say that rape victims are an inevitable result of the power imbalance between men and women. As Courtois says:

Rape is..."an endemic societal manifestation of power imbalance between the sexes" where "men are conditioned into roles of power and dominance...and females are conditioned to be passive and dependant".
(*L. Courtois, 1988, p. 38*)

Courtois is saying that society silently condones sexual violence towards women. Thus, if a culture condones violence then

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it is not surprising that few date-rape victims report the crime. Dr. Mary Koss states that reports of adolescent date rapes are rare and also the many adolescent victims rarely fully realise that an actual rape has occurred. (Lacey, 1993, p.9) This is where the date-rape question begins to become exceedingly hazy. P. Levy also states that the denial that rape has occurred by a victim has little or no affect, the victim often suffers the same trauma as one who admits her rape. This failure of many victims to realise they have been raped further confuses this debate; if victims will not admit to themselves or others that a crime has occurred, little progress may be made in demystifying date-rape and reducing its prevalence in our society.

The Media Backlash

Cases such as the Austen Donnellan trial serve to further highlight the bad representation date rape has received in recent media discussion. The Donnellan case concerns two students, Austen Donnellan and an unnamed woman. The alleged rape occurred at a college party where both parties had consumed large quantities of alcohol. This resulted in Austen Donnellan and the unnamed woman having sexual intercourse. The unnamed woman claimed she had been too intoxicated to make a rational decision and considered the encounter as rape. She then brought her complaint to college authorities, naming Austen Donnellan as her rapist. Austen Donnellan then brought the case to court in order to prove his innocence and was acquitted.

This case is important in highlighting how society views acquaintance-rape or date-rape. One must ask why such a case

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even came to court and why such a weak case received such media attention. I feel that the answer lies somewhat in the media's reaction(backlash). This response attempted to prove date-rape does not exist; a backlash against the credibility of date-rape to reassure a nervous public that rape is not such a frequent occurrence.

What is important about this case is, not what actually occurred, but what transpired in the media coverage of the whole event. Unquestionably, the case was weak and use of alcohol always weakens the credibility of a testimony (according to Dr. Koss) but in Britain and Ireland it is extremely rare for any date-rape case to reach court. Why is it that the first major date-rape case in a British court was so heavily weighted in favour of the alleged rapist?

This was due to several factors. The media representation of the unnamed woman was very harsh, portraying her as a desperate, unbalanced "slag". The media representation of Donnellan was, of a fine upstanding man, victim of feminist hysteria. The fact that it was Donnellan who brought proceedings to prove his innocence immediately led to a presumption that the unnamed woman was guilty.

This was a case which occurred only to prove the innocence of an alleged rapist and a media debate which served only to discredit and further humiliate the plaintiff (the unnamed woman). The fact that the present climate of society's understanding is one that is apparently seeking to blame the victim rather than her assailant. The Donnellan case was too weak and Austen Donnellan's acquittal was, in my view, the only

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logical and fair conclusion to such a weak case. There are cases of 'reasonable doubt' and one must be sure one is convicting a rapist. Surely the importance of this case lies in what transpired in the media coverage of events. The virtual crucifixion of the plaintiff, prior to the trial of the case (by a UK University poll) where the plaintiff was voted "Slag of the Year" by her supportive contemporaries. This label must have further served to traumatise the plaintiff but also to destabilise her case against Donnellan. The acquittal of the man she believed had raped her must have caused added trauma but with back-up comment from the media that Donnellan did not 'look like a rapist' one wonders is it such a surprise that Donnellan was acquitted?

Comments from the media such as the latter, further points out the bias of the media's view by assuming that we can determine what 'real rape' is and what 'real rapists' look like. The backlash against women, in the form of a large-scale media campaign against date-rape serves to reveal the current unsympathetic nature of an uninformed public.

American colleges have attempted to, in some way, deal with date-rape on campus by creating a level of awareness of what rape means. This has been achieved through poster campaigns and by making college campuses more secure, by installing more lights, making buses available for female students, etc.. Activities like these are to be commended but I feel some colleges may have taken their anti-rape campaign too far. Many colleges in their attempts to reduce the number of date-rapes on campus, have created an 'anti-offence policy'. Best described as a 'check

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list' of all the do's and don'ts of a romantic evening between a young couple. The most famous of these 'anti-offence policies' comes from Antioch College (U.S.A.). This policy has various stages of sexual contact listed and both parties must agree and sign (the document) before progressing to the next stage (e.g. hand on knee...) This 'anti-offence policy' seems to have reduced the number of date-rapes occurring on campuses but many years of this policy will more accurately tell of the viability of this policy. One must also bear in mind that while such a policy may reduce date-rape that it may also create problems. This policy may serve as a means of regulating 'inappropriate sexual behaviour', further regressing positive more liberal attitudes towards sexual behaviour and sexual freedom. The implications of such a policy for women may serve also to further regress attitudes on rape. By policing sexual behaviour, which is directed more so at women's behaviour (as this policy does) one risks returning to attitudes of the 50's. One can only imagine the possible implications of such attitudes, perhaps resulting in such questions as "*what were you wearing at the time of the alleged crime*". The recent gradual elimination of such relevant questions from many rape cases has created a more just system. This anti-offence policy may regress any progress which has been made, leading to a public regulation and close scrutiny of private events. I feel 'anti-offence policies' do not really tackle the problem of date-rape, but only serve as a temporary band-aid over the flow of reportings on date-rape which has steadily increased on many U.S. campuses.

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The Feminist Backlash

They come from a protected, white, middle-class world and they expect everything to be safe. Notice its not the black or hispanic women who are making a fuss about this - they come from cultures that are fully sexual and they are fully realistic about sex.

(Paglia, 1992, p.57)

Some feminist thought, such as Camille Paglia, in "Sex, Art and American Culture" and Katie Roiphe in "The Morning After" claims that such notions as "date-rape" are nothing but a feminist hype which use rape as a feminist weapon and that this 'rape-crisis' is a feminist tool to wield authority over society.

Similar "feminist hype" ideas may be heard from Camille Paglia who totally discredits the notion of date-rape as a naive, white, middle-class, misconception.

Paglia and Roiphe see this debate through white, middle-class, educated eyes; both assume all women are assertive and mock and condemn those who are not. They categorise women as either victims or well adjusted individuals; their theories exclude the many victims of date-rape who may not have had the opportunities to mull over the finer complexities of female existence. While attacking date-rape as a purely middle-class naivety, both writers fail to mention their own 'middle-classness' and while condemning date rape as non-existent, both do admit to never knowingly being raped. Their education, I would suggest, silences many victims.

The implications of both writers' exclusion of acknowledgment of their own, white, middle-class, educated backgrounds is that they fail to see the hypocrisy of their arguments. One could say that they are remarkably similar to those they attack (white, middle-class, etc.). The fact that

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neither have been raped begs the question why are they such an authority on this subject? The exclusion from their arguments of any direct contact with any date-rape victims also is curious. Their ego's fail to allow any humanitarianism into this issue, creating a black versus white argument. This, I feel is desperately unfair to this sensitive subject. Their clumsy insensitive arguments only serve to assure that more victims will not report rapes or attempted rapes, for fear of a "Paglia-esque" inquisition. Their discussion has contributed to a narrower perception of what rape is, thus reducing the chances of justice in many rape trials yet to come.

Katie Roiphe and Camille Paglia contribute to critical debates on rape. Roiphe and Paglia are one extreme; the other being the politically correct feminists who create a permanent female victim. Examples are the change of certain vocabulary to a more "politically correct" and acceptable language, such as 'rape victim', becomes 'survivor', 'shame' becomes 'traumatised', etc. Such examples sanitize the reality of rape; if we change the words we use in connection with rape we risk forgetting or disallowing a rape 'victim' or 'survivor' her right to grieve or be angry.

I think real rape is an outrage. And for me real rape would be either stranger rape or the intrusion of overt sex into a non-sexual situation.

(Paglia 1992, p.69)

From Roiphe's and Paglia's interpretation of rape we should rule out date-rape as being of any serious social consequence. If we do so, we deny that rape exists at all. If most women are raped by someone they know (79% R.C.C.) then are all those women lying? Roiphe and Paglia would have us think so.

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Paglia states in "Sex, Art and American Culture"; 'The Rape Debate' that only middle-class white and very naive girls ever cry date-rape. She claims that streetwise black/hispanic women don't cry date-rape. This statement in itself points out Paglia's own middle-class/white/naive attitude but also her racism. If Paglia took a second glance at her culture perhaps she would see the reality of a largely white police force. Of course black/hispanic women do not report as many date rapes as their middle-class white counterparts, simply because they realise there would be even less likelihood of their plea being taken seriously by police or by a judge - simply due to a largely white/male power system in America.

Paglia is also assuming that black/hispanic women have more sense; are more "streetwise" than to even consider date-rape. This categorising of the black/hispanic American female as "streetwise" individuals, presumes most black/hispanic female Americans are streetwise and poor; denying the existence of a black middle-class or black/hispanic professional class. I feel this is important in revealing Paglia's narrow-mindedness and also reveals her to be racist and ill-informed.

Paglia and Roiphe seem to consistently categorise women by creating a stereotypical view of what it means to be a victim. Their referral to date-rape victims as "naive, little girls", degrades many victims who have suffered rape and are by no means "naive, little girls".

Paglia and Roiphe claim this constant portrayal of women as victims, belittles women, disempowers them and discredits full female sexuality. They feel the preaching by college

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authorities and other groups on what is correct sexual behaviour is akin to attitudes of the 1840s. They condemn "anti-offence policys" (e.g. *Antioch College*) as limiting sexual freedom. In some degree one must agree; stringent rules on sexual behaviour may serve only to control women and their sexuality more. The wide campaigns of rape-awareness (posters, courses) may serve to create a crisis where there is no crisis and instead instil fear into lone women walking home at night. All these points that Paglia and Roiphe raise may be true but I feel their widespread preaching of the non-existence of date-rape and categorising of women, does as much if not more damage.

There is a danger that present U.S. campus paranoia may create "woman as victim", but there is equal danger that Paglia and Roiphe may create "woman as guilty".

Paglia is wrong, date-rape is not a white, middle-class, mistaken issue - perhaps it is a question of education? Many women's definition of rape clings rigidly to the narrow stereotypical images of rape. Many women deny the possibility that what has happened to them might have been rape. The view of feminists like Paglia and Roiphe that only "pansy" girls "cry" date-rape is insulting. These claims may get them media coverage, write-ups in respected magazines (e.g. *The Sunday Times*), invited onto cascades of chat shows (*Kenny Live*, *The Late Late Show* (RTE), *Good Morning* (UTV), *The Late Show* (BBC 2) to mention just a few!, and certainly sell their latest book but it puts many women two paces back from being taken seriously in court.

One must ask at this point why Paglia, and more so, Roiphe, have received such critical acclaim and such abundant media

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coverage? Roiphe, a 25 year old Harvard graduate, now studying for a Doctorate at Princeton University (previously unpublished), would seem an odd, if not unreliable, choice to place such value on her. While older (perhaps less glamorous or 'camera-friendly') feminists do not receive such acclaim and most certainly not for their first book. One must conclude that this frantic explosion of publicity surrounding Roiphe has occurred suspiciously enough, directly after the Donnellan controversy, and thus further fuelling the backlash against the credibility of date-rape.

Roiphe's youth, glamour and 'un-threateningness' make her an ideal tool in the media's backlash. What better opportunity to serve in this backlash than to have feminists mouthing off about "bad feminism". The resurgence of Paglia seems to be due to her slightly eccentric but certainly media-worthy approach to self publicity. (Paglia has been known to arrive at public events on the arms of two black muscular bodyguards). With her open declaration of her bi-sexuality, she has become a feminist freak, to be "wheeled out" at every available opportunity to comment upon every debate from date-rape to the importance of the Phallus.

Paglia perceives date-rape as a tool for feminist propaganda. Roiphe sees it in similar ways, claiming many feminists are not crediting women with sense, brains or full sexuality. Paglia states "Rape is one of the risk factors in getting involved with men" and later states "All rape is erotic - All rape is sexual". (The Rape Debate, p.71)

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These statements and Paglia's opinion seem to reveal a misinformed and very biased viewpoint. This attitude further condones the attitude that victims are somehow to blame.

Paglias' yawnsome renditions of "you wouldn't leave your purse on a bench in Central Park, walk away and expect no one to steal it", seems not only to put women, yet again, into the same category as purses, money, objects, etc. but again, blames a woman for being a sexual being! What is Paglia saying? Because we are female and we dance with the devil (i.e. men) we must expect to get burnt, that we should take it like 'real women' and not whine and complain? Paglia preaches that women must take responsibility for their actions - sure, fine - but why does she not credit men with the intelligence to stop, or are they purely uncontrollable, sexual hormones that "Paglia-esque" women must be responsible for? Paglia fails to mention that men must take responsibility for their own actions. Paglia makes the fatal and sad, mistake of discrediting date-rape. She confuses the issue and falls prey to belief in the classic stranger-rape. Although Paglia and, to a lesser degree, Roiphe, stresses the importance of the assertiveness of women and the "de-victimisation" of the feminine, Paglia stresses the power, intelligence and full sexuality of women - this is to be commended but what she gives to women in one glorious theory, she takes with another. Paglia and Roiphe should, perhaps, examine their beliefs more closely to find that their understanding of rape and date-rape has largely been formed by rape-myths, media misrepresentation but rarely by communicating with its victims.

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CHAPTER III

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SEX ROLES AND SOCIAL CONTROL

Masculinity and Femininity and Rape as a Means of Social Control

Aggression and eroticism are deeply intertwined. Hunt, pursuit and capture are biologically programmed into male sexuality...

Feminism does not see what is for men the eroticism or fun element in rape, especially the wild, infectious delirium of gang rape. Women who do not understand rape cannot defend themselves against it.

(Paglia, 1992, P.51)

There are mass communication problems between the sexes and many misconceptions surrounding rape and date-rape. How we understand each other, how one gender group views another, often reveals the myths that many hold about the opposite sex. So, what does it mean to be masculine?, or to be feminine? To be either means that we automatically assume a sex role. A sex role is an analytic distinction between the person and the social position they hold. This role implies that the person adopts a set of actions or role behaviours which are assigned to that particular role. We do not always stick stringently to our assigned roles and when this happens the person concerned is liable to suffer criticism and often condemned to some degree by society. Society likes 'norms'. When we break the 'norm' society often punishes.

The feminine sex-role is a dual edged sword; to be on either side is often difficult. This dual edge of femininity concerns two roles: that of mother and nurturer, and that of temptress/whore. This is often referred to as "the virgin/whore dichotomy or the slag/drag syndrome. The difficulty of this duality is that each category has its positive but also negative

attributes. To pertain the first role - that of virgin, mother, nurturer or drag, is seen to be pure, natural, and inevitably sexless. This portrays woman in a traditional role - to be this, society views as good,, but also as a bit dull. To be in the second category (of temptress, whore or slag) is to be despised but desired. Society pertains to purity but desires sexuality or regards sexuality as impurity. This division of woman into non-sexual and sexual roles splits the true identity of women. Note in this division, what is pure and good in the female, is sexless, but, what is impure and bad, in a female, is her full sexuality. Society often views women with full sexuality as being abnormal and hence, any woman with a healthy attitude to sex risks being labelled 'slag'.

Sue Lees discusses these notions in "Losing Out". With referral to a study of 13/15 year old girls by Deirdre Wilson. Wilson interviews girls as young as 13 and discovers how they are starkly aware of the slag/drag syndrome.

Its a vicious circle. If you don't like them then they'll call you a tight bitch. If you go with them they'll call you a slag afterwards.

(S. Lees, 1987, p.30)

This harsh reality of how female sexuality is viewed and developed in teenage culture merely serves to reflect the more silent opinion of an adult culture.

Girls are seen primarily in terms of their sexual reputation rather than in terms of their human qualities, personality or attributes. Embodied in this vocabulary is a contempt for women which emerges if they are seen to be actively sexual and unattached. (Lees, 1987, p.53)

Woman's value seems to lie largely on her reputation, her ability or inability to be openly sexual. Whereas, a man's value

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seems to be placed largely on his physical build and his ability to gain varied sexual experience. Where a man's social standing among his peer group is enhanced by sexual experience, a woman's is demeaned. If society views independent female sexuality as something bad, it begs the question: Why does society fear full female sexuality? Why does full female sexuality presume promiscuity? That is a woman enjoys sex, she is a slag, whore, etc. Anne Dickson suggests that this dichotomy of slag/drag, or woman as evil and as chaste lies, largely in our Christian tradition.

Sex was envisaged as the devil's dynamite, a constant power in man's genitals, ready to be kindled in an instant by the tempting wiles of a woman.

(Dickson/Lees, 1987, p.47)

Lees points out that woman is also the bearer of children and this notion of woman as chaste is embodied by the idea of The Virgin Mother. Lee states that the control of female sexuality is essential. That the independent sexually active woman is as dangerous whether lesbian or a heterosexual. She says that such women are often labelled as 'veracious, nymphomaniacs or sexless old maids'. (Lees, 1987, p.48)

I feel that women are subject to the same myths today; that society maintains the attitude that it is somehow wrong for a woman to invite sexual activity, but natural for men to do so. Why this is so, is due (according to Wilson and Lees) to the importance of 'Love'. Lees and Wilson state:-

The importance of love seems to be therefore in its permitting feelings of sexual excitement, while offering some protection from a reputation of sluttishness.

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Where men can happily romp from sexual relationship to sexual relationship, a woman must commit to and love (to some degree) her sexual partner in order for that sexual encounter to be acceptable by society and its views of what is normal.

Society's "norms" of what it is to be masculine, seems to generate a more positive attitude to promiscuous male sexuality. As stated before, a masculine desire for frequent and varied sexual encounters is silently condoned or, at least, not condemned as frequently as a female desire for sex. Male desire is seen as natural and a sign of a healthy male. This acceptance of abundant male sexuality can be seen through the visual imagery of sex (particularly pornography). Visual sexual imagery is largely formed for the male gaze; representing women specifically for masculine enjoyment.

Society's unspoken celebration of male sexuality as something good, positive and natural, further serves to push women's sexuality into the darkest corners. This categorising of female/male into non-sexual and sexual persona leads to misinformation of what it means to be female or male. This disallows open discussion between the sexes, on sexuality and desire. This in turn, leads to myths, both female and male. The lack of communication between the sexes, creates a "gap of knowledge", which has throughout the years been filled with these sexual myths.

Due to the subject of this thesis, I will discuss specifically rape-myths, although I do acknowledge the prevalence of many other male and female sexual myths.

Many common beliefs about rape have been found to be false. Such myths as the notion that rape cannot occur if the victim resists; that only young, attractive, women are likely to be raped; that some women enjoy the experience of being raped; or that most rapists are mentally disturbed individuals. (Hall, 1985).

These 'rape myths' point out that there is widespread ignorance on the subject of rape. Many men presume sex must be in some way violent or aggressive. A survey by the National Institute for Mental Health of 114 undergraduate men (U.S.A.) revealed some startling statistics. When questioned, these replies emerged:-

"I like to dominate a woman"	91.3%
"I enjoy the conquest part of sex"	86.1%
"Some women look like they're just asking to be raped" 83.5%
"I get excited when a woman struggles over sex" 63.5%
"It would be exciting to use force to subdue a woman" 61.7%

(Wolf, 1990, p.165)

Naomi Wolf, in her discussion on the prevalence of date-rape, states that in a U.C.L.A. study of 14 to 18 year olds that the researchers found some equally startling beliefs. It was found in this study that 50% of the boys and nearly 50% of the girls thought it was okay for a man to rape a woman if he was sexually aroused by her (Wolf, 1990, p.168). This finding clearly points out that many people have misread the situation, with regards to what women want, out of sexuality and with regards to what constitutes rape. The idea that a woman must

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submit to a man's overwhelming sexual desire/need serves to prove how tragically invalid many of our society's myths are. Myths such as these serve further to allow an environment where rape, date-rape and the abuse of woman is assured. Rape is not purely a sexual act but an act of masculine power over women. The misconception that rape is 'sexy' encourages dangerous attitudes towards women and the realities of rape.

That it is therefore up to women to limit their lives to 'non-dangerous' or unprovocative behaviour (as defined by men) and that if they do not, they ask for and deserve to be raped.

(Peck, 1987, p.48)

Rape myths also seem to be encouraged by contemporary newspaper reports of rape. These reports can often be highly selective, focusing only on rape trial cases (which in themselves are highly selective) but such reports often contain a subtle warning to women about their sexual behaviour - deeming some behaviour as inappropriate and dangerous for women. Selective mentioning of rapes, creates a mythology about rape which is highly dangerous (Walby, 1987, p.140)

The control and manipulation of rape reportage by mainly male journalists creates a public discourse on rape which, in turn, controls women. The message is clear - if women don't behave, then they deserve whatever they may get (Rape, etc.). Men can't help it. The constant media bombardment of our society with images of what it means to be female; what it means to be a "virgin/mother" or "whore/temptress", and the consequences of this media ambush is to create a constant stage of terror in many women - using violence, rape and fear of violence as a means of social control - the backlash subtlety continues.

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Rape Societies

The reportage of rape is on the increase. Some feel that the increase of rape reportage in our society (an increase on 56% in Britain and 170% in USA) (Bunch, 1991, p.23). is due to a patriarchal backlash and as women gain more power in our society men's power base is threatened so they re-establish their power through rape or the threat of rape. (S. Brownmiller)

The anthropological studies to back this theory up include Peggy Reeves Sanday's discussion of 'Rape Prone' and 'Rape Free' societies. In her essay "Rape and The Silencing of the Female" Sanday discusses the practices of tribal societies in Highland New Guinea and South America, where the threat of rape is used to prevent women infringing upon a male domain. The Mundurucu of South America is a particularly "rape-prone" society, where gang rape is the penalty for women who see the men's sacred symbols of power called The 'Sacred Trumpets'. This penalty is often enforced and is accepted as part of that society's behaviour. One could argue that this example of rape being used as a weapon to prevent women gaining access or knowledge in certain sacred areas is similar to the unwritten rules of our own rape-prone society - where, if a woman does not live by our society's guidelines (of being a good woman/nurturer/virgin) the penalty is rape or, at least, the threat of rape.

As Sanday points out:-

"Men rape women when they are threatened with the loss of their culturally constructed maleness."

(Sanday, 1989, p.87)

Sanday discusses how a silencing of the feminine occurs in rape prone societies. Where rituals which contain male dominance

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20535

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FROM : SAC, NEW YORK
SUBJECT: [Illegible]
RE: [Illegible]

AS TO THE [Illegible]
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Very truly yours,
[Illegible Signature]
Special Agent in Charge

of the maternal or the recreation of the feminine in the male image, Sanday says that some of these tribal societies believe that women originally were the dominant sex, they had power over birth and, therefore, power of creation. Many of these tribal rituals contain a recreation of the feminine reproductive model in male guise, i.e., 'The Sacred Trumpet'.

Other antrapolitical studies by Giddens[?] states that tribes such as the Marind Anim of Southern Coast of New Guinea also use the threat of mass gang rape as part of their natural culture. The Marind Anim gang rape women on marriage. Gang rape occurs by the husband and his kin - this practice continues well into marriage. This tribe also use rape as a method of punishment for those women who have broken laws, by invading the secrecy of the many male cult practices such as invasion, often results in gang rape or murder.

By these cases we can see how 'less developed societies' use rape as a means of controlling women. By creating a male social importance, such as religious practices, excluding women and punishing any invasion into their separate revered male domain through rape. Many of these rape-prone tribes have a large degree of separation of the sexes, where women have no positions of power and are submitted into nurturers and workers.

This separation of low power/high power groups between the female and male and the prevalence of rape in these societies, I feel, is not unlike our own. Although women in our society do not have to adhere to such stringent groupings, the power in society (government, religion, media, etc.) is largely male dominated, although women in our society are not as obviously

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punished with rape as in the Marind Anim or the Mundürucu tribes. The underlying messages that male power based society sends out is similar to the mentioned tribes. Fear of rape is used to keep women off the streets and sexual aggression is often prevalent in the workplace - offering a reminder of where the power really lies.

Male dominance is acquired, female submission is enforced when rape is the threat that guards male secrets, phallic sadism, subordinates women to male reproductive functions, a subordination that hides men's reliance on the feminine reproductive model. Men become men by becoming masculinized women.

(Sanday, 1987, p.89)

I wish also to point out that tribal rape is not limited to the Mundürucu or similar tribes. There are records of similar such 'tribal rapes' in Ireland. "Fuadach" is an Irish word used to describe the seizure and carrying off (usually of a young girl), "Fuadach" was a tradition in some rural parts of Ireland up until as late as the 1830's. "Fuadach" involved the kidnapping by a group of men of a young girl which one of the men hoped to marry. The prospective husband then raped the girl. This meant she would then have to marry him. This peculiar practice was particularly prevalent in Inis Owen, Co. Donegal where it had become an almost expected ritual of that era. (Friel/McGlinchey, 1987, p.59).

Why Subordinate Women?

Sherry Ortner discusses why men feel the need to dominate and subordinate women. Her theory lies in the belief that universally women are equated to nature and men to culture. She suggests that, due to women's connection with the body and

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natural procreative functions, this deems them closer to nature. The mothering and social roles of women place them in a category which is seen to be closer to nature. She suggests that men being the 'naturally dominant sex' (Ortner, 1987, p.66). - Attempt to control and manipulate nature, to create some order, she states that men have a natural desire to subordinate nature, thus, creating culture.

... the distinctiveness of culture rests precisely on the fact that it can under most circumstances transcend natural conditions and turn them to its purposes. Thus culture (i.e. every culture) at some level of awareness asserts itself to be not only distinct from but superior to, nature, and that sense of distinctiveness and superiority rests, precisely on the ability to transform - to 'socialize' and 'culturalize' - Nature. (Ortner, 1987, p.73)

Ortner refers to Simone De Beauvoir's (1953, p.60) suggestion that women's bodies are more organic (therefore closer to nature) than men's. The fact that many major areas of the female body, serve no apparent function to the health of the woman but more so to the reproduction of the species. She states that man, lacking in the ability to give birth, asserts his creativity externally and abstractly - (artificially) - through the creation of culture (The arts, etc.). Where a man creates lasting cultural object, (such as art, literature, symbols, etc.) woman creates the inevitably perishable human being. Ortner recognizes that woman is not just nature, but has her own consciousness and the fact that woman accepts (in general terms) her own devaluation and takes culture's point of view, reveals her membership and full awareness of and to culture. Ortner also recognises that in actuality, woman is no closer to nature than man but her theories suggest why perhaps woman **seems** to be closer

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to nature. Ortner suggests that man's desire to order or subordinate nature, reveals why he subordinates woman. Women are seen to be as nature, nature is seen to be secondary to culture. Therefore, woman being as to nature, is naturally subordinated by man. This need to dominate woman/nature, reveals why independent female sexuality would be 'abnormal' in such a society (culture) and why rape may be used as a means to control or keep women in line. The use of rape as a weapon has been shown in such tribes as Marind Anim, etc., as a punishment for interfering with male culture. Perhaps rape may be seen in similar terms in today's society.

Rape as a Means of the Social Control of Women

Rape is nothing more, or less, than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a State of Fear.

(Brownmiller, 1975, p.15)

Susan Brownmiller, in her discussion on rape, suggests that rape is a means by which men socially control women. This idea can be linked with Ortner's theories on: women is to Nature as man is to Culture. If man seeks to control nature he thereby seeks to control woman (woman being nature). What better means to subordinate and control women than to attack their physical vulnerability through rape or the threat of rape. Ortner and Brownmiller both seek to prove that rape serves as an ideal catalyst to control women in a male dominated culture. Rape is an expression of male power over women, a means of reminding women of their place. There is a sense that all women are victims of rape, through the unspoken threat of rape in our culture. This threat of rape creates caution in women in their everyday lives, and modes of behaviour. Rape is a crime which affects the

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lives and behaviour of all women and a crime which currently is protected by society's denial that rape is an intrinsic part of every woman's life.

The current backlash against the credibility of date-rape also shows how male culture in the 1990's controls women. By denying date-rape exists, it creates any woman who claims otherwise as 'guilty' and creates a state of terror where many victims never receive justice for crimes which our culture perceives as non-existent.

Rape is a painful crime, society's virtual denial that 79% of rape (date-rape) is 'real rape', is a sad reflection of the lack of understanding between the sexes. The roles and myths that society has created from male expectations of what female sexuality is, lead to the trivialisation of women and of rape. The preference for puritanical values on sexuality by many of our cultures authorities leads to a denial of full human sexuality. If, perhaps, we realise that sexual lines are much hazier, it would complicate many apparently 'clear-cut' rape and date-rape cases in courts. The denial of date-rape is a preservative measure whereby our culture insures that social norms and ideals of accepted behaviour are maintained; and thus, the distance and understanding between the sexes becomes greater.

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CONCLUSION

To show the realities, complexities and misrepresentations of rape and particularly date-rape, was my aim for this thesis. In Chapter I, I defined rape both in its legal and cultural definitions, pointing out the narrow definitions of rape which exist within the law and particularly the narrowness of society's definition of 'real rape' as being only defined as a 'stranger rape' in an attempt to create an awareness of how prevalent date or acquaintance-rape is. I briefly discussed rape in Ireland with reference to the lack of understanding of rape in much of Irish culture and pointed out the unlikelihood of a date-rape conviction in Irish courts of law.

My second chapter discussed date-rape, with detailed examination of the word and the concept 'date-rape'. I referred to the prevalence of date-rape on American college campuses and suggested that there is a silent, condoning a rape apparent in American, Irish and British culture. I discussed the media backlash and why the Austen Donnellan case received so much publicity, as did Camille Paglia and Katie Roiphe. I criticised the feminist backlash of Paglia and Roiphe, in an attempt to point out the hypocrisy of their arguments; and revealed what damage this 'backlash' may do. With my examination of this backlash in media, public opinion and Paglia/Roiphe, I concluded that it was a symptom of an unsympathetic climate and a culture which seems unconcerned about the prevalence and violence of date-rape.

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My final chapter dealt with notions of masculinity and femininity, examining myths which surround femininities and unearthed the relevance of the virgin/whore dichotomy with regards to rape, and how women's sexuality is viewed. I discussed rape-myths and suggested that such myths may contribute to misunderstandings between the sexes and ultimately rape. I briefly mentioned how media reportage contributes and creates rape-myths. I traced the prevalence of ritual-rape in the Mundurucu and Marind Anim tribes with reference to 'rape-prone' and 'rape-free' society. I showed how gang-rape is used by such tribes as a means of controlling women. I then looked at Sherry Ortner's theories on why man subordinates women and discussed her theory that woman is to nature as man is to culture. I concluded that this division of the sexes, manifested in the rape of women or the threat of rape as a means whereby men control women. I referred to Susan Brownmiller and her similar theories on rape as a means of social control. I concluded that a lack of communication and understanding between the sexes may be a large contributory factor to the existence and prevalence of date-rape.

At this point I wish to acknowledge that the term 'date-rape' is not used by the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre who prefer to use the term 'acquaintance-rape'. The preference by the media and current debate for this term prompted me to continue to use the term 'date-rape'.

What we call it is of little consequence. What we do about combatting date-rape does. Perhaps in time, the backlash will fade and then, perhaps, society will take a long hard look at the realities of rape and date-rape. When communication between the

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sexes becomes more open and honest; when we begin educating the public on the realities of human sexuality, rape and the abuse of power, we will have taken a big step to combating and perhaps eradicating rape - this is my heartfelt hope.

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