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Women who cried wolf — the illegitimate rape claim behind *Roe v Wade*

Note: Rebecca Kiessling, who was herself conceived in rape, is the co-founder of [Hope After Rape Conception](#) which advocates on behalf of rape survivors and their children.

This past week, Congressman Akin was publicly chastised for his comments on abortion in the case of rape, employing the controversial term “legitimate rape.” There was outcry from the liberal left, and from moderate Republicans – an indignation that a candidate for U.S. Senate would dare imply that a woman’s claim of rape might not be legitimate, making him out to be a misogynist. Though I’ve previously written that the comment was a *faux pas* and unnecessarily uttered, I’d like to address the underlying implications of such a statement, which was very similar to Ron Paul’s phraseology about an “honest rape” when he too was asked about abortion in the case of rape. Are legislators really to blame for implying that there are false claims of rape? Is there a history of illegitimate rape claims, particularly as it relates to this issue of pregnancy and rape? Do some women fabricate these claims? If so, who is to blame for any tendency in our society to question the veracity of rape victims’ accounts? Skeptical lawmakers, judges, juries, media, and the public, or the women who have cried wolf?

When I was in law school, I was a victim of domestic violence. A boyfriend from law school beat me up, breaking my jaw, knocking my teeth loose, chipping them, and crushing all of the bone in my upper jaw, which eventually resulted in the loss of my front tooth after much effort and surgeries to try to save it. I became a family law attorney because of what was done to me. As a young attorney, I was idealistic and naïve – absolutely indignant that any judge or Friend of the Court referee would dare question the claims of a victim of domestic violence. After all, she finally had the courage to leave the abusive situation after having been threatened, abused and terrorized. How on Earth could a judge or Friend of the Court referee doubt her account and refuse to grant, or dismiss, a Personal Protection Order? I thought that these people must be uncaring women-haters, showing deference only to men. Maybe they were even abusers themselves!

Then I gained experience. I had clients who I discovered were lying about their claims of domestic violence. I had clients who specifically asked me, “Well, what if I say I was abused?” – wanting to know how that could affect custody, or getting her husband removed from the home so she wouldn’t have to live with him during their divorce. Finally, the reality struck me – these judges are skeptical because there are women who cry wolf. That’s when I began seeing the judges in a new light, and my resentment grew toward the women who lied. I saw the reality that my clients who really were abused had a difficult time with the court system because of these other women who were ruining it for the real victims.

After learning my front tooth would have to be pulled, an expert in cosmetic dentistry offered to restore my smile for free, as part of the Give Back A Smile Program for victims of domestic violence, through the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. The bridge and eight teeth with porcelain veneers would have likely cost me around \$20,000 to have done by [this expert](#) in advanced cosmetic dentistry. Hence, the program had to ensure that there wasn’t fraud. I had to have a certification from a domestic violence counselor that I’d spent time with her, that she believed my claim was legitimate, and that I’d been out of the relationship for at least one year. Was this because these people who wanted to help restore my smile were

really misogynist wife-beaters themselves who heartlessly mistrusted a victim's story? No, of course not! This is the result of women who have cried wolf – and I got scrutinized.

In my conversations with many people this past week, I repeatedly got asked the question from those who were honest in their reactions to the latest news frenzy: “Well, aren't there women who lie about rape? What about the Duke LaCrosse team rape scandal?” Margaret DiCanio, author of the book, *The Encyclopedia of Violence: Origins, Attitudes, Consequences* (1993), states that “while researchers and prosecutors do not agree on the exact percentage of false allegations, they generally agree on a range of 2% to 8%.” Aren't the ones who make the false rape claims prejudicing our society and hurting the 92 – 98% of rape victims who actually have legitimate rape claims, and doesn't some of the blame rest on them? I believe so.

But what about the claims of pregnancy by rape? Do women lie about that? When I first learned that I was conceived in rape, I was 18, and I was devastated. My family and friends did not know how to relate to me. I was not given any kind of foundation in my life for dealing with this difficult truth, and they had no foundation themselves for offering real assistance. So they took the easiest strategy, which was to tell me that it's probably not true, “because a lot of women lie about becoming pregnant by rape.”

When I finally met my birthmother several months later, she shared the horrible details of the rape, having been abducted at knifepoint by a serial rapist and brutally raped. She basically walked me through the entire evening of the rape, including the aftermath. There was no question her account was true. Once again, I had to try to cope with the reality of it, and I still had some family members who suggested that it may have been fabricated. I got very upset with them. I intuitively knew how unfair it was for them to question the veracity of her account, just because they didn't want to deal with the painful truth and because of their discomfort with the fact that my rape-conception could not be reconciled with their world-view and pro-choice values. But once they realized my birthmother's account was true, their abortion stance was instantly changed.

But why would family and friends suggest such a thing – that there are women who lie about becoming pregnant through rape? Are there any well-known documented cases where this happened, as in the Duke LaCrosse team false rape claim case?

The answer to that question lies in the very foundation for the landmark U.S. Supreme Court case which legalized abortion in the U.S. – the false rape claim by Norma McCorvey – Jane Roe in *Roe v Wade*. This is her testimony on January 21, 1998, before the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Federalism, and Property Rights of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

*“My name is Norma McCorvey. I’m sorry to admit that I’m the Jane Roe of *Roe v. Wade*. The affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court didn’t happen the way I said it did, pure and simple. I lied! Sarah Weddington and Linda Coffey needed an extreme case to make their client look pitiable. Rape seemed to be the ticket. What made rape even worse? A gang rape! It all started out as a little lie, but my little lie grew and became more horrible with each telling.”*

The largest illegitimate rape claim ever perpetrated in the history of our nation was the foundation for the filing of *Roe v Wade*, which led to abortion on demand in our country! So the next time you hear anyone complaining about Todd Akin’s “legitimate rape” remark, I want you to remember that abortion rights activists are the women who cried wolf. They are the ones who are squarely responsible for the skepticism we see today regarding women who claim to be pregnant by rape, and they’ve set an example for other women to lie about it too. For those on the left who criticize Akin, I can assuredly call you out as hypocrites.

And for those who make the rape exception, some blame rests on you as well. After all, once you make a rape exception, you now have to set a standard in order to determine whether a claim of rape is legitimate so that the government will not be defrauded when a woman wants to receive Medicaid funding to abort her child - as in the Hyde Amendment exceptions. Rape exceptions put the government in this position – whether they require a police report, social service agency report, or a doctor’s certification that he’s satisfied that the woman’s claim of rape is legitimate.

I'm a co-founder and board member of a newly-formed 501(c)(3), [Hope After Rape Conception](#), whose mission is to assist rape survivor mothers and their children. We seek to ensure that they are protected by law from the rapist having any parental rights, with model legislation posted on the site, and we also plan to post model guidelines for States so that rape survivor mothers will not be cut off from receiving state aid. This occurs all too often because federal and state laws require that a mother cooperate with the local child support enforcement division of the prosecutor's office by naming the father. Some rape victims are unable to do so, and others are apprehensive about naming him because it could open the door for him to know about her child, and to be able to exercise parental rights. So part of our board members' plans are to craft model guidelines ... which means that we'll have the difficult task of recommending standards for states to set to determine whether a claim of rape is legitimate. Ah – there's that word again!

As if that task is not sticky enough for a board composed of two rape survivor mothers, two members who were conceived in rape, and a grandmother of a child conceived when her minor daughter was raped, our future plans also include offering scholarships to rape survivor mothers and their children, as well as financial assistance to those who have been cut off from state aid. What this means is that we will be in the awkward position of having to ascertain ourselves whether a rape claim is legitimate. Juda Myers – someone who was also conceived in rape, runs a new organization called, ["Choices 4 Life"](#) – which has presented "honor awards" to rape survivor mothers and which seeks to raise funds to provide financial aid to these women. She recently shared with me that she has experienced fraud where women – dare I say – had illegitimate rape claims. So this is not foolhardy or myth, but a reality in this world that there are indeed women who lie about having become pregnant by rape.

It does take a lot of courage for survivors of rape and survivors of domestic violence to come forward with their stories and to seek protection and justice, and I'm very protective of my own birthmother in this regard. Last year, I had friends alert me to a chat room where someone was making the accusation that my birthmother's story was false, and/or that my claim of having been

conceived in rape was false. It's frustrating and insulting that such accusations are made. It affects me, and it hurts other women as well. But when we discuss this issue, let us not forget, and let us remind others, who it is that fabricated the greatest illegitimate claim of rape which has ever been perpetrated in the U.S., and perhaps around the world. These abortion rights activists are the women who cried wolf.

<https://www.lifesitenews.com/opinion/women-who-cried-wolf-the-illegitimate-rape-claim-behind-roe-v-wade>