

All Politicians are rapists

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Content Warning: rape, rape culture, victim blaming.
Read this when you're ready.

Power makes rapists.

There are endless reports of politicians, celebrities, businessmen and more raping. This is not some fluke: It is not just that powerful people being powerful makes it more likely to hear about their assaultings due to being famous and “news-worthy”—it is also that being powerful makes you more likely to rape or at least to excuse and cover up rape.

The rapes reported on the news are portrayed as news-worthy not because rape is seen as rare, special, to be unexpected, but because it is a famous person doing it: The story focuses on the poor, helpless, intrinsically innocent cis man (with half the world’s wealth) in order to make digs at him and excoriate people near him. Think of the case of Jeffery Epstein, where many people who ruthlessly support the rapist-in-chief of the so-called US question, question, question endlessly which of their personal political enemies were on his jets and decidedly do not question. The people the powerful rape, whom they forever altered the lives of are absent referants under the terms “victim,” “accuser,” “whore.” It is dangerous for them to have names because they will be eternally shunted into the public eye and nailed with stigmata that reduce them to “I ACCUSED” or “I FABRICATED” or “I AM NOT A PERSON”—they are tossed aside yet more in favor of the rapist.

Rape is in fact extremely common. 47.1% of trans people have a history of being sexually assaulted.¹ In the so-called U.S. in 2018, there were 734 630 rapes and sexual assaults, which is 2 013 per day or just over 1 rape per minute on average (and these are just the ones that were reported.)² Between 25% and 57% of straight cis

men self-report perpetrating a sexually aggressive behavior to a woman since they were 14 years old;³ if you know several straight cis men, it is highly likely more than one of them are rapists.

The powerful are rapists because they are powerful. Patriarchy is a hierarchy of power over others where straight cis men are higher on that hierarchy than anyone else. The kyriarchy is the confluence of all hierarchies, where each person can be simultaneously higher in one hierarchy and lower in another. Kyriarchy is what makes intersectionality necessary. Patriarchy intersects with all other hierarchies, be they racism, classism, ableism, or any other, and all hierarchies are insidious.

As you become more and more powerful in the kyriarchy, or the more that you feel that you *deserve* that power, the more likely you are to rape or excuse rape. This is because patriarchy deeply intersects with other hierarchies—especially classism, racism and ageism—and because rape is an efficient tool to perpetuate, reinforce, and “reward” patriarchy because it reifies disparities in power. It is not that each time a businessman rapes is an unexpected occurrence; it is actually the case that to *not* be a rapist or to *not* excuse rape as a powerful person (or someone who feels they deserve power) is exceptional because rape, being a tool of patriarchy, is also a tool of capitalism and the state.

All politicians and businessmen are rapists, would be rapists given the chance, or would excuse rape. The only way to eliminate rape is to destroy the kyriarchy—to eliminate power over others and replace it with power generated by equality and solidarity. If we do not destroy capitalism, patriarchy will not end because they mutually reinforce each other.

1 Lauren Abern et al., “Prevalence of Sexual Assault in a Cohort of Transgender and Gender Diverse Individuals,” *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 38, no. 5 (April 2023): 1331–33, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-022-07900-y>.

2 Rachel E. Morgan and Alexandra Thompson, “Criminal Victimization, 2020” (Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, October 18, 2021), <https://bjs.ojp.gov/library/publications/criminal-victimization-2020>.

3 Rhiana Wegner et al., “Sexual Assault Perpetrators’ Justifications for Their Actions: Relationships to Rape Supportive Attitudes, Incident Characteristics, and Future Perpetration,” *Violence Against Women* 21, no. 8 (August 2015): 1018–37, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215589380>.