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## CAN RAPES BE PREVENTED ALTOGETHER? GENETIC AND SOCIO-BIOLOGICAL THEORIES OF RAPE SUGGEST IT IS NOT POSSIBLE: A CRITICAL EXAMINATION



**Sunil Lungare**

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### ABSTRACT:-

**C**raig T Palmer (Anthropologist ) and Randy Thornhill (Biologist) wrote a book in 2000. Publisher was MIT Press USA. The title was "Natural History of Rape: Biological bases of sexual coercion. The authors maintained that rape is natural phenomenon known to human for at least 40,000 years and it is taking place as routine and it is not an aberration. Their kinky research suggested that in animal world coercive sex is common and routine. This book angered feminist and rational both. People felt this research was aimed at challenging the earlier book (1975 First Published by Simon & Schuster ) by Susan Brownmiller titled "Against Our Will" in which she had said " Rape is a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear."

**KEY KEYWORDS :** Socio-Biological Theory, Anthropologist.

### INTRODUCTION

The basic principle is planet earth must sustain with all its flora and fauna. The perpetuity principle behind this planet's continuance in the solar system and in the entire universe has built up instincts among all living beings on planet earth. This instinct is

of males depositing sperms in females of their own species. The human has evolved itself in to a dominating species due to it's intellect and setting of his fingers of hand and the erect figure the human acquired during a couple of million years. Humans lived in groups then tribes then tribal villages. In last 4000 years cities were developed and some codes of living in cities were developed but prestigious kings sages. But history and the ancient epics like Ramayana teel us that kings and sages also lost their mental balances, lust taking over them and they committed rapes.

### Rapes described In Epics

First rape described in Epic Ramayana is that of Ahalya Daughter of Brahma and wife of sage Gautama Only Padma Purana mentions that Ahalya became almost a stone when Gutama cursed her for having been raped by Indra and gave a dredemption that she would become human again upon Rama's feet touching her who dhad been lying in the form of stone. Sage Gautama also cursed Indra that his entire skin will have 1000 vagina shaped scars. Saa tataH tasya raamasya padda sparshanaat mahaatmanH abhuut suruupaa vanitaa sammaakraantaa mahaa shilla!, which means that by the touch of the feet of that great souled Rama, she would manifested into a divine damsel, getting rid of her stone (motionless) shape Ahalya is also mentined in Uttara Kanda of Ramayana<sup>1</sup>. There will be an exchange of words between Indra and Brahma and here Brahma defines hala as 'distorted shape' and ahalya is one with an 'impeccable beauty. 'Besides the above, indra will be usually addressed as

sahasra-aksha – thousand eyed one, and behind this legend, there is another legend, saying that Gowtama’s curse to Indra is: ‘since you delighted with Divine Ahalya, who is crafted by Brahma, in carnal pleasures, let there be thousand carnally vaginal apertures on your body...’ Then Indra is agitated for such an appearance, pleads for mercy. Then, the curse is amended saying ‘instead of vaginal apertures, the apertures on your body will look like eyes...’ thus Indra became sahasra aksha (1000 eyed). It is not understood why Ahalya was turned in to stone and why mercy was shown to Indra for having committed rape.

### Second rape described in Ramayana

Second rape is that of daughter Arja of Sage Shukracharya by King “Dand”<sup>1</sup> King Dand comes across a beautiful young woman in the woods near the Ashrama of Shukracharya. Seeing the beautiful damsel he approaches her and says I am enchanted by your beauty and want to have sex with you. Upon such demand the daughter of Shukracharya tells King Dand that she is daughter of very powerful sage Shukracharya and that if he commits advances towards copulation the sage will destroy him with “curse” But the king ignoring threats and warnings says he is ready to die but will not desist from having sex with her. He finally rapes the girl. Sage Shukracharya After listening to the disturbing news gives a very punishing curse that within seven nights from the crime of rape committed, King “Dand” along with his son and his entire army shall embrace death. Deterrence for has been shown but not so severe in case of Indra. .

### Socio-biological Theory of rape

The idea that rape evolved under some circumstances as a genetically advantageous behavioral adaptation was popularized by Biologist Randy Thornhill and Anthropologist Craig T. Palmer in their book published in year 2000. The book has been published by prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT Press). The name of the book is **A Natural History of Rape: Biological Bases of Sexual Coercion**. Craig and Thornhill said man is in search of a female for depositing his sperm and therefore rape occurs. Their tone was as if humans and especially females are just animals and they don’t have to get married and they do not have choice and freedom of mating. The view of the scientists was wrongly perceived as sexual intercourse with strange unwilling human female by an aggressive human male is not at all a crime. It is just a natural routine and that coercive sex among animals is common. There was much resentment about the Palmer-Thornhill book in the society.

### Elysabeth A. Lloyed

Arnold and Maxine Tanis Chair of History and Philosophy of Science and Professor of Biology Indiana University at Bloomington condemned the book Natural History of Rape by a scathing attack by Publishing a Research Paper titled **Science Gone Astray: Evolution and Rape**<sup>2</sup> Palmer and Thornhill present two alternative evolutionary explanations for the existence of Human rape. They claim that rape behavior must either have evolved through a process of natural selection or it must be the byproduct of some underlying traits which must themselves be adaptations. Their main argument rests on a hypothesis about the evolution of sex differences that because the women bear the brunt of effort in reproduction through pregnancy delivery nursing and infant care women have evolved to be very selective about their mates. Men on the other hand being able to reproduce just by mere ejaculation without responsibility of co-parenting or providing This led to such traits in males that they have casual sex and one night stands. Male female reproductive strategies differ. Women choose one mate carefully whereas men seek multiple mates Palmer and Thornhill call their first hypothesis that men have evolved through natural selection a specific tendency toward behavior –the rape specific hypothesis. Men who have trouble in accessing a female due to low birth or low status, inferior genetic make-up and bad looks must have resorted to rape.

The authors Craig T Palmer and Randy Thornhill have given explanation as infra to quell the criticism that they are misogynist and barbaric

### Naturalistic Fallacy

Thornhill and Palmer write that "Rape is viewed as a natural, biological phenomenon that is a product of

the human evolutionary heritage". They further state that by categorizing a behavior as "natural" and "biological" they do not in any way mean to imply that the behavior is justified or even inevitable. "Biological" means "of or pertaining to life," so the word applies to every human feature and behavior. But to infer from that, as many critics assert that Thornhill and Palmer do, that what is biological is somehow right or good, would be to fall into the so-called natural fallacy. They make a comparison to "natural disasters as epidemics, floods and tornadoes". This shows that what can be found in nature is not always good and that measures should be and are taken against natural phenomena. They further argue that a good knowledge of the causes of rape, including evolutionary ones, are necessary in order to develop effective preventive measures.

Evolutionary psychologists McKibbin et al. argue that the claim that evolutionary theories are justifying rape, is a fallacy in the same way that it would be a fallacy, to accuse the scientists doing research on the causes of cancer, that they are justifying cancer. Instead, they say that understanding the causes of rape may help create preventive measures.

Wilson et al. (2003) argue that evolutionary psychologists like Thornhill and Palmer use the naturalistic fallacy inappropriately to forestall legitimate discussion about the ethical implications of their theory. According to Thornhill and Palmer, a naturalistic fallacy is to infer ethical conclusions (e.g., rape is good) from (true or false) statements of fact (e.g., rape is natural). Wilson et al. point out that combining a factual statement with an ethical statement to derive an ethical conclusion is standard ethical reasoning, not a naturalistic fallacy, because the moral judgment is not deduced exclusively from the factual statement. They further argue that if one combines Thornhill and Palmer's factual premise that rape increases the fitness of a woman's offspring with the ethical premise that it is right to increase fitness of offspring, the resulting deductively valid conclusion is that rape has also positive effects and that its ethical status is ambiguous. Wilson et al. state that Thornhill and Palmer dismiss all ethical objections with the phrase 'naturalistic fallacy' although "it is Thornhill and Palmer who are thinking fallaciously by using the naturalistic fallacy in this way.

The socio-biological theory of rape does not explain why a human rapes infants as small as 11 months old and fails to explain why a 100 year old sick woman is raped by drunkard which woman dies soon after rape. Extreme small age and also extreme old age females are raped. Such things do not happen in animal world. Are the humans more fallen morally or otherwise than animals is a question to ponder upon. Another important question is if at all rape is about sperm deposition only as per socio-biological theory then why nirbhaya and Kopardi girl are killed brutally. These question are beyond the socio-biological theory. No evolution or natural selection can explain the question asked here by this researcher. Rapes are aberration of mind and such minds cannot be corrected. Death sentence to such psychopathic criminals is the only answer to the problem of rapes.

## CONCLUSION

Deterrence alone is the answer to such age old evil. Entering into socio-biological theories of rape will take us nowhere. Applying animal world theories such as socio-biological theories of rape to human society itself is an aberration. Sending rapists to correction centers is waste of resources and time. They must be sent to gallows. Mercy petition of rapist killers may not be registered at all.

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<https://philarchive.org/archive/LLOGAv1>

This is a standard view among many biologists working on human and animal evolution.

Huffingtonpost 04-09-2016

The Times of India 30October 2017

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