Frontal Lobe

Parietal Lobe

Occipi

Temporal Lobe

Cerebellum

Myth: *If it was really an assault, they could have just fought back.*

Neurobiology Fact: During an assault, the brain's defense/fear circuitry can take over. It can quickly impair the thinking part of the brain (prefrontal cortex), responsible for rational and flexible responses, and instead trigger habit behaviors and survival reflexes that don't involve fighting or even struggling. These responses are automatic and normal in such situations. There are a few common reflexes that the brain falls back on during an assault situation. For example, a person may "freeze" when the attack is first detected. Some people space out and disconnect from their body, while others actually pass out from fear, or become paralyzed and unable to move or speak. These are all common brain responses to any type of life-threatening, fearful situation, not just a sexual assault. They are not a matter of choice for the person experiencing them.

Myth: *If it was really an assault, they would've called out for help or called the police.*

Neurobiology Fact: When a person experiences extreme fear, their prefrontal cortex (decision-making part of the brain) becomes impaired. Logically thinking through the situation and deciding to call

they are unable to escape, or that trying to escape could be very dangerous. It's a response that appeared millions of years ago in evolution, and all mammals can have that type of response."

Myth: If it was really an assault, then why did you agree/offer to give him a blow job first?

Neurobiology Fact: When people are attacked, their brain may automatically activate old habits of responding to aggressive and dominant people, for example from experiences of childhood abuse or bullying. Or habits that girls learn for politely responding to unwanted sexual advances without causing a scene or upsetting the other person. Women, in particular, are raised to be nice and to be pleasers or placaters. Sometimes that might mean offering or initiating sexual behaviors because the b