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DEAR DEIDRE



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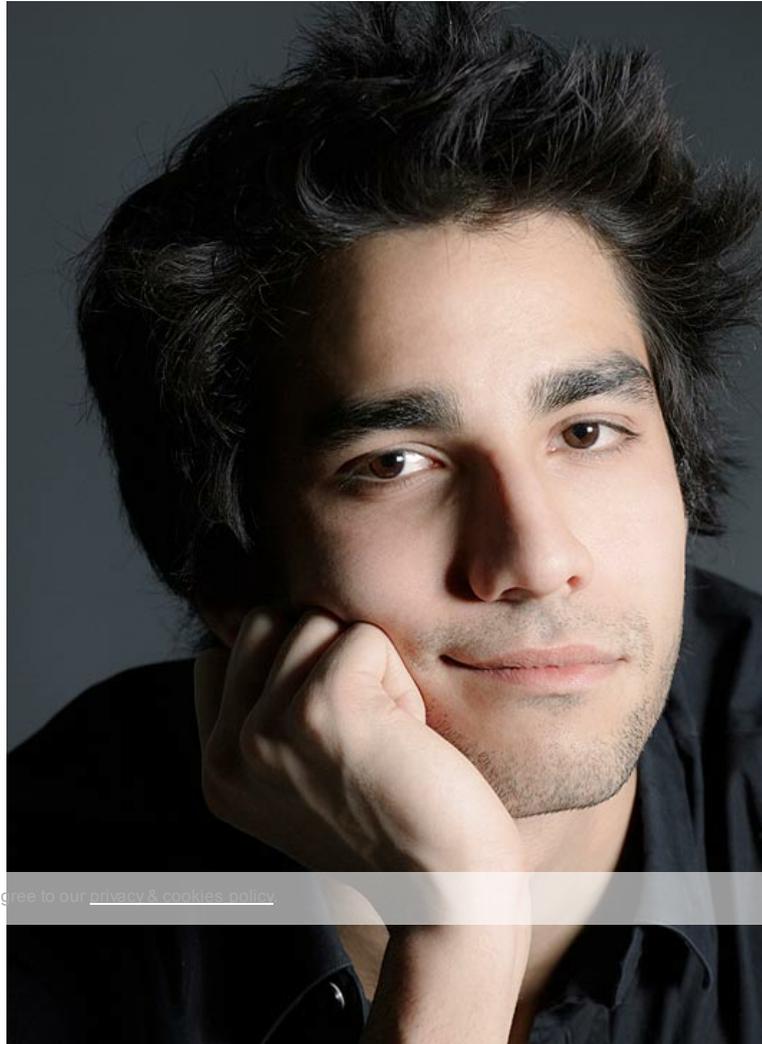
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# She took advantage, does that mean I have been raped?



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**I FEEL like I've been raped, though I am not even sure it's possible for a woman to rape a man.**

I am 27, a single lad-about-town until recently. I went out with my mates six weeks ago and we were having a good time in the clubs and bars. I remember talking to a group of women and one really caught my eye as she was a stunner. I was drunk and thought I was God's gift. I must have looked a real fool.

She was not drinking as she was the driver for her group of friends. We all got on great going from one pub to the next. I don't remember much after that until I woke up in a bedroom I did not recognise, naked and with this woman beside me. I only later found out her name.

I thought we must have had sex so I dressed quickly, and said sorry a dozen times if I'd done anything wrong. She just laughed and said I was so out of it with drink, I just lay there and she did all the work on top.

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I don't properly remember any of it but it's left me feeling gutted. I know this would usually be a man's dream but for me it is a nightmare. I feel dirty, used and violated. Sometimes I think that was rape. Was what she did against the law?

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I cannot tell anyone or go to the police as I would just get laughed at, but I feel so bad I no longer go out into town or see my mates, and rarely go out of the house except to work. I no longer feel like a man, just an empty shell.

## Deidre Says

It would legally count as sexual assault if this woman had sexual contact with you when you were in no fit state to give consent. It sounds as though that is the case – though she may genuinely have thought you were happy with what was happening.

Bringing a court case would probably be a nightmare for you and her but you can get help for your feelings. Of course there's all the difference in the world between fantasy and reality – it's your loss of control over what was happening to you that is so deeply disturbing.

What you're feeling now are recognisable symptoms that victims of rape commonly suffer – depression, inability to eat, fear of going outdoors and of meeting people, even friends.

You need expert help to come to terms with that night and so that in time you can move on from this trauma. Contact Survivors UK who help men who have been sexually abused (0845 122 1201, [www.survivorsuk.org.uk](http://www.survivorsuk.org.uk)).

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