Answering the Hard Questions About Sexual Violence

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Rape Deniers' Strategies

- Criticize rape statistics as exaggerated reports
- Claim rape victims lie: false reports

(Raphael, 2012)
Topics Covered
- “It’s just a miscommunication”
- “Most of them are lying”
- “What if they are both drunk?”

“It’s Just a Miscommunication”

The Undetected Rapist
The Undetected Rapist

Single Act Rapists
44 men
44 rapes & attempted rapes

Serial Rapists
76 men
439 rapes & attempted rapes

Serial Offending-Lisak Study

- Serial Rapists (76 men) (439 rapes & attempted rapes)
- Single Act Rapists (44 men) (44 rapes & attempted rapes)
Violence Committed by Serial Rapists

The 76 Serial Rapists Committed:
49 sexual assaults
439 rapes & attempted rapes
66 acts physical abuse of children
277 acts sexual abuse of children
214 acts of battery
Total: 1,045 offenses

Similar Findings

- Study of 950 college men over 4 years
- Multi-year study of Navy recruits
- Criticism debunked

www.jimhopper.com/repeat-rape
False Reporting

Wigmore’s View

“Modern psychiatrists have amply studied the behavior of errant young girls and women coming before the courts in all sorts of cases. Their physical complexes are multifarious, distorted partly by inherent defects, partly by diseased derangements or abnormal instincts, partly by bad social environment, partly by temporary physiological or emotional conditions. One form taken by these complexes is that of contriving false charges of sexual offenses by men.”

(Schuller & Hastings, 2002; quoting Wigmore, 1908)

False Reporting: The More Modern View

49% of the men and 42% of the women believe women cry rape when it hasn’t really happened.

Georgia Opinion Poll (1998)
(Random sample: ages 18 to 49)
Why?

What is a “False Report”?

Definition

According to the International Chiefs of Police (IACP):

"The determination that a report of sexual assault is false can be made only if the evidence establishes that no crime was committed or attempted. This determination can be made only after a thorough investigation."

(Lisak, 2010) (citing IACP, Investigating sexual assaults: Concepts and issues paper (2005)).
Definition

IACP definition, continued:

"This should not be confused with an investigation that fails to prove a sexual assault occurred. In that case the investigation would be labeled unsubstantiated. The determination that a report is false must be supported by evidence that the assault did not happen."

(Lisak, 2010) (citing IACP, Investigating sexual assaults: Concepts and issues paper (2005)).

What Isn't Included?

- Unsubstantiated
- Unfounded
  - False
  - Baseless
- Recantation (unless proven false)

False Reporting: The Reality

“False allegations of rape are rare. The best estimates, drawn from careful analyses of police reports, indicate that between 2 and 8 percent of rapes reported to police are false allegations.”

(Lisak et al., 2010)
False Reporting - IPSA

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<th>Domestic Violence</th>
<th>Rape &amp; Domestic Violence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of cases prosecuted</td>
<td>5,651</td>
<td>111,891</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total suspects referred for charge</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charge WPT</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>No further action</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Out of court disposal</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
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Lessons learned:
- Proving the falsity of the original complaint
- Need for care in relying on admissions
- Need for care in examining terms of complaint
- Previous reports of rape
- Intention
- Young suspects who are themselves victims
- Public interest factors

Answering the Question:
- How many have been asked about false reporting?
- How many had trouble answering?
- What are the key components to an answer?
Key Components

- Acknowledge false reports
- Acknowledge harm caused
- Explain definition
- Explain recent analysis of studies
- Explain statistics
- Don’t say it is the same as for other crimes

Time to Practice

“What if They Are Both Drunk?”
The link between substance abuse and trauma goes both ways:
- Substance abuse often follows the onset of PTSD
- "Substance abusers are at higher risk for trauma of all kinds"

(Najavits, 2009)

Study of aggression in large bars & clubs
- Looked at:
  - Intoxication levels of both parties
  - Aggressive intent
  - Persistence & invasiveness by initiators
  - Targets' responses
  - Third party involvement

(Graham et al., 2014)

89.9% of aggressive sexual incidents involved male initiators & female targets
- Initiators were more invasive & persistent when targets were intoxicated
- Intoxicated women may be targeted for sexual aggression:
  - Less able to resist
  - More available

(Graham et al., 2014)
Findings

- Initiators’ intoxication was not significantly related to their persistence or invasiveness.
- Acts of sexual aggression are intentional, rather than attributed to effects of alcohol on initiator.

(Grantham et al., 2014)

The Role of Alcohol in Sexual Assault

- Alcohol does not “cause” sexual assault.
- Role of alcohol:
  - Perpetrators use it as a weapon.
  - Society views alcohol use differently:
    - Victims = makes them responsible.
    - Perpetrators = excuses their behavior.
  - Victims often self-medicate with alcohol and/or drugs.

"Both Drunk"

- Voluntary intoxication not a defense to an intentional act.
- Analogies:
  - Remember “Frank”: perpetrators use alcohol deliberately as a weapon.
Closing Thoughts

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.”
Margaret Mead

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Thank you for what you do for all of us.
References


References


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