

The Dynamics of Intimate Partner Sexual Violence

Jan Russell, JD



Overview

- Scope of the problem
- Types of rapists
- Case studies
- Physical and psychological impact

Historical Prospective

- “Sexual intercourse with a female not his wife, by force and against her will”
- Courts found that a man could not take his wife against her will as “consent to sexual relations with her husband was implicit in the marital contract”

Historical prospective

- At least 30 states have special restrictions:
 - Limited window to report (30 to 90 days)
 - Requires use of force, disallows charges when spouse is unable to consent
 - Penetration only
 - Separate offense with lesser penalty

Studies

- **Diana Russell, Rape in Marriage**
 - Face-to-face interviews with a representative sample of 930 women in San Francisco
- **Finkelhor and Yllo, License to Rape**
 - Survey of 323 married women in Boston
 - Face-to-face interviews with women who reported being raped
- Occurring within a marriage
- Involving penetration by force or when the woman was unable to consent because she was drunk or drugged

Prevalence of rape in marriage

- 10 -14% of married women in the general population reported being raped by their husbands at least once
- Of those reporting rape:
 - 50% report being raped 5 or more times
 - 1/3 report being raped 20 or more times
- 18% of incidents were witnessed by children

Prevalence

- When scope of study was extended to include forms of psychological coercion, in addition to use of force, 34% of women in the general population reported unwanted sex with their partners

Battered women and marital rape

In studies of battered women, 50-70% report being raped at least once



Types of rapists



Battering type

- Much physical and verbal abuse
- Angry and belligerent
- May have alcohol or drug problem
- Part of power and control dynamics
 - Sex is the weapon, not the purpose
- Use more force than is needed to overpower the victim

Non-battering type (rape only)

- Only uses as much force as is necessary
- Parties have consensual sex but have long term disagreements over frequency or type of sex
- He sees her “withholding sex” as her trying to control him
- Assertion of dominance and control over sex is primary motive
- Usually not controlling in other aspects of relationship

Obsessive rape

- Bizarre obsessions
- Heavily involved in porn
- Fetishes or sadistic
- May demand wife to perform deviant, unusual or painful acts
- Dee

Dangerousness

- Men who batter and rape are particularly dangerous, more likely to severely injure their wives and potentially escalate to murder
- More likely to batter when wife is pregnant compared to other abusers
- Battered women who were raped more than 20 times are more likely than other battered women to kill their abuser

Case studies: Sexual abuse through coercion

Sleeping with the
Enemy

Bree's story

**Case studies:
Use of intimidation based on
past physical assaults**

Final Analysis



Case studies: Attacks resembling stereotypical stranger assaults

RESCUE ME



Case studies: Attacks resembling stereotypical stranger assaults

BATTERED:
LISA BIANCO

Extended ordeal

Case studies: Forcing the victim to have sex with other men, sometimes for money

BATTERED



Case studies

Sexual abuse in same-sex relationships



Case studies: Rape of older women



Older women

- May have been ongoing throughout the relationship
- May have begun when the wife became frail or disabled
- May begin in new dating relationships

Older women

- At higher risk of injury
 - increased risk for genital trauma, including vagina trauma that may require surgical repair
 - spontaneous vaginal and bladder infections
 - broken pelvic and hip bones
 - difficulty sitting and walking
 - exacerbation of existing conditions
 - loss of independence

Warning signs

- Bruises around breasts or genital area
- Unexplained venereal disease or genital infections
- Unexplained vaginal or anal bleeding
- Torn, stained, or bloody underclothing
- An elder's report of being sexually assaulted.

Psychological impact

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Lack of sleep
- Eating disorders
- Lack of interest in sex
- Fear of men
- Other social phobias
- Substance abuse
- Suicidal ideation
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Psychological impact

- Compared to stranger rape:
 - Higher levels of anger, depression and sexual distress
 - Feelings of betrayal, humiliation and guilt
 - Thought that they would be killed during the attack:
 - 36% in stranger rapes
 - 40% in marital rape

Physical consequences

- 72%: painful intercourse
- 64% vaginal pain
- 37% vaginal bleeding
- 30% anal bleeding
- 32% leaking urine
- 20% miscarriage/stillbirth within days
- 18% unwanted pregnancy

Higher rates of Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Abusive men are more likely to engage in extramarital sex, acquire STIs, & place their partners at higher risk through sexual abuse
- Risk of transmission of HIV increases with the degree of trauma, vaginal lacerations and abrasions that occur when force is used

Higher rates of Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs)

- Violence limits the ability of women to negotiate condom use
- Battered women who ask their partners to use condoms:
 - 4 times more likely to be verbally abused
 - 9 times more likely to be threatened with physical abuse

Domestic violence programs

- 2005 study
- Specific training on IPSV:
 - 31% of domestic violence shelter programs
 - 49% of rape crisis center
- 5% of shelters and rape crisis centers provide a support group specifically for survivors of IPSV

Asking about sexual abuse/assault

- Never ask “have you been raped”
- Ask:
 - What happens when he wants to have sex and you don't?
 - Has your partner ever forced you to do sexual things that you were uncomfortable with?
 - Has your partner pressured you to have sex?

Contact information

- Jan Russell
- Domestic Violence Advocacy Program
- Chicago Police Department
- 3510 S. Michigan Ave., Unit 140
- Chicago, IL 60653
- 312-742-5290
- JRussellJD@sbcglobal.net