


Them and Us: Talking about Perpetrators of Sexual Crime

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Outline of Presentation

- ▶ Extent of Sexual Violence in Ireland
 - ▶ Lot of Victims – Lot of Perpetrators – Where are they?
 - ▶ Individual / Psychological Perspectives
 - ▶ Dynamic Perspectives.....
 - ▶ Social / Sociological Perspectives
 - ▶ Responses
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Extent of Sexual Violence in Ireland

- 30.3% Irish Females, 23.6% Irish Males - sexual abuse in childhood
- 25.6% Irish Females, 12.4% of Irish Males - sexual assault in adulthood
- 42% females and 28% males sexual violence over life-time (SAVI, 2002: xxxii)

Lot of Victims: Lot of Perpetrators

- ▶ Lot of Victims

 - 1: 2.5 females;

 - 1: 4 males.....

- ▶ Lot of Perpetrators

 - Estimate: 6% of men sexually abuse minors..... (Marshall UK and Hanson Canada)

1% Sexual Offenders imprisoned

SAVI (2002) Reporting Rates

- ▶ Adult Sexual Assault: 1% of Irish male victims; 7.8% Irish female victims reported to An Gardaí
- ▶ Child Sexual Abuse: 1% of male victims and 10% of female victims reported
- ▶ 14% in other jurisdictions
- ▶ 2007 18% of Rape Crisis Network Ireland (RCNI) service users reported, 2009, 27% and 2011 30%



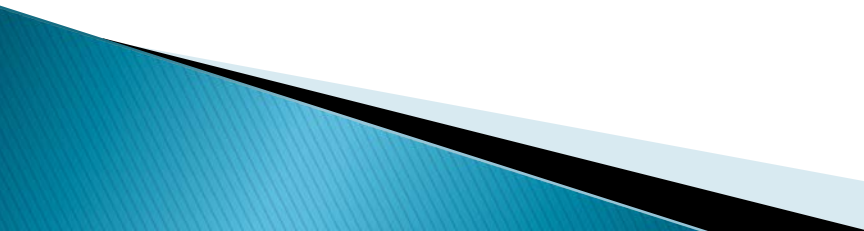
Reporting on Increase [increase by over 50% 2008-2012]

- ▶ Attrition rates Increase [decline in sexual violence cases prosecuted e.g. in rape cases 73% in 1977; 19.5% 2007; 15% in 2012 (Lovett and Kelly, 2009; CSO, 2014)]
- ▶ The proportion of Garda recorded sexual offences leading to court proceedings declined markedly during the period 2003-2012
- ▶ Conviction rate low [100 cases of rape, 8 convicted] (Hanley et al, 2010) [Just over 2% rape cases 2007 resulted in conviction] (2006) Ireland 20 out of 22 European countries



Reasons for Low conviction Rates for Rape in Ireland

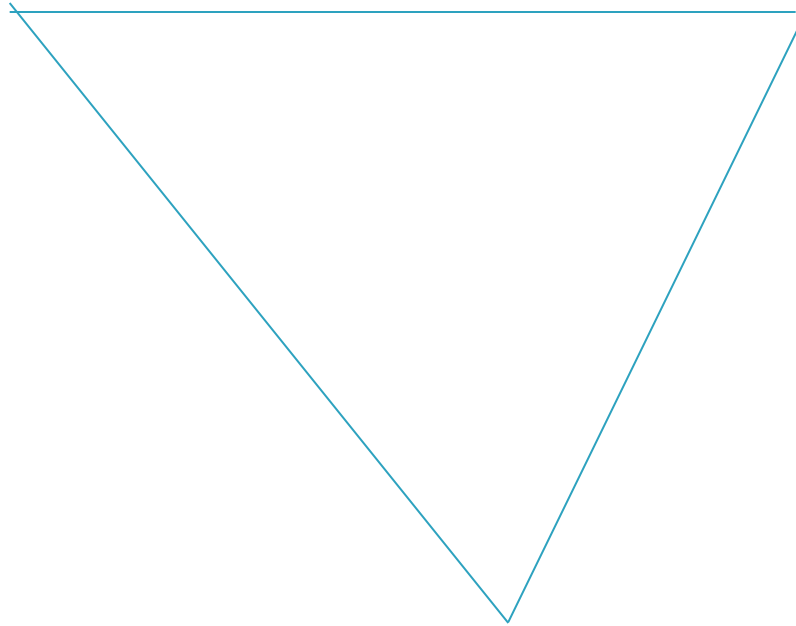
- ▶ Evidential deficits or case withdrawn by the victim
- ▶ Evidential deficits especially common in situations where (1) the victim had consumed alcohol, (2) the victim had a mental illness and/or (3) the suspect was known to the victim (Hanley et al)
- ▶ Except in 'wholly exceptional' cases a conviction of rape will attract a custodial sentence

- ▶ Who are the Perpetrators?
 - ▶ Where are the Perpetrators?
 - ▶ People we know
 - ▶ In Communities
 - ▶ Them or Us?.... Them and Us....
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Victim

Offender


Bystander



Psychological Perspectives of Sexual Violence Perpetrator

- ▶ Low Empathy for Victim
 - ▶ Cognitive Distortions – about women and children
 - ▶ Deviant Sexual Preferences
 - ▶ Attachment, Intimacy Deficits and Emotional Loneliness
 - ▶ Poor Emotional Regulation.... Anger, depression, Anxiety
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Dynamic Perspectives


- ▶ Power and Control
 - ▶ Anger (Men who rape) – Pseudo –sexual crime
 - ▶ Clumsy ‘Attempt’ at Intimacy
 - ▶ Opportunity
 - ▶ ‘Grooming’
 - ▶ Always know what they are doing- Always a decision - Rational Choice
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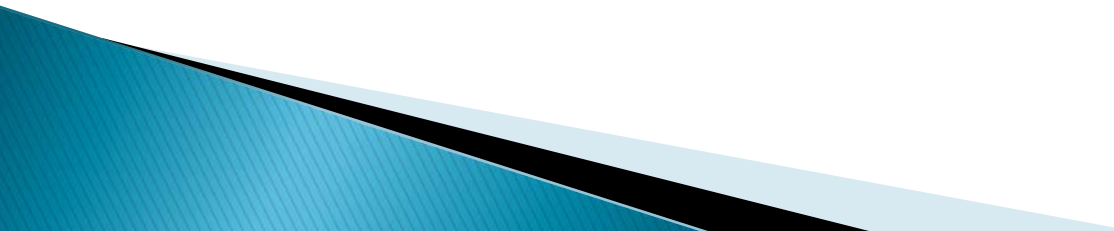


Sociological Perspective

- ▶ Discourse: Changing Understanding of The Perpetrator
- ▶ Creation of Types: Identity Totalized – Behaviour and Personhood construed as Evil/Sick (The Role of Professionals and the Media)
- ▶ Labelling, Shame, Classifications and Stigma – wipes out man's entire social and personal profile
- ▶ Social Violence.... As Context....

Responses

- ▶ Public discourse one of Retribution....but evidential threshold and adversarial system limits justice responses for victims, accountability for perpetrators and healing for both.....
 - ▶ Risk management and Public Protection / Notification preferred to the more Rehabilitative or Restorative ideals
 - ▶ Social Isolation – work, accommodation etc.
 - ▶ Families of Perpetrator suffer as do families of Victims
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- ▶ Socially sanctioned practices of dehumanisation, oppression and marginalization are endorsed
 - ▶ No appropriate language to describe Cultural Trauma
 - ▶ Paradoxically, he who is seen as most threatening lives in a highly threatening and uncertain world
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Rituals and Restorative Justice

- ▶ Expert on Rituals of Condemnation / Weak on Rituals of Redemption / Transformation
- ▶ Expert at Social Exclusion: Weak on Social Inclusion
- ▶ Restorative Justice – Additional Response Mechanism
 - Justice Response for Victims
 - Accountability Mechanism for Perpetrators
 - Healing Mechanism for both and the Community

Thank You
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