Rape Deniers' Strategies

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

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 offences by men.”

(Crane & Hastings, 1902; quote 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. 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)).

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)

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

Getting the Facts Straight: The Use and Misuse of Statistics

Important Resource

Questions to Ask
- Who participated in the study?
- Who asked the questions?
- How was the information gathered?
- What questions were asked?
- When was the study done
- Sample
  - Gender
  - Age
- Types of questions
  - Behaviorally specific questions
  - Crime
    - Rape
    - Forcible
    - Attempts
    - Drug-facilitated/incapacitated
    - Coerced
    - Sexual assault
  - Period of time (lifetime or past year)
- How was the study conducted
  - Phone survey
    - Include cell and land line?
  - In-person interview
    - Were others present?

Bottom Line
- Perpetrators commit forcible rape (penetration) on 10.6% to 16.1% of women in the United States at some point during US women's lifetime
  - Women
  - Lifetime rates
  - Forcible penetration (rape)

Common Traps
- Confusing lifetime and past year rates
- College example (multiplying annual rates)
- Citing statistics without knowing the source or understanding the study
Exercises

Misuse of Statistics Example

- **The actual facts:**
  - Among the current Air Force population, 18.9% of women and 3.1% of men reported having had experienced some form of sexual assault while in the Air Force.
  - Of the 18.9% of women who reported they had been sexually assaulted, 58% had been raped and 20.8% had been sodomized. (Steiger, 2010)

- **How the actual facts were interpreted:**
  - “[T]he Air Force is set to release a comprehensive survey later this week that finds almost 1 in 5 women and 1 in 20 men in the Air Force say they have been sexually assaulted or raped since joining the service.”
  - “[A]mong the women surveyed, 58% revealed they had been raped and 20% had been sodomized.” (SWAN, 2011)

Civilian v. Military Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial Rapists</th>
<th>Single Act Rapists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>76 men</td>
<td>44 men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>439 rapes &amp; attempted rapes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Serial Offending-Lisak Study

- Serial Rapists (76 men) vs. Single Act Rapists (44 men) vs. Non-Rapists (1,762 men)
- 91% of rapes were committed by serial rapists.
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

Serial Offending-Navy Study

- Study of 2,925 Navy recruits
- Follow up study of 1,146 (6 to 12 months later)

Key findings:
- 13% admitted perpetrating attempted or completed rapes (ACR)
- 29% admitted perpetrating single incident
- 71% admitted perpetrating multiple ACRs

Strategies

- Know the source of any statistics cited
- Know the parameters of the study
- Include citations to the study for all statistics included in your materials

Strategies

- Be able to explain the issues with the Uniform Crime Report data (official FBI statistics)
  - Narrow definition
  - Reported only
  - Voluntary compliance
  - Law enforcement characterization
- “Are you OK with…….” response

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
Thank you for what you do for all of us.

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