

Understanding the Experiences of Male and LGBTQ+ Survivors

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thank you for being here today



About You

About Me

Intersectionality Male Sexual Victimization With Gender Bias

- Limits awareness and visibility about male victimization
- Reinforces norms of toxic masculinity - minimizes...
 - assessment of males for victimization
 - extent to which males access healing resources
- Constrains depth of therapeutic engagement for male survivors

Gender...

...is more than the exclusive binary options of masculine and feminine

...exists on a spectrum of gradient identities and expressions

...may reflect fluidity, influenced by developmental stages of life and situational influence

...is impacted by expectations that vary by historical and cultural context

...is more non-binary and less rigid when an individual has the safety to embrace personal authenticity

...can be variable when an individual has dissociated or disowned parts of their self

...identity confusion or gender rigidity is sometimes the result of trauma that occurred during developmental stages

Shifting The Paradigm



Current Statistics

- 1 in every 4 females experience sexual violation
- 1 in every 6 males experience sexual violation

No evidence that trauma impact of sexual violation is greater or less for male or female survivors

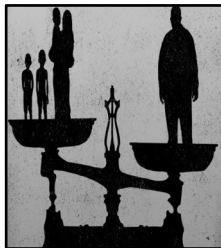
Feminization of Rape and Sexual Assault

Understanding the context for the prolonged invisibility of male sexual victimization

Intersectionality of historical paradigms and social structures



Patriarchy



Dominance of males

- social, governmental, religious, and familial forms of organization

Two central norms

- Chattel Property
- Sexual Entitlement

Two distorted "truths"

- Oppression of women and children is normative
- Sexual exploitation as tool for control of males over females is acceptable

Evolution of Rape Laws



Rape of female before marriage was not crime of injury of the victim but rather violation of property rights of father

- Virginal daughters were damaged goods from rape
 - diminished their property value

Marital rape was not included in legal statutes

- Change only emerged in 1970's
- Majority of American States did not change statutes until 1990's

Feminization of Sexual Victimization

- Early Rape and Sexual Assault Protections do not include male victims
- Template of penile to vaginal penetration
- Established paradigm of female victim and male perpetrator

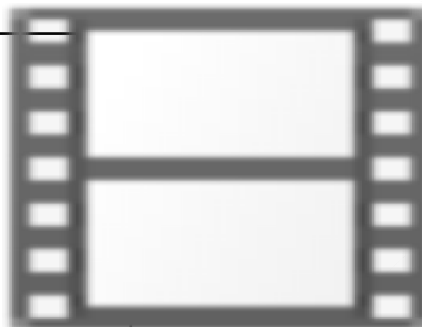
The Invisible Visibility of Male Sexual Assault



The Invisible Visibility of Male Sexual Assault



Video Intro



Impact of Marginalization and Chronic Social Exclusion

Oppression By Deprivation



- Contextual social isolation
- Chronic loneliness
- Undermines motivation to self-regulate
- Negative psychological and behavioral impacts

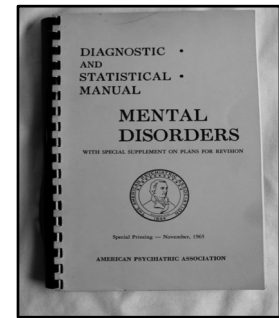
Health Care Evolution of Medical vs. Wellness Model

Patriarchal paradigm

- Provider Driven
- Expert Focused
- Hierarchical
- Outcome based

Mental Health Codified in 1952

Categorization based on pathology



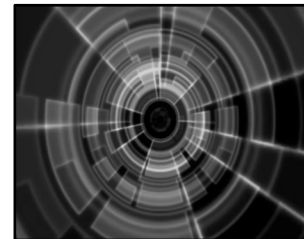
1980 Aspects of Victimization Added to DSM III

Pathologized females and victims

- Post Traumatic Stress DISORDER
- Borderline Personality DISORDER
- Bipolar DISORDER
- Dissociative DISORDER



Shifting the Paradigms



Post Traumatic Stress Response
 Language of Abuse and Assault
 Sexuality and Gender as Binary

Reframing PTS(D) to PTS(I)

Post Traumatic Stress Injury



Deconstructing “disorder” and “pathology”

Language Conundrums of Abuse and Assault

- Compartmentalization of sexual exploitation
 - Childhood Abuse vs. Adult Assault - or both
- Non-consent may not be interpreted as violation
- Violation may not be named and labelled as victimization
- Victimization may not be perceived as trauma
- Trauma may occur in absence of violence
- Confusion/denial about what constitutes trauma or harm

Overcoming Gender Bias

January 1, 2013
FBI Changed Definition of Rape

Old Definition:

“The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.”



New Definition:

“Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”

Possible Flaws In Demographic Reporting



- Inconsistencies in data collection
- Feminization of sexual exploitation = Paradigm of female victim and male offender
- Gender and Racial/Ethnic Biases

Consider the possible implications of research and treatment biases



- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity
- Class
- Economics
- Culture

Privilege Dilemma



- A male survivor risks loss of privilege by disclosing his sexual victimization
- Many male survivors may take in excess of 20 years before talking about their victimization
-If ever!

CDC Survey of Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2011)

- 1 in 5 males (= 25 million males in United States) reported sexual violence other than rape at some time in their lives
- Reported they had experienced sexual coercion (unwanted sexual contact) in their lifetime
 - 6% of males (= approx. 828,000)
 - 13% of females (= 1,864,000)
- Reported non-consensual sex in 12 months preceding the survey
 - 1.267 million males
 - 1.270 million females

CDC Survey of Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2011)

- Reported being raped during their lifetime
 - 21% of heterosexual men
 - 40% of gay men
 - 47% of bisexual men
- Reported rape, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime
 - 26% of gay men
 - 29% of heterosexual men

Transgender Sexual Victimization

- 50% or more of transgender and gender non-conforming people report experiencing some form of sexual victimization

(FORGE Survey - 2015)

- 22% of respondents reported being sexually assaulted by residents or staff while in homeless shelters

(National Transgender Discrimination Survey - 2011)

Male Rape Culture Normalization and minimization of male sexual victimization

Toxic Masculinity

- Incarceration
- Warfare and military culture
- All-male associations
- Sexually and gender diverse individuals



Sexual Assault of Men Played for Laughs: Prison Rape Jokes



Warfare and Military Culture

- "Soldier:" icon for noble masculinity
- Military strategy: creation of enemy = objectification of an "other" who is then portrayed as a threat
- Predictable prize of military conquest = sexual servitude of females
- Males are hidden victims of sexual assault in civil and military conflicts
- Prevalence of sexual assault within ranks of uniformed recruits

All-Male Associations

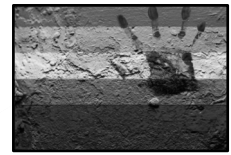
Hazing Rituals = institutionalized traditions

- Frequently sexualized "tests"
- Exorcism of feminization
- Humiliation
- Bonding enhanced by sexual domination over inductees



Sexual and/or Gender Diversity

- Often targeted as an "other"
- Bullying may be disguised or invisible
- May be reprimanded to
 - non-conforming behavior with intention to instill fear about non-compliance with expectations for socially acceptable masculine behavior
- Hate crimes often perpetrated with intent to disgrace or obliterate personal and cultural identity of the victim



Responsibility Dilemma

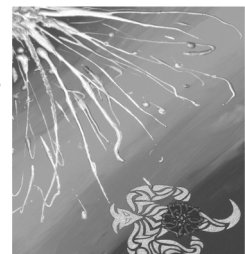
- Females
 - ...usually must refute allegations that their behavior embodied promiscuity
 - ...their defense often appeals to imagery of female weakness and fragility
- Males
 - ...*must defend their masculine identity (e.g., overcome accusations of being a faggot or latent homosexual), they must justify allegations that they relinquished their masculine power that would otherwise have allowed them to stop any sexual violation, and they may have to exonerate "evidence" about how physiological body responses did not constitute consent. (Hunter, 2007).*

Myth - TRUTH

Arousal and ejaculation are physiological responses to sexual stimulation...

...even in encounters of violence, non-consent, or trauma

...and do not mean a boy or man 'wanted it.'



Myth - TRUTH



Sexual Victimization does not make someone...

- ...less of a man
- ...less masculine
- ...LGBTQ+

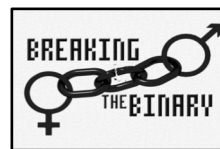


...but **IDENTITY CONFUSION** is a common and predictable residual to resolve for most male survivors

Common Questions for a male survivor...

- Was I targeted for sexual victimization because of my real or perceived sexual or gender presentation?
 - What aspect of my identity do I need to alter in order to protect myself from future violation?
- Is my sexual or gender identity forever tainted as a consequence of my sexual violation?
 - Would my identity be different if not for the sexual victimization?
- If my victimization included any act of receptive sex, does that undermine credibility for my masculinity?
 - How do I reconcile my identity as a cisgender heterosexual male if my body became sexually aroused?
- Was I actually victimized if my offender was a female?
 - What does it say about my masculinity if I am claiming non-consent in sexual contact with a female?

Guiding Principles About Sexuality and Gender CHALLENGING BINARY CONSTRUCT



SPECTRUM vs. binary identities

- Other sex attracted---bisexual---same sex attracted
- male---intersex---female
- masculine---third gender---feminine

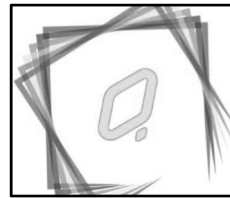
Guiding Principles About Sexuality & Gender FLUIDITY

- ...based on geographic, cultural, historical context
- ...mixed and/or changeable over lifespan



Guiding Principles About Sexuality & Gender ASPECTS OF IDENTITY

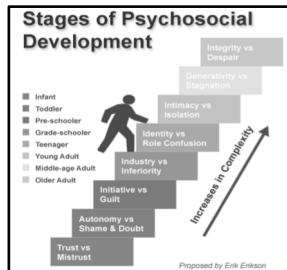
Awareness - Expression - Identity



May not be congruent or integrated...

...especially for male survivors or sexual assault

Guiding Principles About Sexuality & Gender



Distress and confusion may be impacted by **STAGE OF IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT** when sexual adversity is experienced

Assessment Intersectionality of Sexual Violation and Identity Development

Stage of Sexual/Gender Identity Development	Clear	Confused/ Questioning/ In Flux	Gender Identity of Offender: Male	Gender Identity of Offender: Female	Gender Identity of Offender: Both Male & Female
Unaware					
Cisgender/Heterosexual					
Cisgender/Sexually Diverse					
Gender Diverse/Non-Conforming					
Transgender FTM					
Transgender MTF					

Guiding Principles About Sexuality & Gender



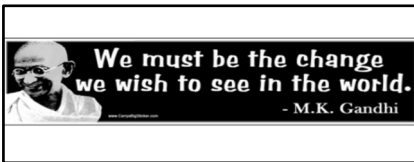
Sexual violation within context of **MINORITY STRESS** may result in a dual layering of disturbance or injury



Words of a Transgender Survivor

Sexual assault by its very nature is physically invasive and often involves genitals or parts of our body we perceive as centrally connected to our trans identity. For many, our genitals and/or secondary sex characteristics may feel incongruent with our gender identities (or may even be charged with feelings of shame). People may have used our genitals against us to oppose, deny, or try to destroy our gender identity or self-esteem. For those who have had gender confirming surgery, the attack on our genitals may feel like an attack on everything we are. It may be hard enough to expose and talk about our bodies under typical circumstances

(FORGE, 2015)



- Reach beyond binary constructs for sexuality and gender
- Overcome gender bias about sexual victimization
- Engage male survivors in ways that are authentic to their experiences
- Seek research and interventions that are inclusive, creative, and progressive
- Consider ways to move beyond the "hamster wheel"



menhealing.org

thanks for
this time together

Weekends of Recovery

Days of Recovery



Addendum

Cornerstones for Engaging Males Establishing “safe enough”

- Power of asking “what do you need to be safe enough...”
 - Emphasis on “safe enough”
- Safety promotes desire to challenge self and be challenged, to take risks, and to tolerate mistakes
 - Emphasis on managing mistakes
- Risking challenge and learning from mistakes becomes a tool to deepen resilience



Cornerstone Practice Gender Neutral Assessment

Ask the same questions of all clients

Practice gender neutrality and inclusion



Untangling the Knot of Offender Mythologies

- Most victims know the person who sexually offended against them
 - Sex offenders are most often NOT dark and ominous predatory strangers
- Vast majority of survivors - regardless of gender - will probably be victimized by a male
 - Data from sex offender registries from all 50 American States:
 - 97.7% of total sample are male
 - 2.3% are female

Evolution of Pathway to Offender Mythology

- A mistaken linkage has been made between male sexual victimization and male victim at risk for becoming an offender
- This message is actively - and subliminally - present
- Creates a barrier to disclosure

How did we get here??

1880's - early 1900's



- Media sensationalized coverage about numerous high profile sex crimes
- By early 1900's, "sexual psychopath" had become common in vernacular of criminal justice and mental health

20th Century Preoccupation with "Stranger Danger"



- Criminal justice and media
- Promoted fear in general public

1960's / 1970's

- Increased attention to treat/rehabilitate sex offenders
- Debate
 - Was sex offending criminal or mental health issue
- Intersectionality
 - Homosexuality remained criminalized
 - DSM addition of homosexuality as mental health disorder
 - Gay Rights Movement
 - Emergence of NAMBLA (Nat'l Man-Boy Love Association)
 - Social Conservative alarm by Sexual Revolution

