

Sexual Violence: Research from the ground up. Culture, Institutions, and Social Change

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What is Culture?

- How we think
- How we move
- How we produce, reproduce and consume
- The institutions that shape our lives, and that we shape
- Political, economic, social realms are all culture

What *is* Violence?

- Do we know it when we see it?
- Emotional
- Physical
- Psychological
- Sexual
- Financial
- Verbal

What is Gender-based Violence?

- Interpersonal abuse
- Structural violence
- Rape, sexual assault, domestic and family violence
- Child abuse
- Gender specific practices
- Economic abuse
- Persecution and discrimination against GLBTQ
- State ideology
- Poverty
- Discriminatory laws directed at minority and/or indigenous groups

Are these forms of gbv?

- Sex-selection abortion?
- Female genital cutting?
- Male circumcision?
- Loss of income upon divorce?
- Revoking of welfare rights?
- Plastic surgery?
- Botox?
- Banning same-sex marriage?
- Anorexia and/or bulimia?

The scope and scale of GBV

- 2006 World Health Organization study results:
 - 24,000 women participated in this massive survey in ten countries (replicated in New Zealand for an additional data set.)
 - Violence seen as a consequences and a cause of gender inequity.
 - The average across sites for women's experience of intimate partner violence was 23-49%. The vast majority of women who experienced violence from a partner experience more than one incident. When you factor in sexual violence, the range increases to 30-60% across sites.

Scope and Scale, cont.

- 20-75% of women across sites had experienced emotional abuse in the previous year.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of women in the urban sites in Brazil, Namibia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Japan thought violence against a partner was unacceptable. Only $\frac{1}{4}$ of women in the rural sites in Peru, Bangladesh, and Ethiopia thought similarly.
 - Acceptance of violence was higher among women who had experienced violence, than those who had not.

Scope and Scale, Sexual Assault

- Range 1 in 5 women (20%) to rates as high as over 1 in 3 (38%) as recorded by the World Health Organization
- The Sexual Experiences Survey, developed by Mary Koss et al, is one of the most distributed instruments with consistent reporting
- Problems with teasing out marital rape or rape in relationships vs. acquaintance or stranger rape

Definitions: Sexual assault and abuse

Actual or threatened, including sexual assault and the sexual abuse of children, that can be a single incident or a series of incidents that are located on a continuum of behaviours from sexual harassment to life-threatening rape;

- any form of pressured and unwanted sex or sexual degradation by an intimate partner or ex-partner,
- such as sexual activity without consent;
- non-consensual sexual acts;
- causing pain during sex;
- assaulting genitals;
- forcing or coercing a person to have sex without protection against pregnancy or sexually transmitted disease;
- making the victim perform sexual acts unwillingly (including taking explicit photos);
- criticising, or using sexually degrading insults;
- forcing a person/child to take their clothes off or remain naked against their will;
- forcing a person to watch pornography or sexual activities;
- lewdness or stalking;
- indecent assault;
- date rape;
- drug-assisted sexual assault;
- child sexual abuse or incest;
- deliberate acts that groom children for sexual activity or exploitation; and
- exposure of a person/child to pornography, use of a person/child in the creation of pornography.

Shift the focus away from individuals to structure

- Blaming individuals in the U.S. context; blame “culture” in the global context, particularly in poorer countries
- Adopting a structural violence approach:
 - Women’s disadvantaged economic position
 - The state’s role in maintaining and exacerbating violence
 - **Discrimination against sexual and gender minorities**

Rape Prone vs. Rape Free

- Peggy Sanday's pioneering work
- What factors mitigate against rape
- What factors promote rape
- How her findings compare to current data
- Rape Culture vs. Culture that maintains rape
- Usefulness of term "rape culture"
- How term applies to institutional structures
- Battering State

Silos

- 40+ years of DFV and SA/SV in separate services
- In US, Title IX and Military Code different from civil and criminal code
- State laws vs. federal laws
- Women's issues
- Funding, funding, funding
- Different government agencies addressing different aspects of the problem

Marital Rape and Domestic Sexual Violence

- Why unrecognized
- Became illegal entire US by 1993
- Australia by 1991
- Cross-cultural, legal and political barriers

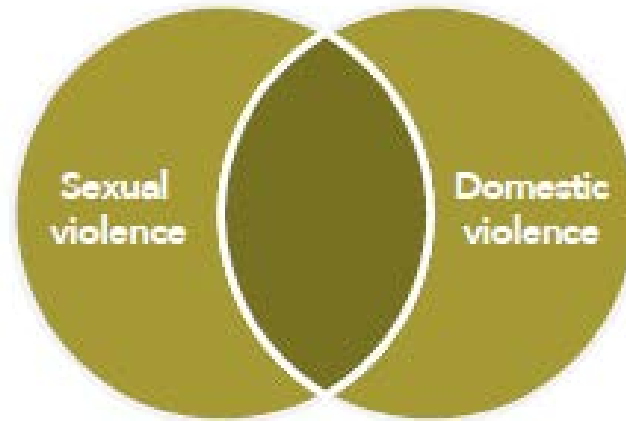
Utilizing Culture as an Asset

- Identify local frameworks of meaning that work against violence
- Identify cultural consensus around ideal sexual relations
- What institutions support healthy sexuality and sexual relations?
- Youth perceptions

QCDFVR: resource for integration and holism

Sexual violence can overlap or be a feature of family and domestic violence

Keeping in mind that sexual violence can occur between known and unknown individuals, thus important to maintain specialists



Importance of the Front-Line

- The value of the front-line labor
- The difficulty of front-line labor
- The invisibility of front-line labor
- The integrity of front-line workers
- The important stories front-line workers tell: RESEARCH FROM THE GROUND UP!

Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research

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