"But We Were Drunk When It Happened, It Doesn't Count": A Discussion on Sexual Violence and Victim Blaming

Viviana Lizarraga
Fort Hays State University, v_lizarraga@mail.fhsu.edu

Brooke Mann
Fort Hays State University, bmmann@fhsu.edu

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Sexual Violence
Sexual violence refers to a sexual act committed against a person, without being given consent (Hackman et al., 2017)

Types of Sexual Violence
- Sexual assault/rape
- Child sexual abuse
- Intimate partner violence
- Incest

Statistics
- Every 73 seconds an American is sexually assaulted (RAINN, 2020)
- Individuals between the ages of 12 and 24 are at highest risk of rape and sexual assault (RAINN, 2020)
- Approximately 20-25% of college women will experience attempted or completed rape in their lifetime (Hackman et al., 2017)
- 1 out of 10 victims of rape are male (RAINN, 2020)

Victim Blaming
Victim blaming refers to a response that minimizes what the victim or survivor experienced, and also minimizes the responsibility placed on the perpetrator (Greeson, Cambell & Fehler-Cabral, 2016).

Rape Myths: A concept of false beliefs that excuse why a sexual violence was acted on against a person. Rape myths give a definition to what constitutes an “actual” rape and what it looks like, it limits who can be a victim and who can be a perpetrator, and blames the victim while excusing the perpetrator of his or her responsibility (Shaw, Campbell, Cain & Feeney, 2016).

- “If both people are drunk, it can’t be rape” (Bendixen & Kennair, 2017)
- “Rape happens when a man’s sex drive gets out of control” (Baldwin-White, Thompson & Gray, 2016)
- “If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control” (Baldwin-White, Thompson & Gray, 2016)

Implications
- Do not blame the individual that was assaulted
- Challenge any rape myths that are mentioned in these situations
- Comfort the survivor and help them gain control
- Allow them to tell their story and give them time
- Inform them of resources that are available to them (Harvard Law School HALT, 2020)

Helpful Resources
- Jana’s Campaign:
  Email: janascampaign@gmail.com
  Phone: 785-656-0324
- Options Domestic & Sexual Violence Services
  Email: Options@help4abuse.org
  Hotline: 800-794-4624
- RAINN
  Hotline: 800-656-4673
  Online Chat: online.rainn.org

Contact Information:
Viviana Lizarraga: v_lizarraga@mail.fhsu.edu
Brooke Mann (Faculty Sponsor): bmmann@fhsu.edu