

Sexual Assault Cases

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The Underreporting of Sexual Assault Cases

Sexual Assault is severely underreported according to the US Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010.) With television shows such as *Law & Order: SVU*, there is a misinterpretation of the processes of sexual assault cases in the Criminal Justice System. Even though this crime is underreported, it is more common than you think. In college alone, 1/5 women will be assaulted, and only 20% will report the assault. So, the main question is “Why?” To answer this, we have to gain empathy for the victim, and to understand the context of their life, daily routines, and socialization.

Overview

- Reasons for not reporting
- #MeToo / #WhyIDidntReport
- Victim Blaming
- Examples of Cases: Michael Hill, Judge John F. Russo Jr.

The Processes

- Investigations
 - Place of assault
 - Forensic exam (rape cases)
 - Swabbing oral cavity, rectum, reproduction areas, etc
- Sentencings
 - Light Sentencing
 - Time not fully served (released early)
 - **NO JUSTICE**

References

1. Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault. (2013). Reporting Sexual Assault: Why Survivors Often Don't . Fact Sheet . <https://ocrsm.umd.edu/files/Why-Is-Sexual-Assault-Under-Reported.pdf>
2. . Steps You Can Take to Prevent Sexual Assault. RAINN. (n.d.). <https://www.rainn.org/articles/steps-you-can-take-prevent-sexual-assault>.
3. Judge Removed for Questions to Rape Victim, Other Misconduct. Bloomberg Law. (n.d.). <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/legal-ethics/judge-removed-for-questions-to-rape-victim-other-misconduct>.
4. Sarah Horner / St. Paul Pioneer Press. (2019, February 20). Minnesota Supreme Court declines to review sentence of probation in rape case. Duluth News Tribune. <https://www.duluthnewstribune.com/news/crime-and-courts/974018-Minnesota-Supreme-Court-declines-to-review-sentence-of-probation-in-rape-case>.
5. Things Sexual Assault Advocates need to know. Rape Prosecution. (2011, December).

https://opsvaw.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/07_Rape_Prosecution.pdf.

Why Not Report?

- Victim blaming
- “What’s the point?”
 - The seriousness of the case
- Humility
- Did not want others to know
- They knew the offender/ did not want them to get in trouble
- Other reasons

Examples of Cases

- Michael Hill (24)
 - Had sexual relations with a minor
 - Sentenced 12 years to prison
 - Only served 4 days due to clean criminal record
 - Case was
- Judge John F. Russo Jr.
 - Victim blamed in court in 2016 during court
 - Was removed from the bench and owed a fee of \$250,000

Future Directions

- Ending Victim blaming
- #MeToo and #WhyIDidn't Report
- Social media trends that support survivors and encourage victims to report their assault
- **Justice to be served**