RAPISTS AND STALKERS AND BATTERERS, OH MY!
WHAT WE KNOW (AND DON’T KNOW) ABOUT VIOLENT OFFENDERS

DONNA KELLY, DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
SALT LAKE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE

• WARNING: The contents of this presentation reflect the quirky style and experience of the presenter. This presentation is based upon the presenter’s 27 years as a prosecutor and is largely anecdotal. War stories, sometimes involving people’s genitals, may be told. The presenter believes in a steady diet of hard work served with a side of humor, and in eating dessert first. Always.

• “A sense of humor is needed armor. Joy in one’s heart and laughter on one’s lips is a sign that the person down deep has a pretty good grasp on life.”

– Hugh Sidey

The same qualities that make a good prosecutor can also make a strong, opinionated, challenging person

PLANT CORN, GET CORN.
(NOT TRUE FOR HUMAN BEINGS)

Does the person’s Background give us clues?
• Raised by a single mother
• Middle class family
• No known physical or emotional abuse
• Intelligent, good student
• Student leader in high schoo
• Honor student in college
• Attended law school

WERE ABUSERS ABUSED AS CHILDREN???

• Most studies show sex offenders were NOT sexually or physically abused as children.
• In one study of 114 convicted rapists, 91% denied experiencing childhood sexual abuse; 66% denied experiencing childhood physical abuse; and 50% admitted to having non-violent childhoods. (Scully, 1990)
• For children, witnessing DV has a huge impact
• Boys who witness violence in their homes are seven times more likely to grow up to batter
• The Good News: if behavior is learned, it can be Unlearned
FACTORS THAT PREDICT WHETHER ABUSED CHILDREN WILL GROW UP TO BE ABUSERS

- The age and developmental stage at which maltreatment occurred: generally the younger the child was at the time of the onset of the maltreatment, the worse the outcome
- The degree of severity of abuse or neglect
- The survivor’s perceptions of abuse: worse outcomes if the survivor feels self-blame, shame or stigmatization
- The relationship the survivor had (or still has) with the perpetrator
- Whether the abuse or neglect was detected and action taken to assure the safety of the child
- Positive or protective factors that may have mitigated the effects of maltreatment. Especially: did close family members support survival?
- Whether survivors received therapeutic services to assist them in recovery

(Blair-Stark & Huggins, 2006; Miller-Perrin & Perrin, 2007; Dow-Linklater et al., 2013)

ABUSIVE MEN DO NOT SIMPLY ‘HATE’ WOMEN

“It is important to note that research has shown that men who have abusive mothers do not tend to develop especially negative attitudes toward females, but men who have abusive fathers do. The disrespect that abusive men show their female partners and their daughters is often absorbed by their sons. So while a small number of abusive men do hate women, the great majority exhibit a more subtle—though often quite pervasive—sense of superiority or contempt toward females, and some don’t show any obvious signs of problems with women at all until they are in a serious relationship.”

Lundy Bancroft, Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men

Myth:
- Offenders are easy to identify.

Reality:
- There is no “profile” of an offender.

“EVERY RAPE IS A STRANGER RAPE”

Most offenders do not fit neatly into one category or another.

— Dr. Jacqueline Campbell, Creator of Lethality Assessment Protocol

Most batterers act out sexually against their victims
Most rapists use manipulation, control and violence, if needed
Most stalkers enjoy the sport of their physical or sexual abuse

VIOLENT OFFENDERS ARE MORE ALIKE THAN THEY ARE DIFFERENT
SINUARITIES BETWEEN TYPES OF VIOLENT OFFENDERS

1. Poor coping skills generally; extreme mood swings
2. Hate delayed gratification
3. Fear of intimacy/interaction with others
4. Motivated by jealousy/insecurity
5. Intimacy deficits/relationship difficulties
6. Mistrust/deny their abusive behavior
7. Inability to identify/express own needs
8. Cultivate dual personality
9. Stereotypes of gender roles
10. Use drugs/alcohol or pornography to justify behavior

“Alcohol does not change a person’s fundamental value system. People’s personalities when intoxicated, even though somewhat altered, still bear some relationship to who they are when sober. When you are drunk, you may behave in ways that are silly or embarrassing; you might be overly familiar or tactlessly honest, or perhaps careless or forgetful. But do you knock over little old ladies for a laugh? Probably not. Do you sexually assault the clerk at the convenience store? Unlike. People’s conduct while intoxicated continues to be governed by their core foundation of beliefs and attitudes, even though there is some loosening of the structure. Alcohol encourages people to let loose what they have simmering below the surface.”

Lundy Bancroft, Why Does It Have To Be Me? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men

COMMON ABUSER CHARACTER TRAITS

- Rapists, battery, stalkers and serial rapists have significantly higher levels of antisocial personality traits than do non-sex, non-DV criminals and their child molesters.
- Colorado Study (2016) looked at 858 rapists
  - 76 percent had personality disorders (66 percent had antisocial personality disorder)
  - American Journal of Forensic Psychology, Frakes et al.
- Rapists are motivated by a mix of sexual and non-sexual factors
- Including: Opportunity, Generalized Anger, Violence associated with Pleasure

COMMON ABUSER CHARACTER TRAITS

Antisocial Personality
- Pervasive pattern of disregard for laws, rights and feelings of others
- Criminality
- Lack of Empathy
- Failure to recognize impact of behavior
- Traits: lack of remorse, manipulative, callous, harsh, deceitful, aggressive, antagonistic, generalized, and disregulated anger

Narcissistic Personality
- Criminality
- Lack of Empathy
- Ego-centric
- Grandiose
- Aggressive Arrogance
- Devaluing others/overvaluing themselves
- Blaming others
- Exploit vulnerability of others
- Create dependency on themselves

RECIDIVISM RISK FACTORS

(ASTS, NOVEMBER 2016)
- Sexual Violence
  - Relationship problems/intimacy deficits
  - Psychological maladjustment
  - Problems with manageability
  - Personality disorder
  - Non-sexual violence
  - Sexual deviation/ideation (can co-exist with normal sexuality)
  - Previous history of sexual assault
- Domestic Violence
  - Relationship problems/intimacy deficits
  - Psychological maladjustment
  - History of violence in childhood
  - Violent attitudes/behavior
  - Degrading/tampering attitude toward women
MYTH: VIOLENT ACTS 'JUST HAPPEN'
REALITY: THERE IS AN INTENT TO ABUSE

“There is absolutely no evidence that any type of violence ‘just happens.’”

— Physical Abusers and Sex Offenders, Scott Allen Johnson

EVIDENCE OF INTENT TO ABUSE

- 1. Offenders are aware of escalation; willing to use
- 2. Isolate victims from others
- 3. Injure victims where no one will notice
- 4. Take measures to avoid being caught
- 5. Have alibis planned in advance
- 6. Supply drugs and alcohol to victim
- 7. Quick thinking to adapt to changing circumstances

MYTH: ABUSERS HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ‘ANGER MANAGEMENT’
REALITY: ABUSERS ARE ‘RAGEAHOLICS’ ADDICTED TO THE POWER THAT THEIR ANGER GIVES THEM

“Domestic Violence is more about control than it is about anger.”

— David Adams, National Crime Victims Training Institute, Philadelphia September 2016

“I was doing all this burglary and I was thinking ‘What if someone’s home?’ And this time there was someone home. It happened to be a female. So I grabbed her. I drug her back towards the bedroom. Somewhere during the overpowering, I got the feeling of ‘Here I am in total control of this person.’ I don’t know. I got sexually turned on and that’s when I raped the woman.”

— Predators, Anna Salter, 2003

MYTH: VIOLENT OFFENDERS LACK SOCIAL SKILLS
REALITY: THEY HAVE COMPLEX COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL SKILLS

Maintaining a pattern of manipulation takes very complex skills: discrediting victims, blaming others, divide and conquer, undermining, gaslighting, minimizing responsibility.

It takes sophistication to maintain a Jekyll and Hyde lifestyle.
Batters typically present a different personality outside the home than they do inside, which complicates a woman’s ability to describe her experiences to people outside the relationship. It also helps to keep her tied to the relationship. The batterer does not always batter: many have periods when they can be very generous with their affection. The woman has seen this and knows that her partner is capable of being loving to her. Thus, much of her time is spent trying to be the “perfect” wife and mother so that the batterer will continually exhibit his loving side. Unfortunately, this is a setup for her; the batterer will choose to or not to batter her, regardless of her actions.

When Violence Begins at Home, P.J. Wilson, 1997

### MYTH: ABUSERS HAVE LOW SELF ESTEEM
### REALITY: THEY BELIEVE THEY ARE BETTER THAN OTHERS

- Abusers are about 90 per cent on the Narcissism Spectrum.
- It is ALL about them.
- They believe they are never wrong, blame others, have a sense of entitlement, do not tolerate criticism
- Overvalue themselves, undervalue others
- It’s all about the ‘show’
- Narcissism is associated with abuse, in part because it is the only personality disorder where an offender has the skill to scan environment quickly and turn it to their advantage

### ENTITLEMENT IS A PRIMARY FACTOR IN ABUSE

“Entitlement may be the single most important concept in understanding interpersonal violence.”

Barcroft and Silberman, 2002

Can manifest as: unreasonable expectations, demands, ‘ownership’ of another, male privilege

### “An abuser can seem emotionally needy. You can get caught in a trap of catering to him, trying to fill a bottomless pit. But he’s not so much needy as entitled, so no matter how much you give him, it will never be enough. He will just keep coming up with more demands because he believes his needs are your responsibility, until you feel drained down to nothing.”

Lundy Bancroft, Why Does He Do That? Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men

### MYTH: ALL OFFENDERS ARE DANGEROUS
### REALITY: SOME OFFENDERS SAFER THAN OTHERS

- Offenders who are “successful” at treatment:
  - [S] Stable
  - [O] Occupied
  - [A] Accountable
  - [P] Plan

“Women are there for pleasure, and they’re going to give me mine.”

• Predators, Anna Salter, 2003
MYTH: ABUSERS NEVER CHANGE
REALITY: SOME DO, ESPECIALLY IF GIVEN ASSISTANCE

• For batterers, studies show that those who complete a 40 week batterer program are unlikely to re-offend
• The best predictor of whether a batterer will re-offend is this: Does he still blame the victim?

Donna Kelly
Deputy Salt Lake District Attorney
DoKelly@slco.org
(385) 468-7676