

# Aware

AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

## A message from the Minister

There is a high incidence of sexual assault in Australia. The Australian Government is concerned by this fact and has invested \$16.5 million to establish the *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault*.

The *Initiative* represents the Australian Government's commitment to reduce and prevent sexual assault, and aims to implement strategies that address the incidence of sexual assault in the community.



From current research about the nature and prevalence of sexual assault we know that, while there are no limits to who may be the victim of sexual assault, the overwhelming majority of survivors are women and girls. We also know that a high proportion of those who offend are in trusted relationships with the victim – such as family members, partners, husbands or friends – and that many victims are assaulted over long periods of time. Most victims do not report their experiences to police, and for those who do, only a small proportion of the offenders will ever be prosecuted or convicted. The impact of sexual assault is often long term, affecting victim's lives on emotional, psychological, social, and economic levels.

Under the *Initiative*, the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault (ACSSA) has been established at the Australian Institute of Family Studies to ensure national information relevant to sexual assault is accessible. The Centre will also function as an important contributor to the development of research programs and agendas aimed at improving the response to sexual assault, as well as to reducing the incidence of sexual violence overall.

I am pleased to introduce the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault in its first newsletter, and hope its contribution will be valuable and productive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Vanstone', written in a cursive style.

Senator Amanda Vanstone  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister  
for the Status of Women



Australian Government

Australian Institute of Family Studies

Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault aims to improve access to current information on sexual assault in order to assist policy makers and others interested in this area to develop evidence-based strategies to prevent, respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of sexual assault.

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault is funded by the Office of the Status of Women, through the National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault. The Centre is hosted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

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Views expressed in the Centre's publications are those of individual authors and may not necessarily reflect ACSSA or Institute policy.

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## Introducing the

# Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault

Adam Tomison

As part of the *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault in Australia*, the Australian Government's Office of the Status of Women has contracted the Australian Institute of Family Studies to develop and operate the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault.

The overall aim of the Centre is to improve access to current information on sexual assault in order to assist policymakers and others interested in this area to develop evidence-based strategies to respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of sexual assault.

The objectives of the Centre are:

- to facilitate access, particularly electronic access, to national policy relevant data to inform strategies to more effectively respond to the issues of sexual assault;
- to establish a comprehensive evidence base, and provide information on research and best practice approaches for interventions in response to sexual assault;
- to stimulate debate amongst policymakers, academics and service providers about the most effective strategies to improve responses and reduce the incidence of sexual assault; and
- to raise awareness of sexual assault and its impact on the Australian community.

The Centre is concerned with *all* forms of sexual assault. However, recognising the gendered nature of sexual assault – that the majority of victims are female, and the majority of offenders are male – the sexual assault of women and girls over 15 years of age is an area of primary focus.

Other key areas of interest include:

- adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse;
- sexual assault in diverse contexts – the impact of different family structures, varying socio-economic backgrounds, and geographic locations;
- sexual assault in culturally and linguistically diverse and Indigenous communities;
- non-familial sexual assault (for example, date rape, stranger rape);
- sexual assault of males; and
- long-term effects of sexual assault, particularly re-victimisation and offending.

## Developing a lifespan perspective on sexual assault

The National Child Protection Clearinghouse, based at the Australian Institute of Family Studies since 1995, already deals with the sexual assault of children and young people. The

intention is that the Centre will not duplicate this work, but will study adult sexual assault so that, together with the Clearinghouse, the field of sexual assault is covered in its entirety.

### What is the need for the project?

A number of national centres or clearinghouse-type units have been developed over the past ten years for a range of issues such as child abuse prevention, domestic violence, and youth issues, in order to create a central access point or “hub” for high quality specialist advice, research and information dissemination for policymakers, service providers and researchers in Australia (and overseas).

Although there are various agencies that undertake service delivery or research, or have a reference collection relating to sexual assault, the development of the new national Centre will ensure access to national information that is accessible and up-to-date.

### Who are the stakeholders?

Stakeholders are considered to be any agency or individual with an interest or role in responding to sexual assault, and/or who provides treatment services, prevention services or resources, as well as researchers in the field of sexual assault.

The following key stakeholder groups have been identified:

- Federal and state/territory government departments and agencies
- Police services
- Legal sector
- Non-government agencies running sexual assault and violence prevention programs
- Community advocacy groups
- Health and medical services
- Specialist sexual assault or crisis services
- Indigenous communities
- Culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Adult victim/survivors of sexual abuse and their support groups
- Aged care and the disability sector
- Youth services
- Rural and remote communities
- Sex workers
- Researchers and research agencies operating in Australia and internationally

We trust that readers will find this Newsletter useful and informative, and that you will make full use of the Centre. We look forward to your continued interest, support and feedback.

## Operation and services provided by the Centre

With the exception of undertaking research studies, the services offered by the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault are all provided free of charge.

### Collection/information access

In order that intervention and prevention initiatives are well informed, the latest research and practice literature, videos, legislation, reports, and training resources on sexual assault are being collected.

Materials held in the collection are available for browsing at the Australian Institute of Family Studies’ Family Information Centre, which is open to the public by appointment, during business hours. Items may also be borrowed via the interlibrary loan system. Bibliographic information about these items may be viewed from the Australian Institute of Family Studies catalogue, accessible via the internet.

Abstracts of Australian items held in the collection are also contained in the Institute’s *Australian Family & Society Abstracts* database. The database is available on Informit On-line ([www.informit.com.au](http://www.informit.com.au)) and on the AUSTROM CD-ROM which is widely distributed throughout Australia.

A help desk service is provided during business hours to members of the public. Staff draw on the library collection and databases when responding to queries about aspects of sexual assault.

### Good practice programs database

In order to provide a picture of “good practice” activity throughout Australia, the Centre will collect information on programs aimed at improving the response to, and reducing the incidence of, sexual assault. The programs will be incorporated into a public access database and will be available to the public within the Institute’s library or via the internet. The data will also be used to inform the work of other service providers who are developing or refining best practice models for responding to sexual assault.

### Publications

Information about sexual assault will be analysed and disseminated free of charge to members on a regular basis via four annual *Newsletters*, two *Briefing Papers* (short discussions of key issues) and two *Issues Papers* (longer papers designed to

provide an overview of key research, policy and practice issues). Full text versions of the Centre's publications will be available on the Centre's website.

### Research and advisory service

The Centre's research staff can provide free specialist advice and information, including the detailed analysis and interpretation of current issues that impact on the response to sexual assault. Specifically, they can review material, and assist service providers with program development and strategies for evaluation. They also ensure that information relevant to the Centre's role and current activities is regularly disseminated, including updates on the Centre's ongoing primary and secondary research program.

Research staff also welcome the opportunity to participate or present in relevant workshops, conferences and seminars.

### Accessing the Centre

The primary point of access for the Centre will be via its website: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/>. The website's *What's New* section highlights new developments for the Centre such as the latest publications and research information, as well as important developments in the wider sexual assault field.

All of the Centre's publications are available to download from the *Publications* page, which also includes links to other selected online papers. Print copies of publications can be obtained by completing the form provided (see 15-16 of this Newsletter) and returning it to the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

The *Resources* section of the website provides further information about useful research publications and literature on a variety of issues relating to sexual assault, through bibliographies and online access to the Australian Institute of Family Studies library catalogue. There are also links to Australian and international organisations working to address sexual assault.

Forthcoming conferences, seminars and events are listed on the *Conferences* page. An online registration form for the Centre's free mailing list can be filled out on the *Mailing Lists* page, which also provides information about joining the email discussion group.

Any contributions to the Centre's website can be emailed to [Bianca.Dobson@aifs.gov.au](mailto:Bianca.Dobson@aifs.gov.au) or faxed on (03) 9214 7839.

### Ensuring we meet the needs of stakeholders

Finally, the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault is interested in hearing your views on the best way for us to meet your needs. If you have any comments on services that could be offered, possible topics for publications or areas of research, or other feedback, we would love to hear your views.

You can fill in the feedback section of this Newsletter (see back page), provide comments on-line on our website, or email us at: [acssa@aifs.gov.au](mailto:acssa@aifs.gov.au)

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Adam Tomison is the Manager of the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault at the Australian Institute of Family Studies. ■

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## Worldwide survey on violence against women

The International Violence Against Women Survey is an international, comparative survey designed specifically to collect information on women's experiences of domestic violence and sexual assault.

The objective of the survey is to assess the level of victimisation of women in a number of countries, worldwide, and to assist countries to implement victimisation surveys on violence against women as an important research and policy tool.

The survey is the result of collaborative efforts involving two United Nations criminal justice agencies – the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, and the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control – and Statistics Canada.

Australia is a participant in the project and is the first country to fully implement the survey after two extensive pilots. In Australia, the survey is coordinated by the Australian Institute of Criminology, and funded by the Australian Government's

Office of the Status of Women through the *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault*.

Fieldwork for the Australian component of the survey has been completed, with more than 6,000 interviews with women aged 18 to 69 years conducted in 2002-2003. The analysis of survey responses, currently in progress, aims to provide prevalence rates of the various types of sexual and non-sexual violence against women, in order to gauge the level of victimisation of women in Australia.

Countries participating in the project include Argentina, Uruguay, Costa Rica, Trinidad and Tobago, Estonia, Serbia, Ukraine, Poland, Indonesia, Philippines, South Africa, Canada, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, Italy, Czech Republic, Spain, and Switzerland. Results from the Australian component of the project will be available in early 2004.

Further information: International Violence Against Women Survey (IVAWS). Internet: [www.unicri.it/ivaws.htm](http://www.unicri.it/ivaws.htm)

## ACSSA WHO'S WHO

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault has a team of four new staff. In addition, it also draws on existing Australian Institute of Family Studies staff and services to support its operation.

**Dr Melanie Heenan** is the ACSSA Coordinator responsible for the day-to-day management of the Centre. As the Centre's senior researcher, Melanie supervises the specialist research and advisory services, and writes many of the publications.

**Alexandra (Lexi) Neame**, ACSSA's Research Officer, is involved in the provision of research and advisory services. Lexi is also responsible for writing articles and preparing each ACSSA Newsletter.

**Bianca Dobson** has responsibility for the development and management of the ACSSA website.

**Mel Kelleher** provides ACSSA administrative and project support.

**Carole Jean** is the Australian Institute of Family Studies Acquisitions and Reference Librarian. Carole provides assistance to ACSSA clients through the Institute's library help desk. In addition, she is responsible for developing the specialist ACSSA library collection.

**Robin Jeffs**, the Senior Cataloguer with the Institute's library, manages the cataloguing and indexing processes for resources in ACSSA databases.

To contact the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, phone (03) 9214 7888; fax (03) 9214 7839; email [acssa@aifs.gov.au](mailto:acssa@aifs.gov.au)

The Centre's website address is [www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/](http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/)



Carole Jean.



Robin Jeffs.



The ACSSA team at the Australian Institute of Family Studies (from left): Lexi Neame, Melanie Heenan (ACSSA Coordinator), Bianca Dobson and Mel Kelleher.

## ACSSA REFERENCE GROUP

An external reference group has been established to inform the work of the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault. The primary role of the Reference Group is to assist in the identification of research priorities and provide expert advice to the Centre. It will also assist in identifying the information needs of key stakeholders; assist in developing strategies to reach key stakeholders; and provide other advice or perspectives as required. The group will meet face-to-face twice a year, with additional meetings conducted via teleconference as needed.

### Members of the ACSSA Reference Group

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*Ms Jane Mulrone*, Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse.

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*Ms Muriel Cadd*, Chairperson, Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care Agencies, and CEO of the Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency.

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*Dr Denise Lievore*, Research Analyst, Australian Institute of Criminology.

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*Ms Vanessa Swan*, Director, Yarrow Place, Rape and Sexual Assault Service (Adelaide), and the Convenor of the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence.

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*Dr Dianne Heriot*, Assistant Secretary, Crime Prevention Branch, Attorney General's Department.

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*Ms Rosemary Sinclair AO*, Founder of the National Association for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, ex-Chair of the Australian Council for Children and Parenting.

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*Dr Adam Tomison*, Australian Institute of Family Studies, who represents the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault, and the National Child Protection Clearinghouse.

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# Sexual Offences Interim Report

While the last decade has seen the introduction of progressive reforms to sexual offence laws and procedures, there is still much to be done before victim/survivors will perceive the system as offering them real justice.

ALEXANDRA NEAME discusses some of the key recommendations for further change contained in a recent report by the Victorian Law Reform Commission that work towards this objective.

Historical explanations of the causes, characteristics and prevalence of sexual assault have changed dramatically over the past three decades, primarily in response to effective campaigning by feminists to challenge the many myths surrounding rape and other forms of sexual violence. Women's groups, researchers and law reformers have continued to demonstrate how a tradition of situating rape as a crime of "stranger-danger" has systematically disadvantaged victims who were far more likely to be assaulted by someone they knew, often in their own homes, and rarely with any signs of physical violence.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, there has been an ongoing process of legislative, administrative and procedural reform aimed at improving the criminal justice response to sexual assault victims, and mitigating against the systematic bias against women that has been deeply embedded within the system.

The Victorian Law Reform Commission's *Sexual Offences Interim Report* (hereafter referred to as the Interim Report, or the report) describes the current operation of Victoria's sexual offence law and practice, and makes recommendations for further change in the hope of increasing victims' confidence in accessing the criminal justice system. This is the second in a series of three reports that will be produced by the Commission in response to their Reference into sexual offences laws and procedures.

Key areas covered in the Commission's Interim Report include:

- current barriers to reporting and strategies for improving the police response;
- legislative and procedural options for making the system more responsive to children;
- further tightening the rules of evidence in relation to the admission of sexual history evidence;
- options for further restricting the use of sexual assault counselling files in court proceedings;
- limiting the circumstances under which judges can caution juries against any "danger of convicting" in sexual offence cases;
- legislating against an accused person being able to cross-examine the victim-complainant in situations where he is legally unrepresented;
- additional changes to the legal treatment and meaning of consent; and
- replacing the crime of incest with a new offence of intra-familial sexual penetration.

Given that the prevalence of sexual assault remains characteristically gendered, the report (and this review) focuses on ways in which the system can be made more responsive to *women*. However, important emphasis is also given in the report to factors that, alongside gender significantly impact on the criminal justice system's response to victims and their experience of the process. In particular, the Commission notes the specific difficulties faced by three key groups – Indigenous women, women from non-English-speaking backgrounds, and victim/survivors with disabilities – in the context of disclosure and reporting sexual assault to police.

This review will highlight some of these issues in the context of briefly considering four main areas covered by the report, namely: an overview of the Commission's empirical research on reporting practices for rape and other penetrative offences; strategies for improving the police response; changes to the legislation governing the admission of sexual history evidence; and restricting the use of "corroboration warnings".

The report also devotes attention to the special needs of children giving evidence in sexual offence proceedings. While the detail of the legislative and procedural changes considered are beyond the scope of this review, the recommendations propose fundamental and progressive change to how the criminal justice system treats child victims.

## Police reports of rape and other penetrative offences 1994-2002

While the report directs significant attention to the operation of sexual offence laws and procedures, it also considers the issue of police reporting and the extent to which reporting practices in Victoria may have changed over time<sup>1</sup>. The report presents the results of an empirical study undertaken by the Commission to examine the number of rapes and other *penetrative* sexual offences<sup>2</sup> reported to Victorian police over the past eight years, between 1994 and 2002.

In summary, the data indicated that:

- Women and girls continued to represent the vast majority of victim/survivors who report rape and other penetrative offences.
- Reports by male victims were more likely to involve incest and other penetrative offences (21.1 per cent of all reports of penetrative offences) than they were to involve rape (10.7 per cent of all reports of rape). However, the Commission notes that the number of male rape victims making a report increased over the eight-year period (p. 65).
- While the *number* of reported rapes and penetrative offences other than rape has remained relatively constant in Victoria between 1994 and 2002, nationally, the rate of reported sexual offences has been on the rise, increasing from 69 to 86 per 100,000 in the population between 1993 and 2001. The corresponding *rate* of reporting in Victoria has declined from roughly 63 per 100,000 people in the population in 1993 to 53.7 in 2001.
- Rape reports were more likely to involve offenders who were current or former partners and boyfriends, or to at least have been acquainted with the victim, than reports of other penetrative offences. For these latter offences, the most common relationship between offenders and victims was familial, with one-third of reports involving a parent or step-parent (almost all were fathers or stepfathers).
- Delays in reporting were most common for victims of penetrative offences other than rape. Slightly more than 30 per cent of reports of incest and other sexual offences were made five or more years after the offence(s), compared with 11.5 per cent of rapes. This is not surprising given that most victim/survivors of these offences are children at the time the assaults occur. However, the majority of rape victims do not report the offence immediately, which is contrary to what the community and the law often expect. Only 33 per cent of victims who reported a rape during 1994-2002 notified the police within the first 24 hours following the assault.

The Commission notes the absence in the police statistics of any reliable information with respect to identifying victims' race, cultural background or identity, and country of origin. Representatives from non-English-speaking groups and Indigenous communities who met with the Commission were particularly concerned about the lack of any consistent or systematic approach to recording the numbers of victims from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who report sexual offences to police (VLRC 2003). According to these groups, providing for the sensitive collection and management of this data would not only assist communities in developing appropriate service responses to victims of sexual assault, but would also ensure greater attention is directed by police in responding to the specific needs of non-English-speaking and Indigenous victim/survivors and the barriers they have traditionally faced to reporting.

### Strategies for improving the police response

The Commission presents a compelling overview of the barriers still faced by victim/survivors in reporting sexual offences to police, and draws critical attention to the unique difficulties faced by non-English-speaking and Indigenous victim/survivors, and for victims with a disability. While some of the barriers to reporting were common for all victim/survivors, such as the fear of being disbelieved, feelings of shame, or being held responsible for the assaults, other barriers were identified.

The problems related generally to a lack of attention being given to the diverse needs of victim/survivors with respect to providing information, support and services that were culturally ►



The development of well coordinated community education strategies was identified as critical to improving the current situation.

sensitive and/or appropriate. The development of well coordinated community education strategies was identified as critical to improving the current situation. Consideration was also given to involving multicultural and indigenous liaison officers within Victoria Police as educators within communities.

The Interim Report also refers to discussions held across community groups, flagging the merits of establishing ethno-specific services as well as calls for a greater commitment on behalf of mainstream services to employ bi-lingual counsellors as opposed to relying exclusively on interpreters.

The obligation of police to provide a professional and sensitive response to sexual assault is clearly critical for all victim/survivors. The Interim Report documents the history of police treatment of sexual offences in Victoria which has undergone significant improvement since the introduction in 1992 of a Police Code of Practice for Sexual Assault Cases.

The Code of Practice provided for a more coordinated response to victim/survivors of sexual assault, that includes all sections of police, the Centres Against Sexual Assault and forensic medical officers. The Code gives immediate priority to the care of the victim, requiring police to convey recent survivors to a hospital crisis care unit within two hours of the initial report. Crisis care includes counselling support, information, and medical care, including a forensic examination.

The focus of the Interim Report is on assessing how well the Code of Practice is working for police and the Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault (CASAs), ten years after its introduction. The Commission reports on the issues raised in discussions with counsellor/advocates from CASAs as part of some preliminary research. In the Final Report, the Commission plans to report on focus groups held with members of Victoria Police, and also to consider the processes used by police when considering whether to charge an offender.

In brief, however, the Commission makes a range of important recommendations aimed at improving the police response to victim/survivors. These include:

- reinstating some of the principles that informed the original drafting of the document in terms of the delivery of crisis care;
- developing training courses targeting general duties members who are often the first point of contact for victims; and
- developing comprehensive training packages for different sections of police, in consultation with appropriate services, that focus on the social context of sexual assault, the barriers faced by victims to reporting, increasing cultural sensitivity to, and awareness of, and diversity across communities that might assist victim/survivors to disclose and or report sexual assault.

The Commission also directs its attention to the investigation of sexual offences. It suggests two mechanisms for ensuring that a more consistent approach is taken to the investigation of sexual assault.

First, the Commission recommends standardising the process through which briefs of evidence are authorised to charge an offender, so that decisions are based on an established set of criteria that is consistent across the force.

Second, the Commission proposes the establishment of Sexual Investigation Units. Under this model, a detective works alongside members of the specialised Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Units to investigate sexual offences exclusively. The Commission argues that specialised Sexual Investigation Units would provide greater continuity for victims, ensure that personnel are appropriately trained on issues surrounding sexual assault investigation and the needs of victim/survivors, produce briefs of evidence of a higher quality, and reduce the number of complaints being withdrawn. The Sexual Investigation Units model has already successfully been piloted by Victoria Police in two metropolitan regions. The Commission recommends that this model be established in all metropolitan and regional divisions where the caseload meets a pre-determined threshold number of sexual offence reports.

## **Tightening the restrictions on the use of sexual history evidence**

For those victim/survivors whose case proceeds to trial, the evidentiary process can be particularly harrowing. The Interim Report identifies the marginalised position occupied by complainants who appear in criminal proceedings where it is the state that brings a prosecution against the accused. The complainant becomes the principal witness in the case whose function it is to give evidence for the prosecution and for

this evidence to be tested via cross-examination by the defence. It is often during this adversarial process that a woman's character and credibility will be filtered through a powerful set of stereotypes that often construct women as deserving of or responsible for the assault.

The law enshrined many of these principals in its historical treatment of rape through evidentiary and procedural rules that indiscriminately treated rape complainants as inherently suspicious and prone to lie about sexual assault. Throughout the 1990s, all Australian jurisdictions introduced legislation that restricted the admission of evidence of a woman's past sexual history or activities. Since 1991 in Victoria, there has been a general prohibition on the admission of sexual history, although there remains some judicial discretion for evidence to be admitted if it can be shown to have "substantial relevance to a fact in issue" (see Section 37A of the Evidence Act 1958). However, applications that claim to meet this threshold must be made in writing prior to the proceedings and must specify how the evidence is said to have substantial relevance to the case.

Despite these provisions, empirical research continues to reveal how readily sexual history evidence is admitted in contemporary rape trials (Heenan and McKelvie 1997; Heenan 2001; Taylor 2001), and the range of levels on which this occurs, namely: as a result of successful applications by prosecution and defence barristers that claim to have met the test of "substantial relevance"; through allowing questions that implicitly direct attention to the complainant's sexual past; and through direct breaches of the section.

The Commission attributes some of the problem to an established reluctance on behalf of both prosecutors and judges to intervene during cross-examination, even where the provisions are deliberately being flouted. They also highlight some inconsistency in how the provisions are being interpreted, especially in terms of whether prior non-consensual activities, or previous sexual assaults, are covered by the provisions. The Commission suggests the section clearly applies to both consensual and non-consensual experiences.

Finally, the Commission strongly suspects there is minimal compliance with the provisions that require defence barristers to provide written notice of applications to admit sexual history evidence prior to the commencement of any committal or trial proceeding preventing any detailed scrutiny of the arguments being relied upon to establish relevance.

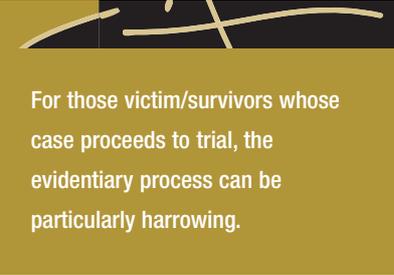
The Interim Report considers three options for responding to these issues:

- retaining the current approach that allows for a broad judicial discretion;
- developing a rules based approach that excludes all sexual history evidence except for a set of pre-determined categories; and
- developing additional limits on the discretionary power of judges to admit evidence only where the evidence can be shown to have "significant probative value" that outweighs any distress, humiliation or embarrassment the complainant may experience were the evidence to be admitted.

The Commission ultimately favours the third option that draws on the current evidentiary models in place in Western Australia and Tasmania. According to the Commission, narrowing the discretionary power allows for situations where the evidence may actually be "relevant to the case of the defence" (VLRC 2003: 195), but more importantly, draws judicial attention to the particular tendency of sexual history evidence to promote discriminatory beliefs about women.

The recommendations state that in determining whether certain evidence or lines of cross-examination are relevant, the judge must have regard to: the distress, humiliation and embarrassment of the complainant and their right to personal dignity and privacy; the risk that the evidence may arouse discriminatory belief or bias in the jury; and the right of the accused to mount a full defence. The Commission is also keen to ensure the amended provisions are the subject of regular monitoring and review.

Importantly, the new section would also include explicit guidance for judges in assessing what does *not* constitute "substantial probative value". Here the Commission intends to prevent defence barristers and judges drawing rudimentary lines between a woman's prior sexual history and any perceived propensity for her to consent to sexual activity in the future. Specifically the legislation will state that: "Substantial probative value will not be established merely because of the fact that the complainant engaged in a sexual act with the accused or another person on an earlier occasion" (VLRC 2003: 197). ➤



For those victim/survivors whose case proceeds to trial, the evidentiary process can be particularly harrowing.

These provisions may reduce the number of trials where defence barristers suggest that an accused's knowledge that a woman had consented to sex with other men was sufficient for him also to form a belief that she would consent to any sexual activity with him.

In making these recommendations, the Commission is nevertheless mindful of how blunt an instrument the law can be in terms of changing established legal practice. The ongoing education and training of judges and prosecutors is therefore positioned as key to the likelihood of any genuine change being effected.

## Restricting the use of corroboration warnings

The Interim Report gives some attention to the current approach taken by judges in directing juries in sexual offence cases. Some of the most important reforms passed in Victoria included the introduction of a set of mandatory directions that judges were required to give juries in order to better assist them in their deliberations on issues such as consent, delays in complaint, and for assessing cases where there was no corroboration. There was also an educative function to these directions that addressed some of the more common myths surrounding sexual assault.

Hence juries are told that consent, or free agreement, cannot be assessed against any lack of injuries or physical resistance; nor should they consider any prior sexual contact the victim may have had with the accused or any other person as relevant to their consideration of whether the victim consented.

Importantly, the legislature also abolished corroboration warnings that had allowed judges to warn juries against convicting an accused unless the complainant's account could be independently verified. These warnings traditionally took the form of suggesting that women, as sexual assault complainants, were a notoriously unreliable class of witness and that juries should not be satisfied of the guilt of an accused man in the absence of evidence that could independently corroborate or support the victim's account of what occurred, such as physical injuries or other witnesses.

Despite these provisions, the Commission draws on empirical research to suggest that corroboration warnings are still being given in a wide range of cases. They refer to the High Court decision in *John Henry Longman* (see (1989) 168 CLR 79) as a watershed case that has meant trial judges often feel obliged to deliver corroboration warnings, particularly in cases where there has been a significant delay in the complainant reporting the assault to police. Given that delays in reporting are far from uncommon, the extent to which corroboration warnings have been reintroduced in sexual offence trials is of considerable concern.

Specifically, the Commission urges the legislature to introduce an amendment that would prohibit judges from warning juries against any "danger of convicting" in the absence of corroboration.

The Commission is careful to distinguish the new version of corroboration warnings as falling short of sexual assault complainants being branded indiscriminately unreliable. Rather, the case of *Longman* suggests that a corroboration warning should be given in circumstances where the *particular* case warrants the jury being cautioned about accepting the complainant's evidence in the absence of corroboration unless after carefully scrutinising her evidence they are satisfied of its truth and veracity. However, the Commission highlights research that identifies judges delivering strong corroboration warnings that cautioned juries against the "dangers of convicting" an accused in cases where there is little or no delay in reporting and where there is other evidence that could be used to support the complainant's account. Moreover, recent High Court cases have added authority to these approaches (see *Crampton v The Queen* (2000) 206 CLR 161; *Doggett v The Queen* (2001) 208 CLR 343).

The Commission notes that: "While a *Longman* warning does not amount to a direction to the jury to acquit the accused, in practice such a direction may be seen by the jury as requiring them to find the accused not guilty" (VLRC, 2003: 218).

Furthermore, the Interim Report notes the extent to which the underlying rationale for a *Longman* warning often *presumes* the accused is prejudiced by factors such as a delay in complaint, where in *actuality*, the degree of prejudice may be minimal. The recommendations by the Commission are therefore directed at narrowing the potential for corroboration warnings to re-emerge as a staple of contemporary rape trials.

Specifically, the Commission urges the legislature to introduce an amendment that would prohibit judges from warning juries against any “danger of convicting” in the absence of corroboration. Where the defence can identify “some specific forensic disadvantage (as opposed to some general or potential forensic disadvantage, such as a lengthy delay in reporting)”, the Commission suggests that some direction be given to the jury on how to assess the evidence. This warning would be confined to suggesting that the accused may have “found it difficult to secure evidence that may have assisted his or her defence, had the complaint been made more promptly” (VLRC 2003: 226).

These recommendations go some way to restoring the original legislative intention of the 1991 reforms that aimed to bring sexual offences into line with the treatment of other criminal cases (*Crimes (Sexual Offences) Act 1991; Crimes (Rape) Act 1991* (Vic)), where the evidence of a single witness is sufficient to secure a conviction, even where there is no other independent evidence available.

## Conclusion

This review has showcased some of the important recommendations being considered under the Victorian Law Reform Commission’s reference into sexual offence laws and procedures. It provides a window into some of the key issues that continue to be debated amongst the legal profession, law reformers, and community groups. There are other important legislative and procedural changes that are canvassed in the Commission’s Interim Report, particularly in terms of securing the gains that have already been made around the legal treatment of consent.

In its Final Report, the Commission intends to examine the potential for establishing a specialised sexual offences jurisdiction. This would result in a specialist criminal justice response to sexual offence cases, specifically designed to alleviate many of the problems that continue to be identified as particularly traumatic for sexual assault victims.

Specifically, the specialist jurisdiction would aim to: provide a more supportive environment for complainants; promote the development of expertise amongst the legal profession in relation to the substantive law and procedures relevant to sexual offence cases; and increase uniformity and predictability in the exercise of judicial discretion on relevant matters (such as the admissibility of prior sexual history evidence and jury warnings).

The Commission has called for submissions in relation to this proposal and encourages further discussion and debate in relation to the broader recommendations. It also intends to give greater attention to the conduct of defence barristers and their treatment of victims during cross-examination in the next stage of its review. The Commission’s Final Report will be published in 2004.

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## Endnotes

1 The Commission also examined prosecution outcomes for penetrative offences other than rape. The findings report on the process of attrition as the case moves through the criminal justice system, from charging through to the committal and trial proceedings (see pages 80-96).

2 Penetrative offences other than rape refer mainly to incest and sexual penetration of children and young people under 16 years of age.

## References

ABS (2001), *Recorded Crime Australia 2001*, Catalogue No. 4510, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra.

Heenan, M. (2001), *Trial and Error: Rape, Law Reform and Feminism*, PhD Thesis, Monash University, Melbourne, Unpublished.

Heenan, M. & McKelvie, H. (1997), *The Crimes (Rape) Act 1991: An Evaluation Report*, Report No.2, Rape Law Reform Evaluation Project, Department of Justice, Victoria.

Taylor, S. C. (2001), “The legal construction of victim/survivors in parent-child intrafamilial sexual abuse trials in the Victorian County Court Australia in 1995”, PhD Thesis, University of Ballarat, Victoria.

VLRC (2003), *Sexual Offences Interim Report*, Victorian Law Reform Commission, Melbourne.

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Hard copies of the report are available from the Victorian Law Reform Commission, Level 10, 10-16 Queen Street, Melbourne, Victoria. Phone (03) 8619 8619. Electronic copies of the report are available on the Commission’s website, [www.lawreform.vic.gov.au](http://www.lawreform.vic.gov.au)

## Identifying the needs and uses of sexual assault data

In the 2001-2002 Budget, the Australian Government announced funding of \$16.5 million for a *National Initiative to Combat Sexual Assault*, which represents the Government's commitment to reduce and prevent sexual assault. The initial focus of the Initiative has been on establishing a sound evidence base, including an information strategy, to facilitate access to national, policy-relevant data.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has recently published an information paper, *Sexual Assault Information Development Framework* that forms the basis of this information strategy. The Framework is designed to facilitate the development of strategies to produce more uniform data from existing sources, as well as to inform future collection processes. It identifies the various requirements for sexual assault data, and reviews available sources (as well as their potential uses) in order to identify the gaps that currently exist in national data on sexual assault.

While it is acknowledged that "perfect" recording of the incidence and nature of sexual assault will never be possible, the Information Development Framework is a valuable resource for informing a broad-based, long-term perspective on the needs and uses of sexual assault data. The elements underpinning the Framework include: the context of sexual assault; actual

and perceived risk; the number of incidents and the responses made; and information on the impacts and outcomes of sexual assault.

These elements allow a long-term analysis of sexual assault as a social problem; an assessment of how the various support, police and legal services are responding to sexual assault; a more accurate view of service effectiveness that will better inform the ongoing development of appropriate programs and services; and the capacity to measure changes in sexual assault patterns over time.

A key part of the Information Development Framework is the proposal of strategies with regard to the tracking of sexual assault data over time. Specifically, this will include following trends in reporting, the nature of incidents, and the characteristics of victims and perpetrators.

Further collaboration in the development of a data collection plan, as proposed in the Framework, is a crucial initiative as a means of boosting what is known about the prevalence and nature of sexual assault.

**Information Paper, Sexual Assault Information Development Framework, Australian Bureau of Statistics (2003), Catalogue No. 4518.0.** [lyn.tucker@abs.gov.au](mailto:lyn.tucker@abs.gov.au)

Copies of the paper are available by phoning Jennifer Farley in the Office of the Status of Women on (02) 6271 5623. It may also be accessed on the Australian Bureau of Statistics website [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) under Themes\Crime and Justice.

## Sexual offences and the criminal justice system

In June 2003, the Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission released *Seeking Justice*, the results of an inquiry into how all sexual offences (against adults and children) are handled by the Queensland criminal justice system.

There were three terms of reference for the inquiry:

- the training, expertise and supervision of police officers investigating sexual offences;
- the adequacy of existing guidelines and procedures for the initiation and discontinuance of the prosecution of sexual offenders by police and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP); and
- the appropriateness of, and the circumstances in which, the publication of identifying information about a person charged with a sexual offence should be suppressed.

The greatest concern to emerge in submissions to the inquiry was the high levels of attrition of sexual offence matters from the criminal justice system: only 17 per cent of reported sexual offences result in conviction.

The commission made 24 recommendations in response to the issues raised by the enquiry. Some of the major recommendations are as follows:

- to enhance the understanding of sexual abuse at all levels of the criminal justice system by introducing training for specialist police and ODPP staff
- to improve the response of regional police to allegations of sexual abuse
- to improve the level of support police and the ODPP offer victims through specialist training, and the implementation of a formalised complaints-handling process
- to improve the transparency of ODPP decision-making processes, both in relation to police and complainants, by requiring written summaries of decisions made about cases
- to retain existing prohibitions on the publication of the identity of a person accused of a sexual offence, and to close the gaps that exist in the legislation

*Seeking Justice: An Inquiry into the Handling of Sexual Offences by the Criminal Justice System, Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (2003).*

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## LITERATURE HIGHLIGHTS

The works listed in these pages comprise selections from the new additions to the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault library collection over the last six months. They may be borrowed from the Australian Institute of Family Studies library via the interlibrary loan system. Compiled by Institute Librarian, Joan Kelleher.

### Adolescent attitudes

**Pathways to manhood: The social and sexual ordering of young men's lives**, by M. Flood, *Health Education Australia*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2002, pp. 24-30.

The author discusses practices, discourses and relations among boys and young men that shape their social and sexual lives. This includes health issues such as contraception and disease transmission, as well as violence and familial relationships. He maps the sexual path many boys take – including proving themselves and how they learn about sex and boys' feelings on rape and heterosexuality – and argues that it is essential to understand these issues and attitudes in order to successfully promote good health behaviour among young men.

**Sowing the seeds of violence in heterosexual relationships: Early adolescents narrate compulsory heterosexuality**, by D. Tolman et al., *Journal of Social Issues*, vol. 59, no. 1, 2003, pp. 159-178.

This paper explores how the precursors of violence may be an integral part of adolescent dating behavior from the beginning. The concept of boys as sexual predators and the response of both boys and girls to this role are examined.

### Costs of crime

**Counting the costs of crime in Australia**, by P. Mayhew & G. Adkins, Australian Institute of Criminology, Canberra, ACT, 2003 (8p), and Online (PDF 356K) <http://www.aic.gov.au/publications/tandi/ti247.pdf>

This paper presents up-to-date figures on the costs of a range of offences and crime as a whole in Australia. The costs assessed include medical costs, lost output, and in tangible costs, which set a monetary value on pain, suffering and lost quality of life. Cost estimates are presented for homicide, assault, sexual assault, robbery, burglary, theft of vehicles, theft from vehicles, shop theft, other theft, criminal damage or vandalism, arson, fraud, drug offences, overall crime costs, and other costs, including criminal justice system costs, costs of victim assistance, security costs, household precaution costs, and insurance costs. Fraud is the most costly crime, followed by violent crime, including homicide, assault and sexual assault, and burglary.

### Impact of sexual assault

**Sexual assault: When sex is not OK**, South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault, Melbourne, 2000, one videocassette, 7 min.

This set of video, cd and booklet defines sexual assault and, if it has occurred, details what kind of help is available. It also briefly discusses possible reactions to sexual assault.

**The trauma of sexual assault: Treatment, prevention, and practice**, Edited by J. Petrak & B. Hedge, Wiley, Chichester, England, c2002. xiii, 354p.

Rape and sexual assault are common crimes in our societies, but work on its psychosocial impact and critiques of procedures and interventions are hard to find. The *Trauma of Sexual Assault* fills these gaps. It focuses on adult victims and opens up the debate with research findings, theoretical perspectives and implications for treatment, longer-term management and future policy . . . The book is a much-needed and accessible reference for clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, counsellors and therapists, nurses, the criminal justice system, and all professionals working in settings providing services for sexual assault. (Book jacket)

### Indigenous communities

**Domestic violence, sexual assault and the health of Aboriginal people**, by R. Widders, *Developing Practice: The Child, Youth & Family Work Journal*, no. 6, Autumn, 2003, pp. 40-45.

The author discusses sexual abuse in Aboriginal communities in relation to the response from services and agencies, the importance of understanding the impact of history, the need to employ Aboriginal workers and to help in culturally appropriate ways, the importance of education and ways of dealing with perpetrators.

**Sharon's story: Young aboriginal women and domestic violence**, Hatchling Productions, Northern Territory, 1999, 1 videocassette, 22 min.

A young Aboriginal woman comes to realise that her relationship with her boyfriend isn't what it appears. With the help of her friends, she takes time to look at herself and her values. The video looks at the issues of violence within relationships between young Aboriginal people. It aims to give young women a better understanding of their legal rights in the event of domestic violence and sexual assault.

### Intimate partner assault

**Forced sexual intercourse in intimate relationships**, by I.M. Johnson & R.T. Sigler, Aldershot, England, c1997, ix, 189p.

This book examines the literature on date rape in both an historical and a conceptual context. Data on the prevalence and incidence of date rape is provided. Various theories of this form of sexual assault are explored.

**Intimate partner sexual assault: The impact of competing demands on victims' decisions to seek criminal justice solutions**, by D. Lievore, Paper presented at the 8th Australian Institute of Family Studies Conference, Melbourne, 12-14 February 2003, Melbourne (8p). Online only (PDF 40K) <http://www.aifs.gov.au/institute/afrc8/lievore.pdf>

Despite initiatives to encourage the reporting of sexual assault to police, women who are sexually victimised by intimate partners are least likely to seek legal redress. This leaves them at risk of repeat victimisation and open to victim blaming. This paper demonstrates that reporting decisions are mediated by a number of competing personal, cultural and situational demands, which act as barriers to the criminal justice system. At the same time, non-reporting may be viewed as a rational response to victimisation in some circumstances, as it maintains particular values and achieves desired outcomes. This is not to suggest that women should not be encouraged to report sexual offences, but indicates that victims who do report to police must be enabled to achieve other desired outcomes, such as protection from reprisal. (Author abstract)

### Law reform

**Sexual offences: Interim report**, by Victorian Law Reform Commission, Melbourne, Victorian Law Reform Commission, 2003, 421p.

This is the second report to be published by the Victorian Law Reform Commission as part of their reference on sexual offences. It describes the current operation of sexual offence laws and makes recommendations for some legislative, procedural and administrative change. It includes research on current rates of reporting to police as well as documents the findings from a study of prosecution outcomes for penetrative offences other than rape. The report also debates the responsiveness of the criminal justice system to victims of sexual assault and considers options for reform that will reduce the distress of giving evidence that include: tightening the restrictions on the admission of sexual history evidence, prohibiting the disclosure of counselling files, allowing for the compulsory use of closed circuit television for victims to give their evidence, and reducing the number of times children are required to appear in court. The Interim Report calls for submission from the public on these issues.

**The trials of sex assault victims**, by J. Silveri, *Law Institute Journal*, vol. 77, no. 5, April, 2003, pp. 18-23.

In the words of one female magistrate when discussing sexual offences: "If it were my daughter, even though I'd want the perpetrator dealt with, I wouldn't put her through [the legal system]." This statement is an indication that the criminal justice system is struggling to make the legal experience of most sexual assault victims anything less than painful. The Victorian Law Reform Commission is about to release its report into the responsiveness of the criminal justice system to the needs of sexual assault victims. This represents the latest attempt to make the legal system less traumatic for victims. The article provides an overview of community concerns about this problem.

### Male victims

**Male victims of sexual assault**, Edited by G.C. Mezey & M.B. King, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2000, xiii, 161p.

This volume discusses the subject of male victims of rape and sexual assault. It addresses the important issues of prevention, care and treatment. A chapter on male child and adolescent victims of sexual abuse is included.

### Medical care

**Management of acute adult sexual assault**, by J. Mein et al., *Medical Journal of Australia*, vol. 178, no. 5, March, 2003, pp. 226-23.

An estimated 13 per cent of women and 3 per cent of men worldwide report sexual assault in their lifetime. This article outlines the forensic care that should follow adult sexual assault and notes that although managing sexual assault may appear daunting, some victims want medical care only. The authors state that after disclosure, forensic assessment should be discussed. If a complaint to the police is possible, a forensic assessment should take place. If medical care only is desired, determine the timing and type of assault and current contraception, manage general and genital injuries and perform relevant tests. Counselling is important for all victims of sexual assault, as psychosocial consequences are more common than physical injuries. Management by a sympathetic, non-judgemental health practitioner helps the victim to regain control. (Journal abstract, edited)

### Offender profiles

**Predators: Pedophiles, rapists, and other sex offenders: Who they are, how they operate, and how we can protect ourselves and our children**, by A.C. Salter, Basic Books, New York, c2003, xvi, 272p.

World-renowned psychologist Anna Salter has been studying sexual offenders and their victims for more than twenty years. Now, for the first time, she uses her expertise to dispel the myths surrounding sexual offenders – how they think, how they deceive their victims, and how they elude the law . . . Why is sexual abuse so common, and how do predators cover their tracks? . . . Anna Salter argues that it is our misconceptions about predators that make us so vulnerable to them. Drawing on the stories of abusers, told in their own words, Salter sheds light on the surprising motives behind sexual abuse. (Book jacket)

### Offender treatment programs

**How to work with sex offenders: A handbook for criminal justice, human service, and mental health professionals**, by R. Flora, Haworth Clinical Practice Press, New York, c2001, xv, 252p.

The complex areas of sex offender prosecution and treatment in the United States are presented in this book in an accessible way. It provides an overview of what happens to an offender from the time of apprehension, through prosecution, adjudication and treatment programs. Information for investigators, prosecutors, child protection workers and therapists is included.

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**Sex offender treatment: Accomplishments, challenges, and future directions**, Edited by M.H. Miner & E. Coleman, Haworth Press, New York, c2001, 125p.

This book gives a general overview of the current types of sex offender treatment programs and outlines future directions. It includes a proposal for a multisystemic treatment model for juvenile offenders. A restorative justice approach for reintegration of adult offenders back into the community is described.

### Online support networks

**Support groups, online bulletin boards and chat rooms**, by M. McKenzie, *Domestic Violence & Incest Resource Centre Newsletter*, no. 4, Summer 2002, pp. 15-17.

A range of support groups exists for people who have experienced domestic violence or sexual assault. The author lists and describes the support offered by some groups, professionally facilitated or not. She focuses on the emergence of online support in particular, and discusses the benefits of anonymity provided by online support services.

### Personal safety

**Acting on the women's safety strategy**, by Victorian Office of Women's Policy, Office of Women's Policy, Melbourne, 2002, 39p.

The Women's Safety Strategy was introduced by the Victorian Government in October 2002. This booklet describes how the strategy will be implemented and the kinds of pro-

grams that exist to assist with the future development of government policy in the area of violence against women.

**Women's safety strategy: A policy framework**, by Victorian Office of Women's Policy, Office of Women's Policy, Melbourne, 2002, 76p.

One in three Victorian women experiences some form of violence in adulthood. This book outlines the Bracks Government policy on women's safety, designed to reduce the level of violence against women and women's fear of violence. The single policy framework operates across many portfolios; the key areas are crime prevention, community care, disability services, regional health and aged care. The document considers "What is violence against women?"; addresses the following forms of violence against women including definitions of violence such as family violence, sexual assault, violence in public places, stalking, workplace violence and bullying, sexual harassment, racial and religious violence against women, trafficking in women and girls, female genital mutilation; and asks why does violence against women occur and how it impacts on Victorians?

**Women's safety, women's voices**, by Victorian Office of Women's Policy, Melbourne, State of Victoria, 2002, 24p.

Released as part of the Victorian Government's Women's Safety Strategy, this booklet contains the personal accounts of several women who have been victims of violence. The booklet aims to raise community awareness of family violence and violence against women generally, and to encourage women who are experiencing violence to seek help. The stories deal with domestic violence, incest, sexual harassment, rape and other violence towards women. ►

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## Pornography

**Youth and pornography in Australia: Evidence on the extent of exposure and likely effects**, by M. Flood & C. Hamilton, The Australia Institute, Lyneham, ACT, 2003, 64p.

Children now have easy and free access to pornography on the Internet. In this study, 16 and 17 year olds were surveyed to determine the extent of their exposure to X rated material. The survey investigates the paths and extent of this underage exposure to pornography, the content of the pornography, and the possible effects of the exposure on attitudes and behaviour, and on the extent to which exposure may also lead to a higher incidence of sexual assault.

## Prevalence rates

**Sex in Australia: Experiences of sexual coercion among a representative sample of adults**, by R.O. de Visser et al. *Australian & New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, vol. 27, no. 2, April, 2003, pp. 198-203.

The purpose of this article is to provide reliable estimates of the prevalence, correlates and consequences of sexual coercion among a representative sample of Australian adults. Computer-assisted telephone interviews were completed by a representative sample of 10,173 men and 9,134 women aged 16-59 years. The overall response rate was 73.1 per cent. Sexual coercion is an unacceptably common experience, with detrimental effects on various aspects of people's lives. It most commonly occurs at the ages at which people become sexually active and women are more likely than men to be sexually coerced. Implications of the

research show that there is a need for services to tailor their responses to dealing with the impact of sexual coercion on victims who are less likely to identify or disclose experiences that fall outside what may be considered the more conventional definitions and perceptions of what constitutes sexual violence. (Journal abstract, edited)

**Women's experience of crime and safety in Victoria 2002**, by C. Gordo et al., Crime Prevention Victoria, Melbourne, 2002, 16p.

Many more women than men are the victims of family violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment and stalking. This report provides statistics on the incidence of crime against women, the effects of violence, and what is being done in Victoria to address the issue. The report looks at women as victims of homicide, sexual assault, robbery, assault, family violence, stalking, violence and misconduct in the workplace, missing persons, and property crime, and women as offenders.

## Research

**Researching sexual violence against women: Methodological and personal perspectives**, Edited by M.D. Schwartz, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, c1997, xvii, 222p.

This volume presents a strong overview of current research into sexual violence against women. It examines the issues and controversy around 'real' rape versus acquaintance or date rape. New methodologies for research in this area are explored and the effects of this research on researchers themselves are examined.

These works from the Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault library collection of the Australian Institute of Family Studies may be borrowed via the interlibrary loan system. Please contact your own library to arrange loans.

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