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Perceptions & Stereotypes of Female Sex Offenders

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Background

- In 2018, the NCVS estimates there were 734,640 incidents of sexual assault in the U.S. but only 24.9% of those were reported to police.
- Official statistics indicate that most sex offenders are male, but these statistics include only offenses reported to the officials.
- Research indicates that sexual offenses committed by females do occur though they are rarely reported to authorities because of gender stereotypes and other factors.



Framework

Sexual Offense: includes a variety of forms of illegal sexual contact

Sexual Offender: a person who perpetrates a sexual offense

Gender Stereotypes: social perceptions about the expected behavior of males and females

“The Medicalization of Female Deviance”

- Female offenders as “mentally ill” or “mad”
 - Label male offenders as “rational”

Methodology

- Project will take place at Boise State University
- Surveys will be distributed with questions assessing the perceptions and attitudes of students on gender stereotypes, sexual offenses, female sex offenders
- Participation will be voluntary and anonymous
- Survey data will be coded to analyze this study’s research question and hypotheses



Potential Outcomes

Determine how gender stereotypes impact attitudes about sexual violence among university students.



Examine perceptions about female sex offenders and how gender stereotypes impact those opinions.

Research Question

How do gender stereotypes impact attitudes towards sexual violence?

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