

Is One in Seven a Myth? The Implications of Using National Data to Address State and Local Issues

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2007 Annual Meeting of the American Public Health Association

Learning Objectives

To compare the result of state extrapolations using national data and the state analyses using specifically collected state data to examine differences in conclusions regarding the prevalence of sexual violence among women ages 18 and over.



Background

- 1971** – The first rape crisis centers open in Oakland, CA and Washington DC.
- 1975** – Pennsylvania passes the first Abuse Prevention Law in the US
- 1979** – Every state has at least one Rape Crisis Center.
- 1985** – The Surgeon General identifies domestic violence as a major health problem.
- 2007** – New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence celebrates their 30th Anniversary.

Background

Sexual violence becomes seen as a public health problem in addition to a criminal problem.

1996 NVAW Study

- Largest study to examine prevalence of sexual violence among women ages 18 and over.
- Randomized national sample of 12,008 women.
- Behaviorally specific questions.
- Prevalence rate of 14.8% for forcible rape or 1 in 6.8

Defining Forcible Rape

The forcible rape measure is put together using the following four very specific questions regarding penetration.

Sexual Assault Items

1. Regardless of how long ago it happened, has a man or boy ever made you have sex by using force or threatening to harm you or someone close to you? Just so there is no mistake, by sex we mean putting a penis in your vagina.

Sexual Assault Items

2. Has anyone, male or female, ever made you have oral sex by using force or threat of harm?

Just so there is no mistake, by oral sex we mean that a man or boy put his penis in your mouth or someone, male or female, penetrated your vagina or anus with their mouth or tongue.

If this has happened multiple times please tell us about the most recent incident.

Sexual Assault Items

3. Has anyone, male or female, ever made you have anal sex by using force or threat of harm?

Just so there is no mistake, by anal sex we mean that a man or boy put his penis in your anus.

If this has happened multiple times please tell us about the most recent incident.

Sexual Assault Items

4. Has anyone, male or female, ever put fingers or objects in your vagina or anus against your will by using force or threats?

If this has happened multiple times please tell us about the most recent incident.

Using Extrapolated National Data as Proxies for State Data

- A series of reports prepared for the 50 states that used extrapolated data from the NWS and NVAWS to provide a profile of the prevalence of sexual violence in the state.
- Reports were prepared by Kilpatrick and Ruggiero and were titled “Rape in Name of State: A Report to the State. One in Seven or One in Eight, One in Six (depending on the state).

http://colleges.musc.edu/ncvc/grants/50_states_reports.htm

Extrapolating National Data to the State Level

Only Four States Met the Following Criteria..

- Had a 1 in X report
- Had done their own survey
 - **Washington**
 - **Texas**
 - **Virginia**
 - **New Hampshire**

Comparisons Between Two Data Types

	STATE	EXTRAP.	% > Extrap.
WA	23%	17.7%	29.9%
Texas	20%	12%	66.7%
Virginia	18%	12.4%	43.5%
NH	19.5%	13.7%	40.9%

NVAW National rate – 14.8%

Prevalence of Sexual Violence Among New Hampshire Female Residents Ages 18 and Over.

WHY STATE DATA MATTERED



Sample Population vs. New Hampshire Census Population

Subjects were comparable to the 2005 NH Census data with two exceptions....

- Women ages 18-24 were underrepresented.
- Women with annual household incomes less than \$25,000 were underrepresented.
- Therefore results that we present are conservative estimates since these two populations tend to have higher prevalence of VAW.

Prevalence of Sexual Assault

- 113,000 or nearly 1 in five New Hampshire women have been the victim of a completed sexual assault, including penetration at some point in their life



**OR... imagine the number of women it
would take to fill Fenway Park in Boston
3 times over**

Profiling the Perpetrators

- Fewer than **13%** of women were sexually assaulted by strangers.
- **87.7% of women were** sexually assaulted by someone in their circle of friends and families.
- If respondents reported being sexually assaulted multiple times they were asked to report information on their most recent experience.

Conclusions and Limitations



Conclusions and Limitations

- Is national data too difficult to extrapolate?
- We want to be able to describe problems at the state level but this requires a large sample size which requires money.
- We were not able to run tests of statistical significance as the standard deviations for the extrapolated reports were not available.