Battered Woman Syndrome & Rape Trauma Syndrome

By: Riley Aguilar
Period 2
What is Battered Woman Syndrome?

❖ Women who are physically, verbally or emotionally abused over an extended period of time by a husband, partner or family member
5 main symptoms of Battered Woman Syndrome

❖ She has visual injuries and when asked about them she is quick to give excuses

➢ Black eyes, bruises, broken bones and/or scratches or cuts

❖ Easily startled

❖ Increased anxiety or depression

❖ Socially withdrawn

❖ Drop in school, occupational or work performances
Cycles of Battered Woman Syndrome

❖ Stage one includes
  ➢ Male acts more irritable, tense and edgy

❖ Stage two includes
  ➢ Acute violent activity, woman will try to argue and defend herself; male will assault her to “teach her a lesson”

❖ Stage three includes
  ➢ Male becomes apologetic and promises to change.
  ➢ The calm continues until tension builds up
Why do women stay in the relationship?

❖ Victims are often afraid to leave due to change, loneliness and the unknown are perceived as more painful than the beatings.

❖ They simply do not know where to go for help.

➢ Friends, family, coworkers, police, school counselor, hospital/ER.
What type of woman is susceptible to Battered Woman Syndrome?

- No specific type of woman is more or less susceptible
- Can happen between the ages of 16-35
- Occurs at all socioeconomic levels
Statistics

❖ Estimated in the U.S between 1 and 2 million women a year are beaten

❖ Men who grew up in homes where their father abused their mother are more likely to abuse their wives/girlfriends

❖ Battered Woman Syndrome falls under spousal abuse

❖ Charges for the man involved may include assault, battery, or criminal sexual conduct

❖ Assault in the first degree is a sentence in most states ranging from 10-25 years
**What is Rape Trauma Syndrome?**

Psychological trauma experienced by a rape victim that includes disruptions to normal physical, emotional, cognitive and interpersonal behavior.
Physical symptoms of Rape Trauma Syndrome

❖ Shock, cold or faint after rape occurs
❖ Pregnancy
❖ Gynaecological problems, irregular/painful periods, STI’s, or bladder infections
❖ Bleeding and/or infections from tearing/cuts in the vagina or rectum
❖ Soreness throughout the body
❖ Nausea/vomiting
❖ Throat irritations due to forced oral sex
❖ Tension headaches
Behavioral symptoms of Rape Trauma Syndrome

❖ Crying more than usual
❖ Difficulty concentrating
❖ Restless, agitated or unable to relax
❖ Antisocial
❖ Not wanting to be alone
❖ Stuttering or stammering
❖ Avoiding anything that reminds the victim of the rape
❖ Very cautious/alert
Continued..

- Relationship problems with friends, family or spouse
- Fear of sex or loss of interest
- Changes in lifestyle; moving houses, change in appearance, change in jobs
- Increased substance abuse
- Drop in school, occupational or work performance
- Increased washing or bathing
- Behaving as if the rape did not occur (denial)
- Suicide attempts or self destructive behavior
Psychological symptoms of Rape Trauma Syndrome

❖ Increased anxiety or fear
❖ Self blame or guilt
❖ Helplessness
❖ Humiliation or shame
❖ Lowering self esteem
❖ Feeling dirty or contaminated
❖ Anger
❖ PTSD
Why does rape often go unreported?

❖ The victim is embarrassed, fears being judged or fears no one will believe them

❖ Fears his/her attacker will come back and harm them again

❖ Does not know how to get help

➢ Police, hospital, friends, family, school counselor
How is evidence collected?

❖ Rape kits
❖ DNA evidence such as bodily fluids, semen or saliva
❖ Document findings
What are the possible degrees of rape charges?

- Rape 1
- Rape 2
- Rape 3
- Rape of a child 1
- Rape of a child 2
- Rape of a child 3
- Molestation
- Assault and or sexual assault
Vocabulary terms

Susceptible: likely or liable to be influenced or harmed by a particular thing

PTSD: a mental disorder that is triggered by a traumatic experience or event

Rape Trauma Syndrome: Psychological trauma experienced by a rape victim that includes disruptions to normal physical, emotional, cognitive and interpersonal behavior

Battered Woman Syndrome: Women who are physically, verbally or emotionally abused over an extended period of time by a husband, partner or family member

Rape kit: examination done to collect DNA evidence of rape; blood, pubic hair, semen or saliva
Thank you for listening!