

Alexa ([00:15](#)):

In 2018, the FBI estimated that a forcible rape occurred in the United States every 3.8 minutes. That means that in the span of this podcast episode, approximately 15 people will experience a completed rape. But statistics like this, the ones that make great headlines, cloud our understanding of exactly how sexual offenses occur in the United States. To fully grasp the nature and extent of the problem, we have to look at multiple sources of data.

Alissa ([00:45](#)):

As criminologists and sex crimes policy experts, we've been asking big questions for most of our careers, our prevention efforts to reduce sexual abuse isn't working. Do our current criminal justice policies do anything to reduce sexual offending? Are sex crimes increasing over time, or are they decreasing? You might be thinking that the answers to these questions are common sense, but actually they are nuanced and must be understood in context. I'm Dr. Alissa Ackerman...

Alexa ([01:16](#)):

and I'm Dr. Alexa Sardina the answers to these questions and so many more are Beyond Fear.

Alissa ([01:40](#)):

So, I am really excited about this episode Lex. I know, I know, I know. I'm a huge research and data nerd.

Alexa ([01:48](#)):

You are.

Alissa ([01:50](#)):

I totally am. I love digging into the weeds, trying to make sense of numbers in a spreadsheet or identifying themes in the stories that people share with us. You know, it was learning about and working with data that helped me to make sense of my own lived experience. Understanding sex crimes data was kind of, in a twisted way, understanding my own story. It was my first class on sex crimes that I learned that I wasn't alone in my experience of sexual violence and that sexual violence was a far more pervasive problem than I had ever imagined.

Alexa ([02:28](#)):

Yeah, and I definitely have had a similar experience to you, and it might seem counter-intuitive to many people but learning about sexual violence in the classroom answered a lot of questions I had. It provided a form of comfort for me as well. It also helped me become more comfortable talking about my experience with sexual victimization relative to what we know about rape and sexual assault. I also have actually had several students who've taken my sex crimes class and told me afterwards that they're survivors and that the class actually helped them heal in some way as well.

Alissa ([03:04](#)):

I've had that experience a lot too. There's never a time that I can think of where I've taught a sex crimes class where I haven't had at least one student in the class who's a survivor who comes to me afterwards

and talks about how it was sort of digging into the data that we talk about that helped them to make sense of their experiences and also to heal.

Alexa (03:24):

Yeah, absolutely. I'm surprised but not surprised every semester when that happens, but I'm grateful that I can be a part of that healing process for them. So hopefully what we bring you guys today will be something that sort of demystifies the picture of sexual violence that's portrayed by the data that we have.

Alissa (03:44):

So, I guess one of the places to start, is kind of where I start in every sex crimes class that I teach, and it's talking about the different kinds of data that we look at. And so, before we get into the sources of statistics and data that we look at, it's important that we understand that data comes in different forms. I personally am trained as what they call a mixed methodologist. So I use both quantitative data, so numerical data in spreadsheets that can tell us about sort of trends and data and correlations, connections between different variables at, I have spent hours and hours and hours, I stay up all night long creating databases on sex crimes policy. And so that is quantitative data that's looking at numbers coupled with qualitative data, which is sort of the stories behind the why something happens. And so, Lex, maybe you could talk a little bit about the work that you do because you're trained in a different way than I am.

Alexa (04:54):

So, the type of data that I work with is typically called qualitative data. And this is data that you gather from talking to people essentially from hearing their stories and identifying patterns in their stories about questions you would like to answer. So qualitative research really helps us answer questions about motivation, about desistance, explaining that the state of mind that somebody is in when they're committing a sexual offense. So, I don't stay up all night creating data tables like Alissa but I've spent a lot of time speaking to people about sexual offenses. So, we're kind of the perfect match here for this.

Alissa (05:34):

I don't understand how you don't stay up all night looking at datasets, like you're missing out. I am clearly. So, in order to understand how often sex crimes happen, we have to look at quantitative data. But if we want to understand why we have to look at more qualitative sources, one the things that we want people to understand is that no matter what source of data you're looking at, there are limitations to that data. On today's episode, we want to talk to you about the numbers. We want to talk about how many sex crimes are happening around us, how often they occur or rates of sexual offending, increasing or decreasing? How can we be sure?

Alexa (06:37):

Measuring the scope of sex crimes that occur is a difficult task. There's not a single source of data that paints the whole picture for us. So typically, we rely on large scale national studies to help us understand the bigger picture. And more often than not, we rely on smaller studies conducted by researchers like Alissa and I, to help us contextualize that information.

Alissa:

So, oftentimes you'll hear researchers say, well it depends. I actually think that this is one of my favorite things to say and it drives my students mad. But, but everything we talk about when it comes to sex crimes data depends on how the study was conducted, who participated and how they were chosen to participate depends on the time period of the study. Right? So, are the researchers asking about experiences in the last year? Or are they asking about experiences across the life span? It also depends on how questions were asked. So, we may compare two sources of data and find that they say different things. That doesn't necessarily mean that one is wrong. It may just mean that the questions were asked in slightly different ways, so I'd like to do a little thought experiment. I do this exercise with my students and the results are always so insightful, so I'd like you to close your eyes for a few seconds and I'd like you to imagine or think about the words or images that come to mind when you think of the phrase sex crimes. We'll give you a few seconds.

Alissa (08:03):

When we do an exercise like this, people usually think about violence and struggle. They think about physical force more specifically, they think of a man using physical force and violence to assault a woman. They think about children being kidnapped and sexually assaulted by strangers. Over the last few years, as we talked about in the last episode, our collective understanding of these issues has shifted. We all have what we think is a pretty good idea about sex crimes, but this is why definitions are so important in every single bit of research that is conducted, researchers ask themselves a series of questions and make decisions that ultimately impact their final results. For example, if I asked series of questions that included, has anyone ever coerced you to have sex with them? and has anyone had sex with you when you could not give consent? I would get a very different response than if I asked, have you ever experienced rape?

Alexa (09:11):

It's important to note here that it matters who's asking the question. If you have sort of somebody that's maybe not the best or most skilled or trained interviewer, just asking a question like this of a stranger, you're not going to get the same response as someone who's been trained to ask certain questions and really develop a rapport with the person that they're speaking to.

Alissa: (9:39):

That's really, really important. What are some ways, maybe really briefly, you could talk about how you gain that buy-in to be able to get participants to trust you?

Alexa: (9:44)

Um, I always think that it's important to come with a certain level of honesty and vulnerability about myself. So, it's not that I necessarily disclosing that I'm a survivor, but it's just a way of opening up with broader questions, more general questions and then sort of getting down to the specific. So it gives you some time to make connections with the person, maybe see if there's things you share in common, um, and really can put them at ease and you're not jumping in with a question about their victimization or their offending within the first two minutes of speaking to them.

Alissa ([10:19](#)):

Yeah, it's really interesting that you say that lacks because my work focuses early on it focused on sex crimes policy. But I've also done work in direct practice, face to face work with men and women who have sexually offended. And one of the things that I had to learn early on in that work was how to keep a poker face.

Alexa (10:42):

Absolutely

Alissa (10:43):

Right? You know, sometimes you are asking people questions that the answers that they give you are very, very difficult to hear and their answers are full of shame for them. And so, if the researcher who is asking the questions appears upset or uncomfortable, they're not going to open up and provide honest answers.

Alexa (11:09):

Absolutely. I agree with that.

Alissa (11:11):

Today we wanted to talk to you about these larger data sets and it's complicated, but we are really excited to dig into the weeds with you. So, you know, from the outset, uh, we have pulled data from multiple different sources to bring this episode to you and we will provide links to all of that data on our website. Um, so that if you want to go look at that data on your own, you can do so.

Alexa ([11:54](#)):

Okay. So, we wanted to start this episode talking about the formal way that crime is counted in the U S so each year the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) compiles crime data that is crimes reported to the police across 17,000 jurisdictions in the country. So, if you remember from our last episode, we talked about how less than 40% of all sex crimes are actually reported to law enforcement. A significant number of sex crimes are already not counted or recorded in official numbers. This is compounded by definitional issues. So, words and how they are defined are really important to us as researchers. And the UCR is a great example of how and why definitions are so important. The UCR counts eight main crimes of which forcible rape is one. The current definition of forcible rape is "the penetration no matter how slight of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral presentation by sex organ of another person without the consent of the victim". So, prior to 2013 the definition that the UCR used a forcible rape was "the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will". So that's always sort of an interesting exercise in my class that I do. I put both definitions on the board and I asked my students when they think the definition changed and most of them are floored to hear that the new definition was not implemented until 2013.

Alissa ([13:19](#)):

Absolutely. And it makes me think when I talk to my students about this, even how we define forcibly, what does that mean? Right?

Alexa ([13:31](#)):

It's very general.

Alissa ([13:33](#)):

As you can imagine, the number of forcible rapes that were counted in the UCR and the uniform crime report in 2012 versus what was counted in 2014 is going to look very different and it doesn't mean that there were any fewer rapes one year versus the next. It's that the definition, the way that we counted it changed.

Alexa ([14:01](#)):

Keep in mind that the UCR excludes sexual assault, so in other words, sexual assault, which really includes a range of victimizations and is separate from rape or attempted rape is not counted by this data source. Sexual assault includes things like attacks or threatened attacks involving unwanted sexual contact between victim and offender with or without force grabbing or fondling and verbal threats. None of this is included in the most widely referenced source of crime statistics.

Alissa ([14:33](#)):

Yeah. So, let's unpack that a little, right? The fact that most sex crimes are not rape, and yet really the only formal law enforcement data, at least when we're talking about these eight index offenses doesn't include the vast majority of sexual harm that occurs in this country.

Alexa:

And I think that that's something we take for granted as criminologists. We live with those limitations of the data, but I always forget that most people don't realize that that's missing from the data that we have. And it's really when we get into these more detailed numbers, quite shocking.

Alissa:

Yeah. And I think it's also important to remember that forcible rape is horrifying. But there are lots of other forms of sexual harm that may not, that we don't think of as horrifying, but as actually quite harmful. And I think most of us, myself included, I think about myself as a survivor because of this specific rape that happened. But it's not the only time that somebody inappropriately grabbed me on a subway or touched me at appropriately in a dance club or right. That kind of stuff happens all of the time.

Alexa ([15:52](#)):

Or speaks inappropriately in the workplace, says things that are overly sexual. So, there's a lot happening that we're not fully capturing. Right? Despite these issues, though, the UCR is considered one of the best sources of official crime statistics, but again, these are crimes that are reported to law enforcement. So, the most significant weakness of this source is under reporting. According to the 2018 UCR data, a forcible rape occurs every 3.8 minutes in the United States. Let's be clear, that means a forcible rape that is formally reported occurs every 3.8 minutes. This does not include other forms of sexual harm that are

also happening. Just as a point of clarity, there were 139,380 forcible rapes reported to law enforcement in 2018.

Alissa (16:48):

One of the biggest problems with the UCR, and one of the things that I love talking about is the “dark figure of crime”. That sounds...

Alexa (16:57):

We don't mean Batman.

Alissa (16:59):

It sounds very Batman.

Alexa (17:01)

I always feel cool when I talk about it too.

Alissa ([17:12](#)):

So, the “dark figure of crime” is all of the crime that happens that law enforcement never knows about.

One way researchers account for this dark figure of crime is through self-report surveys. The most well-known and comprehensive self-report survey is the National Crime Victimization Survey or the NCVS. The NCVS is a household survey of randomly selected households. One person from each household is asked about the victimization experiences of all members of the household who are over the age of 12. So, think about that for a moment. What we talked about in the first episode, all be at briefly was that typically if a child is being abused, the person who is abusing them is somebody that they know, oftentimes somebody in their home, and in many cases the head of household. In addition, the NCVS doesn't ask about victimizations against children under the age of 12. So already any child who is being sexually abused in their home is not going to be picked up in NCVS statistics. But if that child is over 12 and is being abused by the head of the household, you think that person is going to say, “sure, yes, this child is being abused in my home”. It doesn't work that way. So, there are a lot of weaknesses to the NCVS and we will talk about them in a moment, but first we wanted to compare the 2018 UCR data, so that's the most recent UCR data that's fully available, with the 2018 NCVS data. So, remember according to the UCR, there were 139,384 forcible rapes that occurred in 2018. According to the NCVS, there were an estimated 734,630 rapes and sexual assaults.

Alexa ([19:02](#)):

And that is just mind blowing. That blows my mind even though I know those numbers and I would imagine that for our listeners, that is a really compelling statement and difference between the two.

Alissa ([19:15](#)):

Sure. Now keep in mind, as much as it boggles the mind, that 734,630 rapes and sexual assaults are estimated. When you're looking at the NCVS data, it's not just talking about forcible rapes, it's talking about rapes and sexual assaults.

Alexa ([19:32](#)):

Right? And so therein lies the rub. And the theme that we're getting at is the weaknesses and flaws and all of these datasets.

Alissa ([19:41](#)):

But the major benefit to the NCVS is that it counts a lot of what remains and reported. Again, that “dark figure of crime” and what falls outside the formal definition of forcible rape. But there are significant weaknesses too. For instance, some people don't recall the exact date of their victimization, so when they're asked about any abuse within the last year, they may misremember the date. They may think it happened more than a year ago. And so they say they haven't experienced victimization within the last year. They may not believe that what happened to them falls into the category of rape and sexual assault. Maybe they don't define their experience in the same way the NCVS does. Or in the way that the NCVs asks the question.

Alexa ([20:28](#)):

Absolutely. And also I think it's important here to remember that just because individuals might not remember exactly when their victimization took place, it doesn't negate that it happened. We know now from what we learned about trauma in the brain, that it's oftentimes very difficult to accurately remember traumatic experiences. So, it's not uncommon to misremember or not recollect the specifics of a very violent and traumatic event.

Alissa ([20:57](#)):

Yeah. You know, and we will spend an episode in a few weeks talking about the impact of sexual trauma on the brain and the way that it impacts the lives of people who experience it, including on memory. But just very briefly so, you sort of understand or we unpack a little bit more of what Alexa was saying, is that the way that trauma memories are coded in the brain is never in a linear fashion. So the way that I describe it both in my own experience and the way that I describe the research on it to my students is that if you took the pack of sticky notes and you wrote the story of your victimization on those sticky notes or on note cards, whatever, and then you threw them up in the air and tried to put them back together in a linear fashion, you'd never be able to do it. There may be pieces that stick out to you, moments that you remember, things on the periphery, things that you focused in on during your assault. But putting trauma memories back in a linear fashion is very, very difficult, including remembering dates and times and things like that. Right? And so that is one possible issue with NCVS data.

Alexa:

But as Alissa mentioned a little bit earlier, another major weakness is that the survey doesn't include the victimization of children. So, only persons again over the age of 12 are asked about their experiences with violent crime. Therefore, the NCVS is not a good measure of child sexual abuse. It also does not measure crimes against persons who are homeless or live in institutions or on military bases. So again, we're missing a big chunk of the population that would need to be asked these questions for us to get a more accurate count.

Alissa ([23:02](#)):

So, I think it's really important that we take you back again to the first episode of this podcast when we talked about why sexual abuse was going to increase during this COVID 19 pandemic.

If we think out to when the NCVS survey is done for the year 2020, all of the child sexual abuse that has happened while we have been under shelter in place is not going to be picked up in the largest self-report victimization survey in the country.

Alexa ([23:21](#)):

There's something really sad about that, that our most vulnerable don't have a voice in this victimization survey. And there are ways to get at child sexual abuse rates, but they're always going to be woefully underestimated as well. Um, children just don't have the vocabulary, the opportunity, and so much more than adults have in reporting and they're also the most vulnerable.

Alissa ([23:52](#)):

And there are some data sources that look specifically at child abuse and neglect and maltreatment, and we will post some of that data for you, but it is important to think about, you know, the two surveys that we have now talked about, the major formal way that crime is reported and the National Crime Victimization Survey really don't get at the most vulnerable among us, but another important survey that helps us grasp the extent of sexual abuse crimes in the United States is the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. This is an ongoing nationally representative telephone survey of sexual violence, intimate partner violence and stalking among adult women and men in the United States. According to this survey, there are an estimated 1.5 million rape related physical assaults against women annually with one in five U S women reporting that they have been victims of a completed or attempted rape in their lifetime.

Alexa ([24:50](#)):

Think about that again, one in five U.S. women reporting that they have been victims of a completed or attempted rape in their lifetime reporting that they have been. So how many people do we know in our own lives that say, "I never told anybody". And the reasons for under reporting are extensive. They are extensive and I don't ever question somebody's decision not to report.

Alissa ([25:17](#)):

You know, this is such an intimate violation and we've talked about this before about the level of shame and embarrassment that comes from having your body violated in this way. But I also think that it's important that we recognize that one of the reasons why people don't report until many, many, many years later if they were, if they report at all, just because there all a lot of people who didn't realize, especially if they were victimized as children, they didn't even realize that what happened to them was wrong because of the way that the person who harmed them groomed them into this behavior. And we will spend plenty of time on this podcast talking about what grooming behavior is, but essentially for a lot of young children who experienced child sexual abuse, it doesn't look violent. It doesn't look painful. It is - it comes across as a very loving relationship. This is somebody that you trust.

And so, it sometimes takes people 10, 15, 20 years to realize that what happened to them was actually abuse in the first place. Additionally, oftentimes people who have been sexually harmed believed that the police will not be able to do much about stopping the person who harmed them or they're distrustful of the police. So, this statistic always stands out to me. According to the Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network, out of every 100 rapes committed, 40% are reported to the police, 10 lead to an arrest, 8 people are prosecuted, 4 lead to a felony conviction, and 3 people are incarcerated. So, in

other words, 97 of those original rapes, the person who committed that walks free. Now we can have an entire episode on our thoughts about this particular statistic and our thoughts about what it means to go to prison and whether or not that's the right thing. We will talk about that at length. But it's important to recognize that for every hundred rapes committed, only three people will serve time for it.

Alexa ([27:45](#)):

Staggering really when you look at it from that perspective. But other reasons for under reporting are that the victim fears, their own criminal behavior will be exposed. So if someone was using drugs or, um, is engaging in sex work, they're concerned that essentially they'll be blamed for what happened to them or the offense against them will be ignored entirely and the focus of their criminal behavior will be what law enforcement is really looking at.

Alissa ([28:13](#)):

You know what - I don't even - you're right, you're absolutely right. People are afraid of their own criminal behavior will be exposed, but I don't necessarily think it's just criminal behavior. I mean, we talked about in my own experience or the fact that I had lied to my parents was enough to keep me quiet. The fact that I had walked with somebody that I didn't know in a dark place at night was enough to keep me silent. But the number of survivors that I work with who say very similar things like, well, I, I let my guard down, I didn't do enough to protect myself. All of that's going to come up if I come forward. Right. And it does...

Alexa ([28:55](#)):

100% it does, and so like these concerns that are attributed reasons for people not reporting, they're valid, that's not made up in the mind of the survivor. These things are things that actually happen. Also, kind of in line with what you were saying, Alissa, is that sometimes the victim fears their reputation will be damaged or that they'll be embarrassed. And that's also important to consider as well. Sometimes victims are fearful that the offender will retaliate against them in some way and of course that can be the case. I think it's also important to consider the flip side in that sometimes the offender is someone the victim actually loves and cares about or as a member of their family and they know that reporting will tear their family apart. I've heard from victims that I've worked with that they did not want that to happen to their family. They didn't want to be responsible for destroying their family unit.

Alissa ([29:55](#)):

And oftentimes, especially in these cases where the person who was harmed knows the person who harmed them, it's a member of their family or a close family friend. That person will tell them: "This is going to tear the family apart. You don't want to be responsible for that. No one's going to believe you anyway". Right? So, those thoughts, even though culturally speaking, they happen, we know that they happen and we internalize that when we are considering whether or not we're going to come forward. People who harm other people sexually often say those very things to keep the person who is being harmed silent.

Alexa ([30:33](#)):

Absolutely. And so, when we explore grooming a bit more, I'm sure we'll talk a bit about that as well because that can be a tactic used to maintain that abusive relationship. And the last reason we'll talk

about here for under-reporting is that the victim fears that no one will believe them or that they'll be blamed. And I would say that's probably the most cited reason for under reporting or for not reporting. And we see it all the time. We really engage in it all the time. And it's so sad that this is still the case, but this is very much still the case in the U S.

Alissa (31:12):

If you could see me, I am sitting here just shaking my head. Yes, yes, yes. We hear this all the time. I hear this from my students in classes. I hear this from just speaking about like rape myths generally, right? Blaming the victim. I hear it when I talk about my own experience where people say things that are very victim blaming and you see it in the media all time...

Alexa (31:41):

...all the time. It's really heartbreaking and it's not as outright as you might think. It's not always somebody saying, "well, her skirt was too short". It can be much more subtle than that. I mean, you can even be in having a conversation with a friend and sharing your story and them saying, in a very sympathetic way in their mind probably, "But why did you do that"? "Why did you go out with that person"? And they're saying it not in a way to be hurtful, but that is very much a victim blaming attitude and it's so ingrained in all of us. It will take a lot of work to get away from that.

Alissa (32:17):

Sure. As I sit here still shaking my head. Yes. We have talked about some large-scale studies on sexual violence. One thing that remains pretty clear is that even as we speak, you can see that we are talking almost exclusively about acts of sexual violence committed by adult men on adult women. There's been very little conversation about crimes committed by women against men about child sexual abuse, about sex crimes perpetrated by children, the sexual victimization of LGBTQ people, the experiences of people who are homeless or incarcerated or the victimization patterns against racial and ethnic minorities, including undocumented people. Much of that is not captured in the kinds of data that we talked to you about today. It's not that those data sources don't exist because some of them do. They just don't exist on this large scale the way that the UCR and the NCVS do.

Alissa (33:23):

We could talk for hours about all of this data. And that's actually something that I really liked to do. Um, and, but really the point of this episode was just to give you a taste of the multiple forms of data we look at to fully understand the extent of the problem of sexual abuse in this country, but that data is problematic in two ways. Really. First, it's problematic because the rates of sexual violence that we know about are incredibly high, but it's also problematic because we cannot look to any single data source that will give us a completely accurate snapshot of sexual violence in all of its forms in the United States. But here's what we can tell you. No matter what source of data you look at, rest assured that the actual rate of sexual abuse and victimization in this country is significantly higher. We will never know the full extensive sexual abuse and misconduct that occurs in this country.

Alexa (34:24):

And so there is a little bit more information that we do know. So, we know that women and girls are far more likely to be victims of a sexual offense. And the best estimate we have is that 1 in 4 or 1 in 5

women will experience a sexual victimization in their lifetime. That is a crazy number. It's a hugely impactful: 1 in 4 or 1 in 5 women will experience a sexual victimization in their lifetime. This estimate is actually higher in communities of color and among native people. It is estimated that one in two native women have experienced some form of sexual abuse. According to the CDC, the data shows that about 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 13 boys experienced child sexual abuse at some point in their childhood.

Alissa ([35:12](#)):

So, as you can see, men can and do experience sexual victimization at the hands of women and of men. This is something that doesn't get enough attention. We don't talk about it enough at all. No, but if you think that women under report, you'd be surprised at how pervasive the under-reporting problem is for male survivors for so many reasons. And later on in the podcast, we will actually talk to men who have experienced sexual harm, but it is currently estimated that one in six men have experienced sexual abuse of some kind. So, listen to those numbers again, one in four or one in five women and one in six men have experienced sexual abuse of some kind. And finally, almost half of transgender people or gender nonconforming people will experience sexual assault in their lifetime.

Alexa ([36:12](#)):

It still blows my mind hearing those numbers every time, and I hope it never stops having that impact on me because we can't just settle for that number. You know, we have to do something about changing that. And I agree with Alissa, I think there's a lot more shame and stigma around men coming forward with their stories of sexual victimization for a lot of different reasons. And I do think it's much more pervasive than the numbers suggest.

Alissa ([36:42](#)):

Absolutely. And again, in order to actually do something, we have to know what it is that we have to do. Right? That's why we collect data. That is why we have these large data sources that are complimented by smaller studies that people like you and me conduct because in order to answer the questions about whether our prevention efforts are working to answer questions about whether or not trends in sexual violence are changing over time, we have to have accurate data.

Alexa ([37:15](#)):

Also, we need to know why men specifically are not coming forward as frequently we can, like you said, Alissa, there are smaller studies that suggest certain trends, but in order to prevent the sexual abuse from happening, to offer services to survivors and perpetrators, we have to understand what is happening exactly, so it's definitional as well.

The good news is that despite alarmingly high rates of sexual abuse in the U S these numbers, or at least those that are captured in research, suggest that rates of abuse have been declining since the early 1990s across multiple sources of data, including formal reports and self-reports and across large and small scale studies we see these declines. Even one instance of sexual abuse is too many, but we have confidence that the decline we have seen in sex crimes and in crime in general is real. The causes of this decline is a different story and one we'll probably tackle in future episodes of this podcast, but for now, I am Dr. Alexa Sardina...

Alissa ([38:25](#)):

...and I am Dr. Alissa Ackerman. Thank you for journeying with us Beyond Fear.

Alissa ([38:47](#)):

Thank you for listening to Beyond Fear: The Sex Crimes Podcast. Please join us next time and hear our interview with Dr. Karen Terry, a professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City. She joins us to talk about sexual abuse of minors in the Catholic church. Remember, you can find our episodes on Spotify, iTunes, Google podcasts, other podcasting platforms, and on our website, www.beyondfearpodcast.com along with episode transcripts. Follow us on Twitter @fear crimes, Instagram @beyondfearpodcast and like and follow our Facebook group called Beyond Fear: The Sex Crimes Podcast. We would like to thank Christopher Antico, our sound editor, and Danielle Keys for our podcast artwork.

Alexa (39:38):

We out

Alissa (39:40):

We out.