

Transcript of KMYR series on The Public Affair: "The Rapist"
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This radio program is a five-part series by Michael Blake, dealing with the person who rapes and the method in which society deals with them. Interviews with psychiatrists, rehabilitation personnel, and a man convicted of rape.

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MICHAEL BLAKE: Rape. It's always been a super-charged word and the emotions it stirs today have never been greater. Women have mobilized our attention. Women are reporting rape now. They're instructing themselves on defense. They're maintaining liaisons with the people that catch rapists. So, we're all aware of rape in 1974 like we've never been before. But what do we know about the rapist? What makes a man commit society's most startling crime? And what kind of man is he? There are no pat answers, but we are going to find some things out. Starting with this man:

CRIS KEY: In my own mind, I always feel that the rapist is somehow mentally ill. In the sense that the person that can get off sexually on forcing another person to get it on with them has got a mental problem. Uh, I don't want to characterize it really any further than the fact that they have a mental problem or they are mentally ill in some way.

BLAKE: That's just an opinion and it comes from Cris Key. He's a public defender and, among others, he has defended a rapist. The cases are wrenching for all concerned. Because no matter what we would like to believe, rape is rarely a clear-cut crime. It's not a clear-cut crime when we think with our guts. But in a court of law events, evidence, and testimony is rarely black and white.

KEY: There's a whole spectrum which rose from the false report of rape. You know, even saying that you're going to alienate some women, but I happen to know as a matter of fact. I know of certain cases where it's been proven that the charge was false. Um, I think you have to recognize that there will be some cases in which a woman reports she was raped and there was no rape at all. And you start with that on one end of the spectrum, you go through a gray area. Um, and as you are moving along there, you also run into the false charge area that I have seen the cases where there is intercourse, often it will be a younger woman – 17, 16 – uh, and she's with her boyfriend or a boy she knows pretty well. And there is intercourse and she'll say, "He raped me", because then she didn't do anything morally wrong. Her parents can't be mad at her. Um, then you move into areas where – the true sort of gray area, where maybe the defendant didn't realize that the woman did not want to have intercourse. And maybe she really didn't, but sort of went along – maybe she was afraid and he didn't know she was afraid. And then you move up to these cases where women are brutally beaten and it's obvious that they didn't want to engage in intercourse. And, uh, it's hard for anyone to claim there's a misunderstanding.

BLAKE: Defenses are delicate and our legal procedures and mores often tend to favor the rapist. His victim is automatically tarnished in some cases, by of all people, the jurors. Cris Key says that ironically the presence of women on the jury oftentimes works for the rapist. If the victim is unmarked, if she seems to have made a decent recovery with no sign of physical injury or mental damage, prosecution can be very tough. How does Cris Key feel about defending?

KEY: I don't like rape cases. I mean, I – I avoid them like the plague. I, I do everything I can to not get assigned a rape case. Most people it just really turns their stomach to think about rape. It's not nice and it's hard to really get in to being a defender of rapists. The other problem is that the way the law is now, a woman's prior sexual conduct, whether it's with the defendant or with anyone else, is admissible in the case. Uh, and it reflects upon the issue of consent, which is really the issue in a rape case. The law says her prior conduct is relevant. I would have a hard time, as an individual, bringing that up because I would feel it's unfair to the woman. It's sort of putting her on trial. Uh. It would give me a lot of

trouble. On the other hand, we have an advocacy system and each – any person charged with a crime is entitled to an advocate. And that designates somebody who looks at the case and, you know, maybe says the defendant is a bad person therefore I'm not going to defend them to the utmost of my abilities. It needs somebody who's really going to defend the guy to the utmost – to the extent of the law allows. And there's the dilemma.

BLAKE: If we were really honest with ourselves, just about everybody would like to see rapists put away, locked up, and kept out of sight. A great many would simply like to see rapists swing from a scaffold. Cris Key sees it differently.

KEY: What you're doing is sending a man with a sexual problem up to the penitentiary where, uh, if he's a great big guy he's going to be sodomizing the little guy. Or if he's a little guy, he's gonna be sodomized by the big guy. And maybe you take a guy who's a rapist, put him in prison, and maybe he'll come out, you know, forcing little boys into sodomy. And I think everybody involved should have a goal of trying to stop the rape of women. I think some people think the way to stop the rape of women is to lock the people up so they won't be in the streets. That's pretty short-sighted because they're going to get out of prison sooner or later. Whether its three years, or five years, they're going to be on the streets again. And they're most likely going to have the same problem that they had before they went to prison. And, like I've said before, they're likely to have that problem more severely than they had it when they did go to prison. Sending someone to prison is not going to make them more passive.

BLAKE: Cris Key, a public defender with a defense problem. He's not alone. On the program tomorrow, we get out of the courtroom and into a treatment program. We'll talk to Wally Crowe, a man who counsels and helps about one hundred sex offenders, among them convicted rapists. I'm Michael Blake for KMYR.

[6:59]

[pause]

WALLY CROWE: They have some very rigid moral ideas about cheating on their wives. They wouldn't go with a prostitute or commit adultery. But they seem to

have no qualms about, say interfering with little girls, which is a big moral contradiction.

BLAKE: The sexual standards that man was talking about belong to sex offenders. The man is Wally Crowe and he has a very unique job. He administers a program which counsels and guides more than one hundred sex offenders, among them convicted rapists now on parole. Wally Crowe believes that treatment is the answer, but providing treatment is difficult, especially in the beginning.

CROWE: It's very hard for any sex offender to admit that he's got a problem. And that is the first and biggest barrier to overcome. To get the sex offender to admit that he's got a problem and that he needs help. Now, uh, the difficulty from a treatment standpoint is when they are apprehended and hauled into jail are they saying, "Yeah, I need help" in the hope that the legal system will be more lenient on them or are they genuinely saying, "Yeah, I need help. I want help whether I go to jail or not."

BLAKE: [P.A.S.O. \[?\]](#) does lots of things for its people. Things most of us wouldn't think of doing for convicted sex offenders. Things like finding them jobs. But the heart of the program is therapy. Therapy for people who really need it.

CROWE: You cannot, uh, force therapy on anyone. They've got to want help, they've got to be motivated to [unintelligible]. Now this is the effectiveness of the group situation, where many sex offenders are inadequate personalities. That's a -- whatever that means, huh? But they're not able to relate too well on a one-to-one basis and when we start -- if I start talking about your masturbatory habits. They find it difficult at first. It's a cultural thing where we find it difficult to talk sex, sexual problems, sexual deviations and so forth. And so, many of them just cannot admit in a one-to-one situation that they've got a sexual problem, but get them into a group and, first of all, they feel accepted by the group. There's no one in there going to throw stones at them because they've all had their own sexual problems. And they hear other guys talking about probably worse things -- worse sexual deviations that they hadn't even thought of. This gives them a bit of confidence to start talking about their own problems and they get it out gradually

and they're still accepted. For many of them, this is the first time in their life that they've been accepted.

BLAKE: So P.A.S.O. provides therapy. Helping hands and so on. So what? What society in general wants to know is does the program work? Statistics tell us that treatment in conjunction with or without prison lowers the possibility of repeating crime greatly. But that child molester or rapist who was convicted and did time and is now eating lunch at the local beanery, riding the bus to the matinee, or shopping at Sears, what are his chances for a complete recovery?

CROWE: It can be done. And depending on his age. The older he gets, the more fixed he is in his ways, the more difficult it's going to be. And also depending on whether he's, uh, heterosexual or homosexual. Now, for some, the shock therapy of being arrested, being humiliated or being hauled into – thrown in jail, into court and all this is sufficient deterrent. They never do it again. But, uh, so that's the – exhibitionists, right across the nation, has the highest recidivism rates. And then the pedophiles, the child molesters – uh, pretty high. Uh, that's without treatment. Now, with treatment there's a dramatic reduction in the likelihood of repeating the crime. Rape – the aggressive types are the best to work with. Particularly if he's a situational-type rapist.

BLAKE: Wally Crowe is frank enough to say that just providing treatment does not produce a cure. The rapist today, even after undergoing treatment of all sorts, could be the rapist of tomorrow. For Wally Crowe, a man who maintains close ties with some of these men, has seen spectacular results.

CROWE: There are some that I've – oh, I have so many colloquialisms – I'd risk my life on them. I'd be prepared to bet that they'd never commit a sex crime again.

BLAKE: On the program tomorrow, we'll step closer to the rapist himself by talking with Dr. Richard Reyda, a psychiatrist who knows rapists as well as anyone. He's interviewed scores of them, in depth. I'm Michael Blake on KMYR.

[13:20]

[pause]

RICHARD REYDA: There's a strong desire on everybody's part to find the typical whatever-it-is. When, in fact, you study these people in depth, what you find out is there is no such thing as the typical rapist.

BLAKE: Richard Reyda is a psychiatrist. He has interviewed, in depth, many men who have raped. And though he says the typical rapist does not exist, Dr. Reyda has fashioned five basic working classifications. Here's the lineup: The Psychotic, very violent, very bizarre, very very dangerous. The Situational Reactionary, beset with bad breaks at home, on the job, financially, spiritually, usually not dangerous. The Masculine Identity Conflict Group, they're seeking power plays to reaffirm masculinity. Sometimes they're struggling with homosexual conflicts. Sometimes they're dangerous. Sadists, a very small group, who often end up finding partners of like mind. They can be dangerous. Finally, Sociopaths: as likely to stick up the local 7-Eleven as they are to rape. Impulsive and sometimes dangerous. But what about motivations for the people in these groups? Are rapists simply crazed perverts? Slobbering fiends looking for twisted, erotic kicks? Not according to Dr. Reyda.

REYDA: The sexual aspect of the rape is a very little part of what they talk about. It is all of the other things that are involved. The planning, the excitement of, uh, how you might say, the plot that leads up to the rape. What happens between the girl and the rapist prior to the actual rape. Uh, very often excitement about the, uh, either ripping the clothes off or making the girl take her clothes off – but not in the sense that suddenly it's exciting because there's gonna be a nude woman there now who's gonna be sexually exciting, but it's exciting to be in a position where you can make somebody take their clothes off. Which is an entirely different phenomena, in my opinion, than a purely sexual one.

BLAKE: If not sex, then what is the basic motivating impulse for the rapist?

REYDA: I believe, at this point in my understanding of the rapist, that the single most important feature which is of importance to the rapist, is control. That he is excited by the control that he feels he has in that situation. It is not as important to him whether or not that woman is going to be a good sexual object or sexual

partner, either one. But that he is able to decide when, how, under what circumstances, uh, and to what extent the sex will go on.

BLAKE: Dr. Reyda knows rapists like few other men. Based on that knowledge, should women resist?

REYDA: I asked rapists this in my last study. And I talked to some thirty to fifty men. And I asked them that very question and about half of them said to me, "Doc, if the woman would have resisted, I would have ran." But if you're asking me what advice I would give to a woman who is being raped on the basis of what I know about other rapists, since I've been here, I would say you're better off not resisting because the more you resist the more likely there are that they would become violent. I think that, uh, quite frankly, a woman when she's confronted in a rape situation, for lack of a better word, has to rely a great deal on her immediate sense of intuition about what's going on. Um, I think that-- when I've talked to victims of rape that some of them were able to sense immediately that the rapist was psychotic -- if you will, in their terms, "crazy" -- and that he was, therefore, potentially violent and that they needed to be very, very cautious about what they did. On the other hand, I know there are victims who will say that he seemed frightened, he seemed scared, he seemed to not know what he was doing. And in that situation, the woman at the first opportunity that she could escape or run or scream or yell, um, would have maybe been able to have made an escape. So, I think that the woman has to somewhat rely on her intuition to size up the situation. There's no, unfortunately, no spots like on the leopard that can tell you which one is gonna be violent and which one is not.

BLAKE: Richard Reyda's ongoing research has brought him closer than just about anyone to rapists. One would expect him to be sympathetic, to be understanding, to be a lobbyist for better treatment procedures. But when asked at the end of this interview if he had anything he would like to say, he said there was. This is it:

REYDA: Women should be very cautious about hitch-hiking, and if they do, about whom they get in the car with. This is a favorite mode of rapists to find potential victims of rape. Number two: women should be very cautious, obviously, about whom they leave a bar with or whom they leave a social event with, uh, if they

have, uh, never met the individual before. Finally, our society has changed and I think that it is important that women lock their doors at night, that they keep their windows shut, and that they not let anybody in whom they are not familiar with and whom they do not know.

BLAKE: Suffice it to say that beginning tomorrow we'll hear, in his own words, the testimony of a convicted rapist. I'm Michael Blake on KMYR.

[20:16]

[pause]

"TYRONE": All my life I never wanted to commit crimes, I mean as far as getting into trouble. I was just trying to do – like, I didn't have any juvenile– I didn't get into trouble – Well, I did a few things all kids do, you know. I'm not going to say I was an angel. I just never got caught with some of the [unintelligible].

BLAKE: We'll call that man "Tyrone". He has been convicted of attempted rape. Tyrone did rape a woman. His victim allowed him to plead guilty to a lesser charge in the hopes he could be treated in state mental facilities. Tyrone was treated there, but not before he'd served time in the penitentiary. For the next two days, we'll hear a capsule summary of Tyrone's experience with rape from his own lips. I should say before we begin that what you're going to hear is not typical. Every rapist is exceptional in his own way and this man, Tyrone, is exceptional in many ways. What sort of mental state was Tyrone in before he raped?

"TYRONE": It just started as a bunch of – [unintelligible] got bigger and bigger and bigger. A whole bunch of little things, you know, all the time. You never get a break. Every time you turn around something's in your face.

BLAKE: At the time, Tyrone will tell you that he didn't really know why he committed society's most outrageous crime. In hindsight, he gives this – not as an excuse, but as a reason:

"TYRONE": The reason that I did it was just to get back at everybody. I mean, I don't know, not everybody. I mean, my wife, particularly. Probably her, 'cause like

– the girls? I don't even remember their faces or anything because they don't – they didn't have faces. It was just an act against – it wasn't really an act against a woman, it was an act against all women that I had in my life that I hated. Like, my mother, she was drinking all the time, alcoholic. And my wife, and my mother-in-law – just women were just bringing me down all the time, you know? I knew the pressure that was on my head, I just didn't – I wasn't -- I didn't have it organized as to why I was making each move I was making. But I mean, the pressures on my head, I knew what they were. I mean fights with my wife and this and that—what am I gonna do?

BLAKE: But how does severe mental stress over a marriage or any other domestic problem actually lead to rape? To hear Tyrone tell it, it sounds like an accident.

“TYRONE”: Well what started it, I started walking at nights just to get out of the house because we were -- and as I was walking, I ran into a few chicks here and there. I even rapped with a few, you know, just rapping and talking. I don't know how my mind got off track to, uh, grab somebody. It just really freaked me out.

BLAKE: Tyrone said before that he didn't see the faces of his victims while he was raping. Well, what did he see?

“TYRONE”: Really, the thoughts of just before I got – I was just thinking about my wife, I guess. I was thinking about how everything – I mean, I was really low already. The bottom, I guess. And I was thinking how bad things were, too, and how, you know, well this right here too, would make her leave me and I could get somebody else.

BLAKE: Rape is a sex crime, but is that what Tyrone wanted?

“TYRONE”: Both times, the crime, I really couldn't – I couldn't really get into it. You know, that's what I really think helped me in my situation because like the victims, they told people, you know, that I couldn't even – well, like, one of the—the chick told -- you know how she told everybody that I was so nervous, I couldn't do anything, you know. I was just – I was the one that looked like I was being attacked, I guess. It's really – I don't know. I don't know what motivated me

to keep doing it because I knew I was so nervous I wouldn't get anything really accomplished. I guess I just – it sounded like I just wanted to get myself.

BLAKE: Once he was popped, it took Tyrone very little time to find out that rape does not claim a single victim. As far as he's concerned, the victimizing is mutual.

“TYRONE”: Nobody realizes that there's two victims. I found that out, because like guys I see up there. Okay, they did the crime too, but like, they get life or all these years and their family goes down the drain, and all of this. And they haven't gotten any help as far as rehabilitation. Up there you don't get help. So, I mean they're a victim just as much as the victim in the long run, as the victim was. I know that it's a violent crime that shouldn't be committed but, in the long run, I think the guy that did it becomes more of a victim. I mean, there's some times when a woman will go crazy and flip out, but most of the time they'll recover, you know? And most – hopefully they'll live a happy life and the incident will be forgotten. But then, this other guy, on the other hand, he's just going down the drain. And when he gets out, he's really even got it tougher the rest of his life because he has a record. He's done his time. He's paid -- What they say they send you to prison, you do your time -- you're supposed to pay for it. You know, they punished you, but you come out and you still [unintelligible]. So he's getting punish—He's a victim for the rest of his life.

BLAKE: On the program tomorrow Tyrone will talk about his own breakthroughs, among them, a chance meeting in a mental hospital that allowed him to see rape for the first time from a woman's point of view. I'm Michael Blake on KMYR.

[25:48]

“TYRONE”: The penitentiary part is scary. I mean, that's the negative point that maybe you're not committing crimes because you're scared to death of going back there. The other part is down there is learning to feel something for myself. That's the good part. That's the good part for me.

BLAKE: If you listened yesterday, you know that the man who just spoke is a convicted rapist. He thinks he's back to normal now and one of the big reasons is

a difference in his marriage. He was married before he got in trouble and today, he's still married to the same woman. But there have been some changes made.

“TYRONE”: I don't look at our situation anymore like I did before [unintelligible]. Now I just – I mean, we talk feelings for one thing. Feelings help a lot. We'd talk words a lot before but never – You know, like, if she felt something she wouldn't tell me. And I was the same, I wouldn't tell her. We wouldn't communicate at all. Now we talk. We talk feelings. If something's really wrong, we'll sit down and talk what's hurting, you know. Even if it hurts the other person, at least you get it out and you think about it, you talk about it. That's what's changed the marriage a hundred percent. Talking feelings. Doing little things for each other we didn't do before.

BLAKE: We've always heard a lot about the values of rehabilitation. But now, even today, nobody seems to know whether it works or not. Statistics tell us that it does. That the percentage of criminal repeaters drops dramatically with just about any kind of treatment. But controversy over treatment goes on. Treatment has worked for Tyrone. In fact, without it, he wouldn't have had much of a chance.

“TYRONE”: See, I had it in my head that when this came down everybody was just going to kick me in the butt and say well, he was just going to be trouble anyway and then all leave and I was gonna somehow come through this and be Mr. Mean and sitting back and keep on pushing by myself. And when a lot of people stopped and said they cared about me, I just freaked out. I didn't think anybody cared. That was one reason – nobody cares about me, you know? And then when people showed me that they cared. Well, when I started caring about myself is when things started changing because when I was up there in Santa Fe just was getting so bad. I mean people were on my [unintelligible]. And when I got down there and I got to where we were in like a therapy kind of community where everybody was -- there was no bars. There was no bars or anything. You know, you seem – just kinda free. And people started – we had long heavy groups and raps and just look at each other and people showed that they cared. Really cared and people got their feelings out and it just helped me a thousand percent.

BLAKE: It wasn't any kind of high-powered technical treatment that allowed Tyrone to turn the corner. It was a free atmosphere and people that turned the trick. In Las Vegas [New Mexico], Tyrone met two people who helped a lot. The three of them became friends, and they're friends today.

"TYRONE": I was in Las Vegas [New Mexico], I talked to two girls that had been raped and I told them – well, you know, I told them why I was there. We talked about it. And it just helped my insight so much because I didn't realize what some of the women do go through 'cause one had gotten pregnant by the guy and her kid, you know, is still alive and she goes sees him and she can't never touch him. He wants her to touch him and she won't. And I think, well that must be awful. That could be my kid. Talking to them just made me see, really, what the other side of the fence was too, you know? As far as the two girls involved, I could have really – I could have gotten crazy or anything, you know? I'm just so glad I didn't hurt anybody or, you know -- Well, I'm glad, for one, I didn't have any weapons or anything. It was just me.

BLAKE: Today Tyrone is free. He's on parole but he has a job, a home, with a wife and a son, and a friends who he goes to parties and movies with. He's looking forward to the future, even though it will never be the same and he knows it. But he's prepared for the future because he's changed. And in one sense, it's merely been a matter of growing up.

"TYRONE": I realized what I was doing to myself. I started thinking more about me; about what I could do for – Because before I didn't care about myself, I couldn't have cared about myself to be getting into trouble. I started thinking about things I really wanted to do that, uh, things I could do to save my marriage before it went down the drain and try. I figured I'd give it a try before I just threw it away. And just started working. And then a lot of good things started happening.

BLAKE: That concludes our series on the rapist. Summations and conclusions for such a program seem inappropriate because the field is huge and this program just scratched the surface. Even the experts duck conclusions when it comes to rape. Some things, though, have to be said. This series was not intended to glorify

or defend rapists. This man, Tyrone, is a sensitive man. A man who is already an asset to his community and will continue to be so. But Tyrone is not typical. Tyrone has been lucky. Public defender Cris Key is right when he says prison does not make a man more passive and that if you are going to send a rapist to prison, you'd better provide treatment as an opportunity if you're really interested in rehabilitation. And Dr. Richard Reyda is right, too. Our society has changed. Women should bolt their doors. They should learn to defend themselves. They shouldn't be expected to sympathize with a man who wants to hurt them for whatever reason. That's really what's at issue and what's wrong. Men wanting to hurt women. Women can defend themselves. Psychologists can gather statistics. And social reformers can run treatment centers. But the real changes have to come from the male. That's at the very heart of rape: men using women as targets. Targets for everything from masculine insecurity to financial worry to marital hassles. Rape is the violent extension of something all men do in varying degrees: use womankind as a target. And all the social reform in the world won't change that. Men have to change that. I'm Michael Blake on KMYR.

[32:24]

[end]