

AUTHOR ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT FOR PUBLICATION IN THE JOURNAL INTERNATIONAL
REVIEW OF VICTIMOLOGY

ACCEPTED ON THE 29.01.26

Barbin, A. (2026). Book review: Sexual Crime: Victims and Survivors. *International Review of Victimology*, 32(2), 497-499. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02697580261424262>

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Book review of Winder, B., Hocken, K., Lievesley, R., Harper, C., Blagden, N., Swaby, H., & Banyard, P. (Eds.). (2024). *Sexual Crime: Victims and Survivors*. Springer International Publishing. XXI, 269pp. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-46626-7>

Sexual Crime: Victims and Survivors brings together a broad range of contributions examining victimisation, survivor experiences, professional insights, and responses to sex offending across a variety of contexts. The volume reflects the editors' stated aim of foregrounding the experiences of victims and survivors, while drawing on interdisciplinary research and practice. Overall, the book is comprehensive, accessible, and academically rigorous.

A key strength of the volume is its commitment to centring marginalised and often overlooked victim groups from the get-go. The opening chapter on LGBT+ experiences of domestic and sexual abuse provides a well-evidenced overview of prevalence, implications, and barriers to reporting intimate partner violence for same-sex couples (Hine *et al.*, Chapter 1). I appreciate that the authors describe LGBT+ experiences not in comparison with opposite-sex relationships, but the dynamics are well-described within their own conceptualisation of risk and unique constraints (e.g., identity abuse, fear of outing, heterosexist language). Drawing on international data and minority stress theory (Meyer, 2003), the chapter demonstrates how structural stigma, heteronormativity, and institutional mistrust compound victimisation for survivors who do not fit the characteristics of the 'ideal heteronormative target'. Its discussion of identity-based abuse, such as threats of outing and exclusion from support services, is particularly valuable in the current climate of distrust of police work and establishes a strong conceptual foundation for the volume as a whole.

Other contributions build on Chapter 1 by continuing to examine less visible or normalised forms of sexual victimisation. These chapters, although presented much later in the collection, effectively explore several relevant concepts, including 1) restorative approaches for survivors volunteering in sex offender-

focused communities (Wilson & Hudson, Chapter 7), 2) the experiences of partners of individuals convicted of sexual offences navigating societal backlash and the ambiguity of their experiences (Wakeham *et al.*, Chapter 8), and 3) the intersection between manipulation and child sexual abuse in spiritual and religious contexts (Mulla & Chowdhury, Chapter 10). These chapters encapsulate the long-term consequences of sexual crime beyond primary victimisation and are particularly effective in challenging narrow definitions of victimhood and drawing attention to secondary and relational harms.

Chapters two (O'Doherty *et al.*) and six (Akerman *et al.*) uniquely refers to the concept of duality - identifying the contributions of survivors as researchers in the first; and exploring the viewpoints of abused victims turned into abusive perpetrators in the latter. Both these chapters stand out for their clarity and relevance. O'Doherty and colleagues (Chapter 2) offer a thoughtful account of participatory and co-produced research, illustrating how direct survivor involvement can improve ethical sensitivity, methodological robustness, and real-world impact. The chapter also complements broader debates about trauma-informed and survivor-led practice, reinforcing the importance of meaningful, rather than symbolic and inferred, involvement. Chapter 6 (Akerman *et al.*) provides interesting insights into the lived experiences of sexually abused victims who eventually become perpetrators of sexual violence. I appreciated the in-depth considerations of multi-factor variability in the increased likelihood of victim-victimiser crime commission, and the specificity the authors provided around diverse experiences and rationales. Most importantly, they were able to discuss this very sensitive topic without undermining subsequent victim experiences, nor minimising offending behaviours.

Several chapters successfully situate sexual victimisation within specific stand-alone institutional settings. The discussion of campus sexual abuse is particularly pertinent given the ongoing scrutiny of higher education institutions, and their often safeguarding responsibilities for both student victims and perpetrators (McCartan and Meyrick, Chapter 5). The application of a socio-ecological model usefully demonstrates how prevention and response must operate not in isolation, but systemically, by challenging individual, organisational, and cultural levels for more proactive change. Similarly, in Chapter 4, Widanaralalage focuses on the challenges and myths surrounding male victims of rape, offering an interesting discussion of prevalence, consequences, and social stigma. The chapter explains the limitations of feminist theory in studying, classifying, and understanding male rape; and does so without sounding patronising. I found these two chapters especially effective in bridging the gap between research evidence and implications for applied contexts, while being mindful of the impact of rape and sexual offences on victims.

Chapter 3, which addresses sexual abuse, safeguarding, and abuse prevention in sport, is perhaps the least aligned with the aim of the collection to foreground the views of victims and survivors (Mahoney *et al.*). Although the topic is undoubtedly important, the chapter devotes relatively limited attention to the *impact* of child sexual exploitation on victims, and does not report direct contributions from survivors that could have enriched the arguments presented. Instead, several sections focused on the perspective of coaches

who either perpetrated abuse or did not perpetrate abuse but feared their intentions being misunderstood. With most of the chapter focusing on describing that sexual abuse is widely downplayed in sport settings against children, the framing sits somewhat out of focus within a volume explicitly focused on victims and survivors' experiences. This emphasis may be confusing for readers and would have benefited from clearer justification and contextualisation. A stronger centring of victim impact, alongside a more explicit articulation of the chapter's aims, would have improved its coherence and alignment with the book's overarching themes.

The chapters do not appear to be presented in a logical order or categorised according to the focus or implications. As a result, the book feels more like a collection of stand-alone contributions than a cohesive narrative. There is also some repetition of data and illustrative examples across chapters, which could have been mitigated through clearer cross-referencing or editorial signposting. For instance, although very interesting, similar prevalence data concerning male victims of rape and sex offences appears in multiple chapters, and the same references to child sexual exploitation in elite sport, including cases involving gymnasts, recur in more than one section. While such overlap is not uncommon in edited collections, greater integration and signposting throughout the document, or a comprehensive overarching discussion would have significantly strengthened the cumulative impact of the volume. Despite these practical shortcomings, *Sexual Crime: Victims and Survivors* includes some high-quality contributions across chapters, providing a breadth of topics that foreground survivors' and perpetrators' experiences across diverse contexts. In light of the variety presented, the volume might be relevant for a diverse audience ranging from students to researchers and practitioners, as well as experts involved in policy and service provision. Although conceptual coherence could have been improved, the collection nevertheless stands as a valuable and timely resource in the evolving field of sexual crime research.

References

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