Rape & alcohol in the Night-time Economy in Liverpool UK

Prevention, Perception and Practice
25 females & 4 males alleging some form of drink spiking

46% of the 63 clients seen alleged spiking of their drink.

Toxicology could only be tested in some of these clients as some were self referrals, for whom no samples would be processed unless they gave permission for police investigation.

In accordance with most published studies, a high level of alcohol was the most significant finding
Perception of Level of Intoxication

- ‘I had a few drinks but wasn’t drunk’
- ‘Pre drinks then normal drinking’ – preloading of alcohol
- ‘I must have been spiked because I can normally drink loads more’
- ‘I always drink that on a night out but it doesn’t make me feel that way’
- Minimisation of level of drinking prior to assault
- Culture of cheap drinks 2 for 1, especially students, freshers’ fairs, promotion of drinking culture
9 toxicology reports for the period

7 positive for high levels of alcohol

1 positive for high levels of THC (Cannabis)

1 positive for high levels of mirtazapine (Prescribed)

So all 9 reports positive but drugs all taken by choice

Also found: Ketamine, cocaine, thc, citalopram, quinine, mephedrone, norketamine, propranolol, fluoxetine, ibuprofen, paracetemol,
DFSA – what is it?

- In drug facilitated sexual assault, the inability to consent is due to incapacity or unconsciousness due to an intoxicating substance: drugs and/or alcohol

- Proactive v Opportunistic perpetrator; involuntary or voluntary ingestion of drugs/alcohol; drug may be an incapacitating or disinhibiting substance. Operation Matisse 2006

- Alcohol involved in adult sexual assault: 67% UK, 77% Australia, 63% USA, 43% Sweden, 78% N Ireland, 50% Eire

- Capacity to consent is time and issue specific

- “Drunken consent” – what does it mean?
Potential DFSA drugs

- Ketamine: anaesthetic & CNS depressant ➔ slurred speech, incoordination, euphoria, hallucinations; powder, tablets or capsules; oral, IV, snorted or smoked; effect 20 mins ➔ 3 hrs; IV more rapid; detected up to 3 days in urine.

- Gammahydroxybutyrate (GHB): sedative anaesthetic, euphoria, said to increase sexual feeling, narrow margin between intoxication & coma; colourless liquid or powder; effect 10 mins ➔ 24 hrs; out of blood in 6 hrs, out of urine 12 hrs.

- Benzodiazepines: sedative ➔ loss of coordination, dizziness; tablet or IV; onset within 30 mins; detected 2-4 days in urine.
Toxicology...

- According to scientists, the results of these levels of intoxication for our clients went from


- To

- “General inertia, approaching loss of motor functions. Markedly decreased response to stimuli. Marked muscular incoordination, inability to stand or walk. Vomiting, incontinence of urine and faeces. Impaired consciousness/ sleep”
Perception of risk

- Perception: processing of sensory information in order to understand the environment.
- Not a passive reception of sensory signals but shaped by learning, memory, expectation and attention.
- Processing of information is mainly outside conscious awareness.
- Risk perceptions are influenced by the emotional state of the perceiver: positive emotions $\rightarrow$ optimistic risk perception.
- Influence of drugs/alcohol/adrenalin on perception & decision making.
Targeting of the Vulnerable

- Crime of opportunity
- The offender sees a victim who is extremely intoxicated
- Alone, unlikely to be able to put up much of a fight or make too much fuss,
- Nobody around, no witnesses, no homes, no cars, no CCTV
- He (because 99% are male) is already a sex offender and thinks why not
- Or has been building up to this with precursory offences and decides this is the time
- Or this is first offence...
Targeting of the vulnerable

- Predators go into jobs/professions whereby they have access to vulnerable victims for ease of targeting and access (such as youth leaders, sports coaches, priests)

- So if we think of taxi drivers...

- Where else can you find semi conscious victims who are usually
  1. alone in out of the way areas
  2. unlikely to remember details
  3. not likely to be watched, nobody looking out for them
  4. not likely to report due to shame and blaming themselves?

*AND will willingly come with you?...*
Taxi Driver Sexual Assault

- Perception of taxis as safe way to get home
- Perceived to be safer than bus or train
- However, when disinhibited, not looking if taxi is licensed
- Targeting the vulnerable
- 5 cases in the period under review
- All were ‘real’ taxi drivers in licensed vehicles (mix of hackney cabs & private hire)
A report produced by the London Metropolitan Police Service estimates that on average there are a total of 1,125 sexual assaults, (including rapes) each year involving taxi drivers in just London; this works out to approximately 22 sexual assaults against women by taxi drivers each week in England's capital city alone.

According to the report entitled, "Ending Violence against Women and Girls in the UK," published by the Home Office in March 2013, only around one in ten women who experience serious sexual assault report it to the police. As a result, one can infer that the actual number of taxi rapes across Britain as a whole is far greater than many are willing to admit.

There is no mention of men and boys who we know are victims too.
Just a few...
Taxi Driver Perpetrators

- Rapist taxi driver Terence Collins. The judge said Terence Collins would remain a danger while he was still sexually active. The jury heard one of the rapes involved a 14-year-old girl he followed home before forcing her into his taxi.

- Rezgar Zengana brutally raped a 25-year-old woman on a night out in the city centre

- John Worboys is a convicted British serial rapist, known as the Black Cab Rapist. He was convicted in March 2009 for attacks on 12 women. Police believe that he may have had more than one hundred victims, possibly being Britain's most prolific sex attacker

- Abul Malik, 29, stood with his head bowed in the dock at Lewes Crown Court as the jury returned a guilty verdict after deliberating for less than an hour.
Preventative work

- Outreach by crisis workers into pubs and clubs, on the gay scene, with sex workers, into colleges
- Information packs with SARC details
- Presence at Freshers’ fairs during first week of University life
- Talks at University & colleges to potential victims and potential perpetrators
- Lots of community engagement events to talk about rape
- Involvement of our Centre Manager, Shelly Stoops, in the training of Club security staff
If a large group around a lone female/male: disperse & keep vulnerable person safe, look for their mates

If no mates, put in taxi – keep details of Badge & Registration number and make driver aware details recorded

Look for vulnerable people outside club who are very drunk and safeguard in same way

If rape or sexual assault alleged, don’t offer a drink, tamper with clothes, allow to wash etc. Call police, if consent given, or Safe Place Merseyside for advice – both 24/7 service
Pub & Club Door Staff Training

- Keep CCTV and any other evidence
- Keep bottle/drink if spiking alleged
- Oral, anal and vaginal rape all crimes punishable by maximum of life in prison as is assault by penetration (by anything other than penis)
- Groping, unwanted sexual touching also serious crime
- Think about calling police to detain alleged perpetrator
- Citizens arrest?
Conclusions

- Social Media Campaigns - but not victim blaming
- Promote use of licenced taxis - warn of bogus drivers
- Work with the universities to promote safer drinking habits during fresher's week
- Continue working with licensing authority and delivering training to door staff: training developed for the licensing authority and is now mandatory for those wishing to be licensed door staff in Liverpool
- Work with licensing authority around issue of taxi driver rapes
- Utilise media for successful prosecutions
References


2. Toxicological findings of cases of alleged drug-facilitated sexual assault in the UK over a 3 year period. M Scott-Ham & FC Burton J of Forensic & Legal Medicine 12 (2005) 175-186


Photo- Liverpool Echo 2015
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