

## Male rape victims would be harmed by ‘conversion therapy’ ban

Dr. Carys Moseley, Public Policy Researcher  
First Published by Christian Concern: January 14th, 2020

*Carys Moseley comments on how banning conversion therapy would hinder the recovery of male rape victims, such as those of the recently jailed Reynhard Sinaga, who was jailed for life for raping up to 195 men.*

Last Monday, a PhD student from Indonesia living in Manchester was jailed for life<sup>1</sup> for 159 sexual offences, including 136 rapes of men, in Manchester Crown Court. The police identified 48 victims but have been appealing for the many more they have hitherto failed to track down. The police have told the press that they believe he may have targeted up to 195 men. The Crown Prosecution Service told the BBC that he is the ‘most prolific’ rapist ever in recorded legal history in the UK, if not the entire world, leading to the largest rape inquiry in British history.

### Clubbers targeted with ‘chemsex’ drug

Sinaga lived in a flat near Manchester’s Gay Village, where he had often socialised himself given that he was openly gay. Since his residence was also near many other nightclubs, he was in a suitable location to carry out deliberate targeting of victims – something police believe may go back 10 years. He used to watch for young men leaving bars and clubs to lure them to his flat, all the while offering them help to sit down and have a drink.

Detectives inferred from available evidence that once back in his flat he would spike their drinks with GHB<sup>2</sup>, an illegal Class C drug widely used in the gay scene. The victims became unconscious as a result and therefore mostly had no memory of being attacked. However, evidence of Sinaga’s crimes came to light when one victim recovered consciousness whilst being raped and hit back at him. Initially, he was arrested for assault and Sinaga played the victim, having been sent to hospital for his wounds. However, the victim had taken Sinaga’s mobile phone, which turned out to have videos of his crimes. On this basis he was arrested.

### The ‘Fifty Shades of Grey’ defence yet again

Sinaga lied to the court using the ‘Fifty Shades of Grey Defence’<sup>3</sup>, claiming his victims consented to gay sex with him and that they

had homosexual fantasies (which they did not), as well as supposedly having consented to ‘playing dead’ whilst he sodomised them. Fortunately, the judge and the jury saw through this as ludicrous.

### Rapist boasted about turning straight men gay

Most of the press reported on Monday that 48 victims were known, the vast majority of whom – 45 of them – are heterosexual. He is quoted as saying<sup>4</sup>:

*“I didn’t get my new year kiss, but I’ve had my first sex in 2015 already... [the victim was] straight in 2014. 2015 is his breakthrough to the gay world hahaha”.*

He also seems to have taken pride in deliberately setting out to ruin these men’s relationships with women, as per this statement of his to his friends on WhatsApp<sup>5</sup> in 2015:

*“SuperRey saves straight boys from their monstrous girlfriend.”*

The spokesman for the Crown Prosecution Service in the North West told the BBC that he thought Sinaga took “a particular pleasure in preying on heterosexual men”<sup>6</sup>.

### Media silence on effects of male rape

Many of the problems faced by male rape victims have been covered in the press this week, in particular due to concern that victims can be very reluctant to come forward. Not only does this hinder them from getting help, it also makes arrest and prosecution of offenders less likely. However, there is one important effect of the rape of adult males by men which has been overlooked.

Nobody has said anything about the fact of unwanted same-sex attraction among some adult male victims of male rape. This is very important because historic research literature going back decades shows that victims are at risk of experiencing confusion in sexual orientation. For example this dissertation from the University of Central Lancashire in 2004<sup>7</sup> found that 70% of male rape victims surveyed experienced ‘a long term crisis over sexual

identity' (Table 3.5, page 107). Furthermore, it was found that over one third (35%) of its sample of male rape victims had experienced problems with sexual orientation as a result (Appendix 4E, page 254). In nearly all cases, victims said they suffered confusion over their sexual preference (page 108). It also documents previous research from 1980 onwards (page 5) showing that most victims have been heterosexual. Some victims were said to have started homosexual behaviour as an undesired reaction to being raped. For example, this chilling case quoted in the dissertation from the University of Central Lancashire quotes a victim interviewed in a previous study saying this:

*“Since the assault I have trouble relating sexually to my wife. I have found myself in homosexual relationships which disgust me afterwards ... it is almost as if I am punishing myself for letting the assault happen in the first place.”* (page 45)

Another PhD dissertation from Middlesex University<sup>8</sup> in 2002 had also cited evidence by Survivors UK, a charity that helps male rape victims, busting the myth that victims were all homosexual. Today that organisation is silent on the issues.

What has happened in the last 15 years is that one-sided uncritical normalisation of homosexuality has taken over social research. The result is lack of further research on how rape of adult men by men can push them into homosexuality, and the resultant silence from the counselling profession and organisations helping victims. The fact that most victims were heterosexual with many now experiencing homosexual attraction would have been an inconvenient truth for some gay activists. Exactly how this situation arose needs to be investigated thoroughly as it has real-world implications.

### **‘Conversion therapy’ ban doesn’t help male rape victims**

There is a great deal of research literature arguing that there is a stigma to men admitting to being victims that is due to homophobia, i.e. fear of being perceived to be gay if they admit to being rape victims. As the term homophobia is a loaded word this kind of claim needs to be approached with caution. For the claim could be taken to mean that acceptance of homosexuality would make it easier for victims to come forward. In reality, what is needed is a climate where it is acceptable for victims to tell

those professionals helping them that the same-sex attraction they experience as a result of being raped is unwanted. On this basis, victims need to be free to ask for counselling that helps them diminish this unwanted same-sex attraction<sup>9</sup> and any ensuing homosexual behaviour. However, this is no longer possible.

The reason for this is a professional ban on any counselling or therapy which helps clients diminish same-sex attraction. Under the Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy in the UK, there is no help allowed for heterosexual male rape victims experiencing unwanted same-sex attraction. They are condemned to living with this for the rest of their lives.

### **Church of England bishops should end support for therapy ban**

The rapist had previously some years back attended a liberal Anglican church in the Diocese of Manchester, which had provided the court with a character reference about him. The Bishop of Manchester has been a vocal supporter of a criminal ban on ‘conversion therapy’ in the UK. He sits on the board of the Ozanne Foundation and was one of the bishops who called for an inquiry into ‘conversion therapy’<sup>10</sup>.

Now would be the right time for the Bishop of Manchester, along with all his fellow bishops, to reconsider this deeply misguided approach.

### **Government should end goal of ‘ending conversion therapy’**

Just this week, the minutes of the last meeting of the government’s LGBT Advisory Panel<sup>11</sup> in July were published, in response to a Freedom of Information request to the Government Equalities Office (GEO). It contained the following statement:

*“GEO informed the Panel that the focus of the LGBT Policy Unit would be shifting toward the safety commitments of the LGBT Action Plan, noting that many of these commitments were complex and would require significant work, time and resources to achieve.”*

The proposed ending of ‘conversion therapy’ in the UK comes under ‘the safety commitments’ of the Plan. How ironic this now looks.

The writing should be on the wall by now as far as the 'conversion therapy' ban is concerned. It simply has no integrity whatsoever and is likely to be perpetuating profound distress among rape victims. As part of its much-touted

reform of the civil service, the government should now put an end to the LGBT Action Plan goal of 'ending conversion therapy in the UK'. Anything else would allow rapists to win.

- 
- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50987823>
  - <sup>2</sup> <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/online-sellers-flog-date-rape-21235236>
  - <sup>3</sup> <https://christianconcern.com/comment/violent-porn-now-a-political-issue/>
  - <sup>4</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50688975>
  - <sup>5</sup> <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10687737/reynhard-sinaga-rapist-whatsapp-messages/>
  - <sup>6</sup> <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-50987823>
  - <sup>7</sup> [http://clock.uclan.ac.uk/8726/1/Jayne Lizbeth Walker July04 a study of male rape survivors PhD in Philosophy unpublished July04 University of Central Lancashire unknown 283.pdf](http://clock.uclan.ac.uk/8726/1/Jayne%20Lizbeth%20Walker%20July04%20a%20study%20of%20male%20rape%20survivors%20PhD%20in%20Philosophy%20unpublished%20July04%20University%20of%20Central%20Lancashire%20unknown%20283.pdf)
  - <sup>8</sup> <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/17301260.pdf>
  - <sup>9</sup> <https://christianconcern.com/comment/ten-reasons-not-to-restrict-same-sex-attraction-therapy/>
  - <sup>10</sup> <https://archive.christianconcern.com/our-issues/church-and-state/bishops-launch-biased-inquiry-into-conversion-therapy>
  - <sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lgbt-advisory-panel-minutes-18-july-2019>