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THE SENATOR
GEORGE J. MITCHELL
INSTITUTE FOR GLOBAL PEACE,
SECURITY AND JUSTICE

Reforming Legal and Policy Responses to Investigating and Prosecuting Sexual Violence

19th and 20th June 2025

DAY ONE – 19th June

9:00 Registration (The Great Hall)

9:15– 9:30 Welcome (Dr Eithne Dowds, QUB)

9:30-11:00 Plenary

Chair: Dr Eithne Dowds, (QUB)

Senior Legal Figure, (Northern Ireland)

Professor Julia Quilter, (University of Wollongong Australia) - 50 Years of Progressive Law Reform and Rape Myths Are Still Everywhere in Criminal Trials: Why?

11:00-11:15 Break (The Great Hall)

11:15- 12:45 Parallel Session (x 3)

PANEL ONE - Defining Sexual Violence & Consent (The Great Hall) Chair: Dr Daniella Suarez Vargas, (QUB)

- **Mini Saxena, (SOAS London) - Conditional Consent to Sexual Relations**
- **Sorcha McCormack, (Leeds University) - Challenging the narrative: using insights from theories of vulnerability to suggest legislative reform to sexual offences.**

- **Delia Agostinelli**, (ESRI) - Defining Sexual Violence: Its Evolution Over Time and Effects on Measuring and Comparing Prevalence Rates

PANEL TWO - Perspectives of Victims and Jurors (Moot Court)

Chair: Dr Adeniyi Olayode, (QUB)

- **Kennath Widanaralalage**, (Kings College London) - ‘We don’t talk about that around here’: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of South Asian male survivors’ experiences of childhood sexual abuse in the UK
- **Siobhan Weare**, **Maddie Millar** (Lancaster University) and **Dominic Willmott** (Loughborough University) - ‘Jury Decision Making in Male Rape Trials’
- **Rosie Cowan**, (QUB) - Rape Trials: (Mock) Jurors’ Views Through a Gendered Lens

PANEL THREE – Young Persons and Sexual Violence (Edgar Graham Room) Chair: Dr Erika Jimenez, (QUB)

- **Franziska Schulmann**, (UCC) - Addressing Gender-Based and Sexual Violence Among Minors: Bridging Research Gaps and Promoting Early Intervention Through Education
- **Áine Bernadette Mannion**, (UCC) - “The Vagina Problem”: Learnings from Irish Parent-Child Sex Communication Practices for Naming Genitalia and Its Relationship to The Investigation and Prosecution of The Sexual Abuse of Young Children
- **Elizabeth Agnew**, (QUB) – Indecent image sharing among young people and issues of consent: Legal tensions

12:45- 13:45 Lunch (The Great Hall)

13:45 – 15:15 Parallel Session (x 3)

PANEL FOUR – Sexual Violence Trials: Rules and Procedures (The Great Hall) Chair: Dr Sarah Zarnsky, (QUB)

- **Chloe Hanna**, (QUB) - Defendant Anonymity in Sexual Offence Cases: A Comparative Analysis of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland'

- **Katherine Dunn and Brian Brewis**, (Northumbria University) - Section 28 YJCEA 1999: The informed choice of a victim or the choice of the police?
- **Lee Curley**, (Glasgow Caledonian University) - Rape Myths and Verdict Systems: What is Influencing Conviction Rates in Rape Trials in Scotland?

PANEL FIVE – Character Evidence/Personal Information in Rape Trials (Moot Court)
Chair: Mr Seamus Mulholland, (Barrister-at-law, QUB)

- **Eithne Dowds**, (Queen’s University Belfast) - Challenging the Role of Good Character Evidence in Rape Trials: Monsters, Myths and Mitigation.
- **Sinead Ring**, (Maynooth University) - Sexual Experience Evidence and the Question of Relevance
- **Susan Leahy**, (University of Limerick)- Second Time Lucky? Reform of the Law Disclosure of Counselling Notes in Irish Sexual Offence Trials

PANEL SIX - Practical Perspectives on Sexual Offence Trials (Edgar Graham Room)
Chair: Professor Michelle Butler, (QUB)

- **Jan Winton**, (Nexus NI) - Presenting the outcomes “PSNI Training - Challenging Culture: Rape Myths and Sexual Offences” delivered to the PSNI in 2023 – 2024.
- **Sonya McMullan**, (Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland) – Domestic Abuse in the Context of Intimate Partner Sexual Abuse
- **Georgia Stanley**, (Ulster University) - ‘The Second Rape’: An Investigative Analysis of Rape Myth Narratives in Courtroom and Media Discourses

15:15 – 15:30 Break (The Great Hall)

15:30 – 16:30 Round-Table: Reflections on the Jury System in Sexual Offence Trials (The Great Hall)

Facilitator - Dr Dominic Willmott, (Loughborough University)

Discussants – Dr Siobhan Weare (Lancaster University), Professor Vanessa Munro (University of Warwick), Dr Rosie Cowan (QUB), Ms Janice Bunting (CEO, Victim Support Northern Ireland), Mr Nigel Bloomer (Gillen Review Implementation Team, Department of Justice)

DAY TWO – 20th June

9:00 Registration

9:30-11:00 Plenary (The Great Hall)

Chair: Dr Susan Leahy, (University of Limerick)

Professor Clare McGlynn, (Durham University) - Criminalising Intimate Intrusions: sexual violence survivors and *their* quest for justice

Professor Vanessa Munro, (University of Warwick) - “I think we can make a difference now; if we’re ever going to change, it’s now”: Exploring and Evaluating Lessons Learned in Rape Prosecution under ‘Operation Soteria’

11:00-11:15 Break (The Great Hall)

11:15- 12:45 Parallel Session

PANEL ONE - Technology-facilitated Sexual Violence (The Great Hall) Chair:

Professor Kevin Brown, (QUB)

- **Lorraine Hayman**, (University of Galway) – Rethinking Cyber-Located Sexual Violence: Beyond a Communication Crime in the Republic of Ireland
- **Amanda Clough-Ricci**, (Northumbria University) - Revenge Porn and Sexual Harm: Intention Behind Sharing Private Images
- **Ayushman Tripathi**, (Hidayatullah National Law University, India) - Legal Epistemology of Deepfake Sexual Violence: Forensic Detection and the Evidentiary Threshold for AI-Synthesized Content

PANEL TWO - Support for victims within the criminal justice system (Moot Court)

Chair: Dr Siobhan Weare, (Lancaster University)

- **Zoe Mitchell**, (Northumbria University) - Exploring the Role and Legitimacy of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors: Advocacy, Challenges, and Providing Access to Justice in the Criminal Justice System
- **Aoife Grimes**, (London Metropolitan University/DRCC) - What would an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor/Advocate (ISVA) service add to state support for victimsurvivors of sexual violence in the Republic of Ireland?

- **Eamon Keane, Jacqueline Kinghan, James Chalmers, Fiona Leverick** (University of Glasgow) - Implementing Independent Legal Representation in Scotland

12:45- 13:45 Lunch (The Great Hall)

13:45 – 14:30 Plenary (The Great Hall)

Chair: Dr Elizabeth Agnew, (QUB)

Professor Penny Lewis, (Criminal Law Commissioner, Law Commission of England and Wales) - The Law Commission of England and Wales project on Evidence in Sexual Offences Prosecutions.

14:30 – 14:45 Close



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