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In this chapter, we explore the factors that support the occurrence of sexual violence, including the role of interlocking systems of oppression. Traditional conceptions of “prevention” are deconstructed, a social justice paradigm for addressing sexual violence is advanced, and examples of how the paradigm can be applied to practice are described.

Sexual Violence Through a Social Justice Paradigm: Framing and Applications

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Sexual violence changes lives. It also changes the way we think and talk about agency, power, safety, and belonging on the college campus. Sexual violence happens not only to individuals but also to communities. Its reverberations are significant and lasting among those who survive it, as well as among those who care for survivors, and indeed for campus ecologies as a whole (Banyard, 2011). Developing an understanding of sexual violence on campus has evolved over the last three decades and has been alternatively conceptualized as a criminal justice issue, a public health problem, and a form of violence that is the direct result of patriarchal subjugation of women and people of other marginalized genders (Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2009). In this chapter, we explore the factors that contribute to the occurrence of campus sexual violence, as well as traditional conceptions of prevention efforts. In response to these factors, we advance a social justice paradigm (Hong, 2017) and discuss its application in practice.

Sexual Violence: Contributory Factors and Conditions

To conceive of an effective model to address sexual violence in the university setting, it is critical first to name the contributory factors and conditions that enable sexual violence to flourish. These factors are manifold and overlapping, and despite a proliferation of research conducted in the last 30 years to determine the causes, certainty about them remains elusive. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2014) advanced a model of social–ecological understanding of sexual violence occurrence and prevention that locates the causes of sexual violence in four distinct and overlapping sectors: the individual, the individual in relationship to others,

the community context in which the individual is situated, and society as a whole. Each factor intersects with the others, and each compounds both the risk factors and assets an individual possesses in the lifelong possibility of experiencing sexual violence. For example, a person who has experienced sexual abuse as a child is more likely to be revictimized as an adult, and if the person has limited economic resources, they may not be able to access medical care or counseling after the assault, compounding the aftereffects of the violence (CDC, 2014). To address sexual violence specifically, the CDC (2014) recommends approaching violence in a systematic way: Define the problem, identify risk and prevention factors, design and test prevention strategies, and assure widespread adoption. Researchers established that the specific social milieu, relationship formation patterns, and demographics of a college campus should invite a closer examination of violence prevention within this specific kind of setting (Fisher et al., 2009).

Factors That Impact Sexual Violence Perpetration

Researchers have documented the presence of sexual violence on college campuses; however, it is important to recognize that the research has been almost uniformly focused on samples with heterosexual, cisgender men as perpetrators and heterosexual, cisgender women as survivors, so any insights gained from it are certainly not inclusive. Among this population, sexual violence appears to flourish against a particular social and cultural backdrop, one that is replete with a heavy emphasis on parties where the consumption of alcohol (in anticipation, for some, of pursuing casual sexual encounters) is normative (Abbey, 2002; Abbey, McAuslan, & Ross, 1998; Black et al., 2011; Kilpatrick et al, 2007; Ullman, Karabatsos, & Koss, 1999). Alcohol functions as a facilitator, to relax inhibitions about engaging in flirting and sexual encounters. Perpetrators who intentionally use alcohol as a disabling agent also possess traits and attitudes that support the perpetuation of rape, including a belief in men's superiority over women, a belief that women who drink are asking for it, and a belief that women say no to sex when they actually mean yes (Abbey & Harnish, 1995; Burgess, 2007; Connell, 2005; Lanier, 2001). These attitudes are supported and cultivated in social settings where men's control and primacy is unchallenged, and where (heterosexual) women often feel pressured to conform to these expectations to curry favor with men.

These sexist and heterosexist attitudes germinate in the larger society and are promulgated through the media (Jhally, 1999; Wilson, Gutiérrez, & Chao, 2013). They circulate heavily in spaces where white supremacy is also dominant; indeed, men of color and queer men's marginality in such spaces requires them also to adapt to (or adopt) stereotypical masculinities to establish any sense of power or dominance. Among the incubators for cultivating and rewarding sexist and heterosexist attitudes and beliefs are particular kinds of all-male social and co-curricular settings, including

athletic teams and historically white fraternities (Boswell & Spade, 1996; Humphrey & Kahn, 2000).

A clearer picture of the factors associated with campus sexual violence emerged from the revelations of these individual lenses, namely, that sexual violence incubates most often in particular (homosocial, alcohol-centered, masculinist) societal contexts, and is most often perpetuated by individuals who espouse particular beliefs (for example, hegemonic masculinity, which legitimizes men's dominant societal position and justifies subordination or women; Connell, 2005). Those who are victimized are more likely to have socially engaged in these contexts, thus risking greater exposure to perpetrators (Gross, Winslett, Roberts, & Gohm, 2006).

The evidence thus points to a complex interplay of factors, none of which can be understood in isolation from the others. The use and abuse of power, enacted by individuals, but supported by dominant norms in society, is the singular, underlying dynamic that underpins each of these factors. The ways that power is possessed by individuals of particular social identities—especially, but not solely, white, cisgender, heterosexual males and those who co-opt the behaviors of this group—collides with the systemic disempowerment experienced by others. When perpetrators act, they frequently do so with relative impunity, surrounded by peers who are often equally invested in maintaining the “culture of silence” (Kimmel, 2008, p. 59) and other rape-supportive behaviors like sexual objectification or victim blaming. This is compounded by college adjudication boards, which struggle to balance demands for fairness and effective investigations with sensitive, trauma-informed adjudication. Ultimately, too often the system of power is uninterrupted and sexual violence is tacitly permitted to flourish. Although vastly understudied, recent research also suggests that lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students also face disproportionately high percentages of victimization. Very little is known about the factors that contribute to these experiences, the nature of perpetration, or the social contexts in which these crimes take place (Cantor, Fisher, Chibnall, & Bruce, 2015; Wooten, 2014).

Efforts to interrupt these processes by raising awareness, implementing Title IX informed response mechanisms, and attempting to curb the overconsumption of alcohol and attendant hookup culture have yielded little change. Arguably, the limitation of these approaches is that while each contributes to unseating one factor implicated in the occurrence of campus sexual violence, none of them recognizes or leverages the power of community to name, challenge, and change sexual violence across each of these vectors. Instead, we recommend drawing on the legacies and strategies of grassroots movements for racial justice, reproductive rights, and economic justice to articulate a new vision for change that returns the focus to collectively naming and deconstructing the interlocking power dynamics that are at the roots of rape culture and that contribute to the ongoing scourge of sexual violence.

Figure 2.1. Revised Traditional and Social Justice Paradigms for Sexual Violence Prevention (Revised from Hong, in Harris & Linder, 2017 reprinted with permission from Stylus)

TRADITIONAL PARADIGM	SOCIAL JUSTICE PARADIGM
Focuses primarily on individual responsibility (usually that of the victim, as well as that of the bystander)	Focuses on individual actions plus systemic/cultural factors, institutional policies, political context and their interrelationship
Agency of the perpetrator is largely invisible or unacknowledged	Agency of the perpetrator and the system that supports their actions is named and made transparent
Does not acknowledge the salience of identity, power and privilege in human interactions	Intersections of identity, power and privilege are essential to understanding and deconstructing interpersonal dynamics
Violence and its prevention are defined from the perspective of and controlled by the dominant group	The <i>single story</i> is challenged, and understandings of violence are complex and informed by many counter narratives
Peer health educators implement programming	Peer health leaders are embedded in existing social groups
Prevention work tends to occur in isolation; efforts are fragmented and inconsistent	Prevention work is infused across multiple entities working collaboratively to build and sustain community capacity
Focuses almost exclusively on transactional effectiveness	Focuses on transformational and transactional impact
Is an overlay on the institution's existing practices, programs, policies and procedures	Infiltrates and disrupts the systems, structures, culture and core values of the institution
Relies primarily on insight, looking to the campus for sources of knowledge, expertise, answers and solutions	Relies on both insight and oversight, looking in all places for answers as well as collaborating to create new knowledge
Sustained as long as the <i>champion</i> is present	Sustainable over time, with many champions
Requires care and competence	Requires care, competence and moral courage

Sexual Violence: Traditional and Social Justice Paradigms

Comparing findings from the late 1980s (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987) with recent data (Cantor et al., 2015), little impact in reducing campus sexual violence has occurred in 30 years. This suggests that advancements in thinking and practice are required to begin turning the tide of incidence and prevalence among college populations. To this end, Hong (2017) (co-author of this chapter) proposed reconceptualizing sexual violence through a social justice paradigm.

The Traditional Paradigm for Sexual Violence Prevention

The traditional paradigm (summarized in Figure 2.1) for sexual violence prevention focuses primarily and nearly exclusively on individual responsibility—usually that of the survivor. In the traditional approach, the agency of the perpetrator is largely invisible or unacknowledged (Katz, 2006); statistics and data are largely reported from the perspective of who has been victimized, while acts of sexual violence are described as experiences that happen *to* the survivor, as opposed to actions taken *by* a

perpetrator. Further, the traditional conceptualization of, and therefore education about, sexual violence does not acknowledge the salience of identity, power, or privilege in shaping and defining human interactions, as well as how educators perceive or interpret them.

In a traditional paradigm, violence and its prevention are defined from the perspective of and controlled by the dominant group. Perpetrators are frequently regarded as unusual “others,” who have deficits in moral judgment, character, or family upbringing. Campuses may utilize peer educators to spearhead their prevention efforts, yet the salience of culture, gender role socialization, and peer group norms in shaping beliefs and influencing behaviors cannot be easily dissuaded by the provision of facts or recitation of laws and policies. These efforts focus almost exclusively on transactional or technical effectiveness, oftentimes because these are the easiest to measure and cause the least disruption to the institution: how many workshops were conducted, how many people attended, how many incidents were reported, how many were investigated, and whether the policy got posted on the webpage. Historically, campuses have looked within themselves, or to aspirational benchmark peers, to find best practices for adoption, yet intuitions of higher learning have not been able to find the answers or solutions that result in measurable change, despite all the knowledge and expertise located there (Marine, 2015).

Finally, the traditional approach utilizes the many caring and competent colleagues and student activists who contribute in meaningful ways to intervention services in the aftermath of sexual violence and to outreach efforts to raise awareness. This loosely coupled, traditional structure supporting sexual violence prevention efforts is not sustainable. This approach often redirects energy that could be invested in primary prevention efforts on mandated programs and technical solutions that ultimately do not change cultural norms or behaviors. As a result, sufficient change momentum cannot be generated and the status quo is maintained.

Social Justice Paradigm for Sexual Violence Prevention

In contrast, Hong (2017) recommended a social justice paradigm to frame college and university educators’ approaches to leading and engaging the work of campus sexual violence intervention and prevention on their respective campuses. The model described here (Figure 2.1) advances and further explicates this conceptual paradigm from its previous version. A social justice paradigm challenges educators to move beyond the rhetoric of prevention to a comprehensive approach that fosters transformational change by fully engaging all that is known about the root causes of sexual violence. The paradigm incorporates a systemic, adaptive set of sustained initiatives to address sexual violence on multiple levels, embracing the need for organizations to learn, innovate, and share leadership in search of solutions.

This paradigm uses a variety of both traditional and social media and educational approaches to deepen and extend beyond statistics and to incorporate the stories and realities that bring to light the salience of power, privilege, oppression, and marginalization. Further, the focus of inquiry is not solely on victimization but on perpetration as well. Frequency and epidemiology, the risks factors associated with the commission of acts of sexual violence, and the structures, beliefs, values, and attitudes which encourage, endorse, or otherwise support perpetrators' behaviors are explored. The intersections of identity are fully considered, and the complexities of our multiple realities are acknowledged. Accordingly, social justice-minded prevention educators grapple with what Angela Davis (2000) refers to as the "race of gender" and the "gender of race." Davis says, "...we must also learn how to oppose the racist fixation on people of color as the primary perpetrators of violence, including domestic and sexual violence, and at the same time to fiercely challenge the real violence that men of color inflict on women" (para. 8). Awareness of these intersections also emerges when, for example, considering woman-to-woman violence, which is often incorrectly assumed to be nonexistent. Such assumptions render the experiences of queer women who are sexually abused by female partners invisible.

In a social justice approach to sexual violence prevention work, educators and practitioners understand that violence is the outcome of a complex interplay of many factors, both known and unknown, and as such, they resist adhering to one narrative. Moreover, prevention education is a crucial tool for anti-oppression and ending violence. Prevention must be sustained over time and multifaceted, leaning into the complexity of how and why sexual violence occurs. As such, simplistic or single-message, one-time, narrowly focused programs will not generate long-term behavior change, as evidenced in research (Yeater & O'Donoghue, 1999). In the social justice paradigm, college students serve as peer health *leaders*, rather than peer health educators, harnessing their potential power to influence norms, attitudes, beliefs, and ideas in real time while interacting with their peers through everyday academic and social activities. Rather than be limited to presenting information in a structured, formal workshop, health leaders provide new ways of thinking about power dynamics, violence, and healthy social norms in casual conversations in the dining hall.

When a campus adopts a social justice framework, prevention work is embedded across multiple entities working collaboratively and simultaneously to build and sustain community capacity. Knowledge and expertise about ending sexual violence is informed by community-based anti-violence and other civil rights movements and organizers, from whom educators can learn about effective coalition- and consensus-building, as well as how to effectively initiate resistance and sustain it over time.

Finally, in Hong's (2017) model, participants in sexual violence prevention efforts possess one additional essential characteristic: moral courage, "the quality of mind and spirit that enables one to face up to ethical

dilemmas and moral wrongdoings firmly and confidently, without flinching or retreating” (Kidder & Bracy, 2001, p. 3). For example, engaging students to role play in scenarios where they intervene with friends before a sexual assault incident occurs or interrupt and respond to rape myths can help build up their confidence to serve as change agents.

Applying the Social Justice Paradigm for Sexual Violence Prevention

To the authors’ knowledge, there is no institution of higher education that applies the entire social justice paradigm in their sexual violence prevention work. However, the institutions and campus-targeted programs we highlight below are engaged in initiatives that address one or more of the elements. The social justice paradigm represents a significant shift and thus requires us to unlearn what we know and relearn new ways of seeing and acting.

Successful incorporation of the social justice paradigm requires a constant awareness and mindfulness about the ways in which the traditional paradigm is embedded in our prevailing narratives and understanding of sexual violence. Those traditional approaches in many ways must be dismantled at most or reenvisioned at least to make way for transformative approaches to reducing and ending sexual violence.

Below we outline several specific examples of programs that adhere to various aspects of the social justice paradigm for sexual violence prevention (Hong, 2017). See Figure 2.2 for a summary of the relationship between each of the programs and the paradigm.

Culture of Respect, a program affiliated with NASPA: Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education is an initiative that emerged from the realities of the current national landscape and strongly adheres to many aspects of the social justice paradigm. The second edition of the *CORE Blueprint: A Strategic Roadmap for Addressing Campus Sexual Violence* (NASPA, 2017) outlines a comprehensive set of intervention and prevention strategies, organized around six pillars, including Pillar 3, which addresses “Multitiered Education for the Entire Campus” (p.8). As illustrated in Figure 2.2, the “Steps to an Effective Prevention Education Strategy” that are included as a framing structure for Pillar 3 specifically reflect several aspects of the social justice paradigm, namely, the need to address intersectionality of identity and infuse the work across time, groups, and structures (NASPA, 2017).

What is most laudable about the *CORE Blueprint* is its adherence to evaluation and evidence: only strategies with demonstrated efficacy are highlighted in the document (NASPA, 2017). NASPA includes a matrix (accessible to members) on their website that lists various campus-based prevention efforts that must be based in sound theory and research before they will be included.

Figure 2.2. Relationship Between Social Justice Paradigm and Sexual Violence Prevention Efforts

SOCIAL JUSTICE PARADIGM ELEMENT	CORRESPONDING EXAMPLE(S)
Focuses on individual actions plus systemic/cultural factors, institutional policies, the political context, and their interrelationship	NASPA Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint
Agency of the perpetrator and the system that supports their actions is made transparent	Katz MVP Program; Berkowitz Social Norms Approach
Intersections of identity, power and privilege are essential to understanding and deconstructing interpersonal dynamics	Harvard University OSAPR Approach
The single story is challenged, and understandings of violence are complex and informed by many counter narratives	Berkowitz Social Norms Approach; Harvard University OSAPR Approach;
Peer health leader embedded across existing social networks	Katz MVP Program; Berkowitz Social Norms Approach;
Prevention work is infused across multiple entities working collaboratively to build and sustain community capacity.	Lasell College Curriculum Integration; San Francisco State University Title IX Program
Focuses on transformational and transactional impact	Harvard University OSAPR Approach
Infiltrates and disrupts the systems, structures, culture and core values of the institution	Katz MVP Program; Berkowitz Social Norms Approach; SF State Title IX Program
Relies on both insight and oversight, looking in all places for answers as well as collaborating to create new knowledge	Emory University <i>RespectCon</i>
Sustainable over time, with many champions	NASPA Culture of Respect CORE Blueprint; SF State Title IX Program
Requires care, competence, and moral courage	All initiatives listed above

While this paradigm includes significant emphasis on evidence-based, systemic change, other programs have focused on the agency of the perpetrator, the importance of infiltrating the institutional culture, and naming the system that supports the perpetrator’s actions. Tapping into the influence of peer leaders embedded across social networks is also indicated in these innovations. Founded in 1993 by Jackson Katz, *Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)* (n.d.) is one of the longest-standing programs to combat gender violence by building the capacity of boys and men, as well as girls and women, to resist and rewrite social, cultural, and institutional norms that encourage violence, bullying, abuse, and harassment. Although MVP does not work exclusively with colleges and universities, it has certainly had a significant presence on many campuses, delivering both presentations and train-the-trainer programs. The curriculum is developed around several elements included in the social justice paradigm: disrupting culture, sustained efforts and embedded peer health leaders (through the train-the-trainer approach), focus on the agency of the perpetrator, as well as the examination of gender-derived privilege and power.

An additional tool for infusing campus cultures with positive, disruptive change using peer health leaders is Alan Berkowitz’s (2010) pioneering work around interrupting social norms related to sexual violence. This

approach formed the basis of many of the bystander interventions seen on campuses. The “social norms approach” is an evidenced-based methodology that has already demonstrated success in reducing high-risk drinking. At its core, social norms theory posits that college students are likely to misperceive the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of their peers and that such misperceptions tend to favor those actions and amplify ideas that promote unhealthy choices. For example, men are prone to underestimate the degree to which other men adhere to rape myths (false beliefs about the nature of sexual violence and factors that underlie it), are uncomfortable with sexist comments about women, or are willing to intervene in high-risk situations (Kilmartin et al., 2008; Loh, Gidycz, Lobo, & Luthra, 2005). Berkowitz (2010) theorized that if students receive accurate information to correct misperceptions regarding their peers, this will have a concurrent positive impact on their behavioral choices—toward behaviors that are more healthy or supportive of safety.

Preliminary research on the application of the social norms approach indicates that small group norm interventions to prevent sexual assault (Hillebrand-Gun, Heppner, Mauch, & Park, 2010; Kilmartin et al., 2008; White Ribbon Campaign, 2005) and social norms marketing campaigns (Berkowitz, 2010) have the potential to reduce the incidence of sexually violent behaviors of male-identified college students. Campuses are encouraged to incorporate social norms theory-based approaches—which challenge the single story and target the impact of culture—as part of a comprehensive approach to sexual violence prevention using a social justice paradigm.

Another example of the use of the social justice paradigm in action, infusing prevention work across multiple entities of the campus, is found at Lasell College. At Lasell, faculty are guided by a connected learning philosophy: helping students apply what they learn in the classroom to real-life problems. Faculty incorporated this philosophy into high-demand courses that engage students in learning about sexual and domestic violence prevention efforts. Often students who take these courses go on to engage in advocacy and activism efforts after the course ends (Raye, 2016).

Emory University’s *RespectCon* annual event, which started in 2013 by students on that campus, is another example of the social justice paradigm in action. The conference fosters conversations about the interrelationship between sexual violence prevention and social justice. The 2016 event included 150 attendees from 36 higher education institutions and community-based organizations, representing 17 states, who attended or presented sessions about various aspects of implementing and sustaining positive culture change and the complex work of campus-wide norm-shifting (Williams, 2016). *RespectCon* is a living example of the value of relying on insight and research, looking in all places for answers, and collaborating to create new knowledge well beyond a single institution’s walls, halls, and gates.

In terms of grappling with the multilayered complexity of who experiences (and perpetrates) sexual violence and how intersections of identity shape those realities, Harvard University's Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR) also reflects the social justice paradigm in their work by intentionally incorporating anti-oppression and activism (both individual and collective) into their prevention, response, and education efforts. The OSAPR's website lists several multimedia programs that are intended to "... provide thought-provoking socio-political critique of the systems and ideologies that govern our bodies, spaces, and opportunities" (Harvard University, n.d., para. 2). A review of the OSAPR's offerings, which range from Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TEDx Talks (for example, *The Danger of a Single Story* (Adichie, 2009) to the international "No Country for Women" initiative, reflects innovation and intersectionality, as well as a deliberate effort to bring to bear many counter narratives to the reality of sexual violence (Harvard University, n.d.).

Finally, San Francisco State University, where one of the authors (Hong) now serves as Vice President for Student Affairs, has made a concerted effort to ensure that prevention and policy development work is infused across all cabinet areas. The campus is building a lasting foundation in which many champions are advocating on behalf of gender equity and sexual violence prevention. There are seven deputy Title IX coordinators in addition to the Title IX coordinator who are administratively assigned from all the major cabinet areas reporting to the President. These deputy coordinators are not involved in complaint investigations; rather they provide campus leadership on issues of sexual violence prevention and intervention, as opposed to compliance-driven, solutions. San Francisco State's efforts are an example of how a campus' response to sexual violence can be embedded among multiple entities working collaboratively, thereby ensuring the work will be sustained over time.

Looking Ahead, Moving Forward

Broad enforcement of Title IX has been described as the next civil rights movement. However, laws and regulations cannot hope to change the hearts of individuals; only other individuals—through families, neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, churches and other communities—can change minds and, subsequently, behaviors. We have argued that campuses must undergo a major metamorphosis in how we organize around and respond to sexual violence by embracing a social justice paradigm.

It is clear that new capacities and models are needed in higher education; we can no longer relegate the work of social change around sexual violence to one person, office, or advocate. The social justice paradigm advanced here requires sustained, multidimensional thinking and acting, creative and purposeful leadership, and a commitment to the idea that it is the community, not the individual, that will ultimately shift campus cultures

to be safer and more empowering. It has been 30 years since the advent of the sexual violence response and prevention movement, with little or no real progress in reducing the numbers of students victimized. It is time to engage with new ways of seeing, thinking, and acting. This begins with the belief that we can, and must, end sexual violence if we are to ever fulfill the promise of higher education for all.

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