



**International approaches to understanding and responding to sexual violence**

Online debate 4

<p><b>UWE</b></p>	<p>Sexual offending is not a new or culturally specific practice; it is a long standing social issue that crosses cultural and national boundaries. This means that sexual abuse is as much about the impact and consequence upon the victim, the offender as well as national and transnational government policies in place to respond to it. However, there are barriers to examining and developing a “worldly” understanding of and response to sex offending, including, disparate definitions of sexual abuse; different degrees of punitiveness within and between countries resulting in diverse policies; variations in international legislations and logistical issues in information sharing at accompany these (eg, most countries internationally have state treatment programs, a growing number have sex offender registers but very few have community notification). Hence, it is important to examine international perspectives on and responses to sex offending, as well as where they have originated from, to fully understand a “worldly” approach and the reality of it. (Adapted from McCartan 2012)</p> <p>Some of the issues that I think we could consider as pertinent are:</p> <p><u>Is there a globally accepted view of what constitutes sexual violence, the reality of it and the best way of responding to it?</u></p> <p>As current events in India have demonstrated not all countries are at the same stage of being able to discuss or respond to sexual violence. This means that although there is (generally speaking) an international understanding of what rape, sexual offending and child sexual abuse are, there are no international benchmarks for responding to these offences; instead they are dealt with separately by each country in turn, with differing levels of punitiveness vs rehabilitation. While these national policy objectives can fall in line with international agreements, this is not always the case and not all countries will sign up to them.</p> <p><u>Should we have a international approach in responding to sexual violence? If so how adaptable or how standardised should this be?</u></p> <p>One of the main issues in internationalizing any policy or practice is the potential for it to be seen as “colonialism” rather than the exporting of good practice. So how do we get different countries to do similar, agreed upon things; or do we not and say that there does not have to be a standardized global response to sexual offending?</p> <p><u>What can we learn from other international and transnational issues (criminologenic or otherwise) that will help us frame this conversation appropriately?</u></p>
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	<p>Can we look to other areas of social, legal or health policy for guidance on how best to understand and adapt issues which are local, national and international? Can we learn from research on the environment, obesity, smoking or child poverty? How best is it to frame the conversation about responding to, as well as preventing, sexual violence in a clear coherent fashion?</p> <p><b>References</b></p> <p>McCartan, K. F. (2012b). The Management of Sexual Offenders in the Community: Austerity, Engagement, Interaction and the 'Big Society'. <i>Prison Service Journal</i>, 201, 39-43. <a href="http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/opus1935/PSJ_May_2012_No.201.pdf">http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/opus1935/PSJ_May_2012_No.201.pdf</a></p> <p>McCartan, K. F. (2012a). A 'worldly' approach to sex offender policy and management: a discussion of "the registration and management of sex offenders: a comparative study". <i>ATSA Forum Vol. XXIV</i>, 1. <a href="http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/atsa/issues/2011-12-15/5.html">http://newsmanager.commpartners.com/atsa/issues/2011-12-15/5.html</a></p> <p>Tabachnick, J., &amp; Klein, A. (2011). <i>A reasoned approach: reshaping sex offender policy to prevent child sexual abuse</i>. Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers. <a href="http://atsa.com/pdfs/ppReasonedApproach.pdf">http://atsa.com/pdfs/ppReasonedApproach.pdf</a></p>
<b>ATSA 1</b>	<p>As much as "we" all know that sexual offending as a social and public health issue/problem transcends international boundaries, there are still many in our field who cling to vague notions that "things" are somehow "different" in their jurisdiction than in others. As a Static-99 trainer who has provided training in Europe, Australia, Canada, and the United States, I am often questioned as to why we should trust that this scale (developed in Canada and the UK) would be usable with offenders in other countries/jurisdictions. In partial answer, some colleagues and I published a paper this past year showing that, for all intents and purposes, high risk sexual offenders in Canada are essentially identical to their high risk counterparts in the USA, when looking at risk factors, psychological makeup, and post-release conduct. The only major differences we identified had nothing to do with the offenders themselves; rather, the differences were in practices related to sentencing, treatment, and management. Indeed, there is good reason to believe that these findings would extrapolate to other countries as well.</p> <p>Wilson, R.J., Looman, J., Abracen, J., &amp; Pake, D.R. (2012). Comparing sexual offenders at the Regional Treatment Centre (Ontario) and the Florida Civil Commitment Center. <i>International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology</i>. published "online first".</p>
<b>NSPCC</b>	<p>We certainly need to work towards developing a "worldly" understanding of and response to sex offending and whilst culture and situation can inform and influence I think it is pretty clear that the fundamental drivers to sexual violence remain consistent across the world. We are some way from getting to a global understanding or agreement on some key issues in our field however; I think we have some potentially useful and influential drivers, influencers and facilitators</p>

	<p>in place that can be used to promote the importance of a public health approach to sexual abuse prevention. Whilst it is more complex and nuanced that it may first present I do think that governments like the coherence and apparent simplicity of the approach. If communicated effectively it can be sold as a "no brainer" to those in positions of power and influence which can save a lot of tax Pounds, Euros, Dollars etc, even in the short and medium term.</p> <p>I think we should be using our professional structures (NOTA, ISPCAN, ATSA, IATSO ... etc) to more collaborative effect with the aim of promoting key evidence based messages. This could contribute towards a more "worldly" understanding.</p> <p>We should also look to support, nurture and build upon initiatives such as the Council of Europe Sexual Abuse Prevention Campaign - the only region-wide sexual abuse prevention campaign (with government buy in at least to some extent) that I am aware of anywhere in the world currently. It has the potential to be developed further and the idea could be replicated elsewhere in the world.</p> <p><a href="http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/default_en.asp">http://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/1in5/default_en.asp</a></p> <p>In the UK sexual abuse and sexual violence is high on the political agenda following the "discovery" of the extent of child sexual exploitation over the last 3 years or so <a href="http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/info/csegg1">http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/info/csegg1</a></p> <p>and the Savile case. <a href="http://www.nspcc.org.uk/news-and-views/our-news/child-protection-ne...">http://www.nspcc.org.uk/news-and-views/our-news/child-protection-ne...</a></p> <p>and in Australia the government have announced a Royal Commission into child sexual abuse</p> <p><a href="http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx">http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx</a></p> <p>I think we need to use momentum generated by events such as these to good effect, particularly in relation to public and political understanding and awareness.</p>
<p><b>CARDIFF UNIVERSITY</b></p>	<p>There would certainly seem to be a need and opportunity to raise the awareness and significance of sexual violence internationally. But I think the primary aim of this should be to help initiate or develop debate within individual countries about their (a) definitions of sexual violence, (b) their understanding of sexual violence (causes etc), and (c) their responses to such crimes. Kieran makes a useful point about learning from other sectors and fields when it comes to the globalization of policy and practice. It is my understanding that the key thing we could learn from other areas is that countries, societies and contexts can be very different and that the transfer or translation of policy and practice to other cultures and societies is incredibly fraught, and are never likely to produce the same 'effects' irrespective of how strong the original evidence base for 'what works' was. Furthermore, transferring practices and approaches from one country in to another where even the definition of sexual violence may not</p>

	<p>be widely accepted as the same (or even more likely where the degree of severity of the crime is not the same) could ultimately be flawed. So, international networks and programs of knowledge exchange and understanding, yes. But their primary aim should be to develop debate within different countries first, within the particular socio-cultural, political and economic context that exists. If the pursuit of particular policies and practices is then called upon, fine, we should be ready to share our experiences and practices accordingly. If we were able to generate more considered and insightful debate within the UK then perhaps we wouldn't be so overly dependent on approaches to sexual violence from other countries, such as the US and Canada (Note: this is not to criticize approaches in the US and Canada).</p> <p>I accept that this might be a 'slower' approach to tackling what we consider to be horrendous atrocities in other countries, but in the long-term it may be the better approach (primarily to avoid ineffective responses and to avoid the suggestion of Western 'colonialism' of policy and practice and, importantly, values). However, where I do think this is really challenging is when crimes of sexual violence transcend international boundaries (child trafficking, internet abuse, committing sexual violence abroad, etc)? Given my starting point above, this poses significant and very sensitive challenges in the way authorities (and others) can and should respond to such crimes.</p>
<p><b>ATSA 2</b></p>	<p>For my work in sexual violence prevention within the US, an international perspective is essential - in part because the US has been better about responding to sexual violence than in looking at the root causes and how to prevent first time perpetration of sexual abuse. The international perspective also provides us with a broader base of evidence to look at alternative ways of responding to sexual abuse and violence. For example, having the Canadian experience and evidence around Circles of Support and Accountability opens the door for communities to explore new ways to work with high risk offenders. Or the experience and the data from the Dunkelfeld project in Germany allow us to make a clearer distinction between those who have sexually abused and those who may have a paraphilia (but not abused). So the exchange of information is critical and that exchange, does help to inform how each country frames what is possible and decisions about how each country makes decisions about how to respond.</p> <p>So for me, I wonder how we endow the international exchanges with more "gravitas" to ensure that the information does filter into each and every country -- not to dictate what needs to happen but to ensure that when considering the definition of sexual abuse, an understanding of sexual violence, or the full range of responses we truly are considering ALL of the possible avenues of response. In the US, with our tendency to look at individuals within this "throw away culture", it is not surprising that it is only in the last few years that the idea of how a community or organization responds is key to community safety and prevention. And as the US begins to explore these options for the first time in many states, we can see examples from the UK and First Nations of Canada that have long understood that you simply can't throw people away.</p> <p>The international conversations is essential. The international exchange of</p>

	<p>research is critical. And it is through the international debate/discussion that I think we will be able to have a fuller understanding of the problem and the strategies and solutions.</p>
<b>UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS</b>	<p>Upon reading UWE's post, my initial reaction was closely aligned with both ATSA 2's and CARDIFF UNIVERSITY's responses. These two perspectives represent, respectively, the promise and limitations of looking across cultures for framing policy responses to sexual violence. As Joan suggests, examining the experiences of others is a vital first step in prompting self reflection (I am referring to "self" in a cultural context, not an individual one) challenging prevailing paradigms. It also challenges us to critically consider how our own norms, values, and biases affect our sense of what is possible. At the same time, per CARDIFF UNIVERSITY's suggestion, we need to exercise caution in assuming that policies that may be effective and viable in one particular sociopolitical context can be easily exported into an alternative context. As CARDIFF UNIVERSITY implies, one needs to be realistic in determining the pace of change. To use ATSA 2's example, CoSA and Dunkelfeld represent dramatic departures from the prevailing political zeitgeist in the United States -- while these models can certainly represent a basis for re-orienting the dialogue, their sustenance requires a fundamental paradigm shift - which takes patience and time.</p>
<b>UWE</b>	<p>Following on, especially from ATSA 1's post, there seems to a conversation to be had about western vs non western practices and responses to sexual violence. When you move beyond the "traditional" west issues become a bit blurred in respect to cultural attitudes to sexuality, sex, sexual deviance and appropriate responses. the last thing we want to do is wade in and state that our approach is better, so the question is how does this worldly approach come about? Some suggestions, but not a definitive list are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- internally from the researchers in the countries themselves?</li> <li>- as a result of western researchers/academics/policy makers visiting and advising the countries in question?</li> <li>- through collaborative research (i.e., conferences, replication and/or original studies)?</li> <li>- creating international proctols through organizations like WHO, EU, UN?</li> </ul>
<b>UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH</b>	<p>Following this interesting discussion I think there is an ontological problem with developing a 'worldly' perspective, unless it consists of micro-level knowledge acquisition pathways that coalesce around common 'thought collectives' (Fleck, 1935). We need to move away from the epistemological gerrymandering of paradigms and look at the micro-contexts in which sexual violence occurs; unless one thinks sexual violence in a DV situation in the UK is ontologically the same as gang sexual violence in the economically repressive slums of Brazil??</p>

	<p>The only way to move away from grand-narratives (which never work), is to consider more intuitive evidence that is grounded in the context in which the sexual behaviors occurs. Only then could you effectively deal with them.</p>
<p><b>NSPCC</b></p>	<p>In response to UWE's question "how does this worldly approach come about? Some suggestions, but not a definitive list are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Internally from the researchers in the countries themselves?</li> <li>- As a result of western researchers/academics/policy makers visiting and advising the countries in question?</li> <li>- Through collaborative research (i.e., conferences, replication and/or original studies)?</li> <li>- creating international proctols through organizations like WHO, EU, UN?"</li> </ul> <p>Yes all those things and I think we need to be more proactive in engaging governments and those with their hands on the levers of power and influence. We should aim for an international summit on sexual aggression (similar to the international climate change summit) where international perspectives and learning can be shared on a truly global scale, supported by governments. Something UNICEF could broker?</p>
<p><b>DUBLIN INSTITUE OF TECHNOLOGY</b></p>	<p>In response to one of UWE's original questions, I wanted to address the concept of a globally accepted view of sexual violence.</p> <p>While there may be a number of objective components to sexual violence, the historical, cultural and socio-political context must be taken into account before the level of dialogue required for an internationally accepted view can be arrived at. I can think of a few examples (both of which are linked to Catholicism) from the Irish context and would love to hear if similar scenarios have arisen in other jurisdictions or indeed if these stories are not as unique as I imagine.</p> <p>In Ireland, responses to sexual violence have, at least to some extent been legal and institutional manifestations of the cultural trauma which arose from decades of large scale clerical sex abuse. Thus, while the public fear of sexual violence in other jurisdictions may be (largely) misplaced with regard to "stranger danger", my experience has been that in Ireland the concept evokes images of the abuses of power. Indeed our sexual offences legislation specifically provides for harsher punishments for "persons of authority" (Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006, S3.1a).</p> <p>Secondly, for a long time (and to some extent still) the idea that a man could rape his wife was incongruous with the way in which Irish society understood the institution of marriage. This prevented many women from reporting rape, as police who would not wish to "get involved in family matters". Indeed this</p>

	<p>reluctance to intervene has a constitutional foundation, where the family (which can only exist where man and woman are married) has certain “inalienable” rights. While I am sure this is also an issue in other jurisdictions, it is likely to be a bigger issue here, especially as divorce was only legislated for in 1995.</p> <p>Having attended the event last November in Birmingham, I was struck by the progressive and admirable way in which sexual violence in other jurisdictions is treated as a public health issue. This was in such stark contrast to my experience as a young researcher and practitioner in Ireland. As such I think there is still some way to go in agreeing a common language in which we can discuss sexual violence, before we can arrive at an accepted view of it.</p>
<b>CARDIFF UNIVERSITY</b>	<p>I think DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY's post helpfully illustrates some of the points I made before about the challenges about comparing and transferring these types of issues from country to country. It also demonstrates the benefits of having these types of discussions across boundaries as Jon suggests. I particularly like his suggestion for an organization such as UNICEF to set up a world summit on these types of issues. I would however go back to my original point, if we are to have these international global conversations then we must be careful not to jump ahead to issues such as policy and practice (which UWE's second post is still tending to do), without those conversations first covering/raising the moral, ethical and conceptual terms of sexual crime and victimization in that international concept.</p> <p>I am also interested in ATSA 2's comments and her desire for international conversation. This perhaps reflects my ignorance in this area, but what does comparative research say on this within America? It would be my understanding that policy and practice are different in each state. Are there not lessons that can be learnt first by comparing policy and practice here (between states in the US) where there are similarities already in the social and economic concepts? Do these comparative studies exist? If so I would be interested to know what they say about the benefits and challenges of comparative work</p>
<b>STOP IT NOW!</b>	<p>There are but few days left for this discussion, yet it seems barely to have started! It is also a discussion of such enormous proportions that I struggle to get a handle on it. Were the title about the prevention of sexual violence ( or even narrower - the prevention of child sexual abuse) the starting place might have felt more accessible! A little! Reference has already been made to regional for eg Council of Europe, who have a pan-European campaign to prevent child sexual abuse. But even within Europe there are different understandings about what constitutes child sexual abuse and about approaches to respond to it. And I hesitate to offer UK solutions as I am sure there are differences not only in the context but also in the nature and extent of "the problem" such that UK solutions could be partial or ineffective.(And let's face it, even in UK our solutions, responses etc have a long way to go; I'm sure this equally applies in USA and Canada). Travel, then, to other continents, and the picture only gets more complex - colleagues in Stop it Now! US are working some in the Caribbean and in West Africa; here in UK we are collaborating with colleagues in Australia (where some conventional US/Canadian/UK solutions have failed when</p>

applied to remote indigenous populations; but with the promise of a prevention framework (public health approach, with place-based prevention included) that will hopefully allow local communities to decide how they would do the best by their children. And this same approach, based on local understanding of the problem being respectfully used to draw up a prevention strategy is the basis of an international project in which Lucy Faithfull Foundation is involved. Should any readers wish to take part, I'd be delighted. But there are other for a having related conversations - including ISPCAN (International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect), who are holding a Denver Thinking Space in March to "capture" different tertiary, secondary and primary approaches to sex offenders, at-risk groups and boys. For most of us, I imagine there would be broad agreement that sexual violence is mostly done to women and children by men. I have seen some interesting variations to this in other countries, but such variations tend to be more marginal than central (is my understanding at the present!) So part of any international debate needs to be about masculinity and its role in societies - not that I want to delay solutions by pondering; but such solutions need to hold promise because they are built upon sound foundations.

Here in UK, almost 8% of our population is from ethnic minority groups. Clearly many are well integrated; but there are also many whose daily lives are lived largely, sometimes entirely, within their own ethnic or religious community. I mention this in the context of the current debate because these very communities shed light on understandings about sexual violence at an international level.

There is currently an amount of work going on to engage BAMER (black, minority and ethnic minority and refugee) communities in dialogue to prevent, for example, child sexual abuse, female genital mutilation, and domestic abuse. On this same theme, we will watch tonight a documentary about responses to child sexual abuse within the Orthodox Jewish community in the UK. After centuries of prejudice and misuse of the powers of the state and of needing to protect each other from acts of oppression - is it any surprise that Rabbis are reluctant to engage willingly with state authorities to report a crime; even a crime of child sexual abuse? Of course this position cannot stand - Jewish children are as entitled to protection as all other children. But that means creating a dialogue, earning trust, agreeing basic values and the principles of engagement upon which to craft solutions. And these solutions need not only to articulate and organize responses to abuse; but more importantly to create dialogue, promote education and provide services that make such abuse less likely in the future.

But what is assumed in the above is that the authorities in UK (or anywhere?) have the best answers. We know that less than 25%, probably as little as only 10%, of child sexual abuse is currently reported to the authorities. And even when it is, the best outcomes for the child are by no means guaranteed. So what, then, is this protection we wish to extend to Jewish children? Might it be that it is as effectively delivered within and by the Jewish community itself?

Bottom line - we have a great deal yet to learn. And we must remain alert to taking that learning from wherever we may find it and not assume we

	necessarily have a lot of teaching to do.
<b>NSPCC</b>	I agree with what you're saying STOP IT NOW! Ultimately it will not be government, NGO s or any other organization that will really make an impact on the prevalence of sexual abuse in our communities. A crucial and key task therefore is how we can best enable and support our communities to effectively protect and prevent. There are some great models and approaches out there which need to be developed nurtured and further evaluated.
<b>ATSA 3</b>	<p>My apologies for joining the conversation so late in the game. Thank you, CARDIFF UNIVERSITY, for holding the door open a bit longer to accommodate laggards such as myself. I wanted to address CARDIFF UNIVERSITY's question regarding comparative studies. To my knowledge, comparative analyses of US state's sex crime policies are rare. Mark Chaffin, Donna Vandiver and I have just started a study that will compare 3 state's juvenile sex offender registration and notification policies to evaluate their effects (or lack thereof) on general and specific deterrence and on juvenile case processing. Michael Caldwell previously compared 3 state's juvenile SORN policies to determine the extent to which tiers or categories align with recidivism risk (they did not). There is very little research on juvenile waiver to adult court (a common practice in the US) and no comparative analyses with respect to youth who have sexually offended. Some evaluations have examined "no drop" policies in which police must carry on an investigation once a charge (typically domestic violence or rape) is made, even if the victim retracts her/his statements in comparison to states with no such policies. The point of all this is that there has been precious little research on specific sex crime policies or practices between states--due in part, no doubt, to limited funding for research in this area and the difficulty inherent in obtaining data from very different sources. I am not so sure that waiting for the US to produce meaningful comparative evaluations is a good strategy. Funds seem to be opening up for sex crime, policy &amp; practice research but still are limited.</p> <p>Referring back to UWE's opening comments, I'm interested in his third point regarding whether there are other areas of study from which we might learn. From my perspective, getting the US and other countries to adopt a view that sexual violence is a public health problem, vs an individual or criminal justice problem would substantively move us forward toward more prevention-oriented and research-based responses. It is so gratifying to learn that there is one coalition implementing this view (I refer to the Council of Europe Sexual Abuse Prevention Campaign mentioned in an earlier post). Learning from successful efforts to frame sexual violence as a public health issue might be one of the most important lessons we can take from existing practice. I recognize the exact messaging would be different by country, but starting with the achievement of a public health perspective as a goal might help countries avoid some of the many missteps that occur when we view sexual violence only through the lenses of the individual and especially when we rely heavily on only criminal justice interventions. I hope that some of the boundary pushing international projects, such as the Dunkelfeld project in Germany and Patrick Lussier's longitudinal study in Vancouver Canada will provide touchstones, as well as solid data that we can use to generate conversations in our home countries about moving more resources toward prevention.</p>

<p><b>UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS</b></p>	<p>I will weigh in briefly on CARDIFF UNIVERSITY's question regarding the United States itself presenting a paradigm for comparative research. Beyond what ATSA 3 suggests in terms of the relatively sparse amount of research comparing the differential impacts of states' crime policies (and there is indeed quite a bit of variation), I think that we also might think about the significant cultural divides that exist within this country, and how they affect our variables of interest -- e.g. attitudes toward sexual violence and victimization, ideas about the etiology of offending behavior, notions of punitivity &amp; morality, etc. There also are many parts of this country in which anti-intellectualism and a cynicism toward science and empirical evidence is more dominant than in other parts. I believe that this has a significant bearing, not only on policy directly, but on views of offenders and victims alike. To this general point, I am not aware of any particular body of research that has fully considered these types of factors in their analysis of sex offender policies within the U.S.</p> <p>I have recently been working with a colleague who is from Korea on an evaluation of the Korean sex offender registration system -- probably the closest to that of the United States in terms of public disclosure. In the course of these discussions, I have marveled at the fact that the policies in a country such as Korea, which is far more culturally homogenous than the US, still nevertheless have followed our lead.</p>
<p><b>STOP IT NOW!</b></p>	<p>If we then build upon what UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS and ATSA 3 have said, and wish to take a public health approach, (which drives us towards a prevention agenda rather than simply to determining what to do with the few offenders we catch) we need to start from an analysis of the nature of the problem. Again the breadth of the debate is daunting; but the prevention of the sexual abuse of 3 year olds in nurseries and such institutions requires a different approach from that required for the prevention of sexual abuse of teens over the Internet; and different again when we look at intra-familial abuse. This analysis will have implications not just for the treatment responses to incidents of abuse; but also for the education of children and adults; for skills development in protective adults and to target harden children; and for the creation of resources in the community for those vulnerable to becoming perpetrators of abuse.</p> <p>Such a disciplined ( and logical) approach will not necessarily cost more in the medium to long term; but it requires political commitment, the wisdom and skills of a host of professionals, and the support of rather large swathes of the public. It also holds the promise of sparing large numbers of children the trauma of abuse and its legacy. In a rather perverse way, it may be that countries in the less developed world, including low income economies, may be more responsive to such a disciplined approach to prevention than those countries that consider themselves more developed. I include the UK in this latter group. The goal of prevention represents a rather different starting place from that traditionally taken and too many professionals and politicians may have a vested interest in the status quo. But if the public debate could be shifted to ask parents what they want for their children's futures, then even the anti- intellectualism that Andrew speaks of may become less troublesome.</p>

	<p>Of course the analysis of "the problem" needs to be specific to a nation or region, as there are undoubted differences due to culture, history and many other factors. This is not to say lessons cannot be learned internationally, but we need to be smart when taking the lessons from one context and applying them into another.</p>
<b>UWE</b>	<p>I have been watching some of the other posts with interesting and to me they all seem to be discussing the social/cultural construction of sexual violence. This feeds back to our previous debate ibn talking about how we engage communities, policy makers and politicians in a realistic conversation about sexual abuse that they can all buy into. This means changing the way that we as a global society views sexual abuse and some countries/regions might be in a better place to do this. If we can change the conversation, then the funding stream, inputs/outputs can all change. Look at the revolution that we have gone through in terms of smoking, obesity and alcohol over the last number of years. However, they have easy to track and easily observable impacts upon individuals, but the impact of sexual violence on the perpetrator, victim and the state are often more hidden. Therefore do we change the story that we tell in respect to prevention vs. punishment; and/or produce a cost/benefit analysis of the finances of prevention vs. punishment; and/or evaluate the real impact that prevention vs. punishment has on all parties day to day functioning? Do we need to be more calculated than human, to talk in financial terms in this age of austerity? If we can change the global dialogue (in general and on the whole) on smoking, obesity, disease and child malnutrition; could we use the same approach in sexual violence? Could a global summit, international roundtable or transnational organizational (i.e., un) lead agenda help this?</p>
<b>NSPCC</b>	<p>I think we do need to change the discourse, and an emphasis on the costs of sexual violence would focus the minds of policy makers and politicians. We need more up to date, good quality national and international research on costs to assist with this. As I suggested in an earlier posting I think a global sexual violence prevention summit would be timely and valuable in a number of ways. In the UK we have a government lead on child internet safety - UKCCIS (the UK Council on Child Internet Safety) which brings together industry, academics and NGOs. This could and I think probably should be extended to become a UK Council on Sexual Violence Prevention. That would be a significant step towards getting government to see and treat the problem as a public health issue which is where we need to get to.</p>
<b>ATSA 1</b>	<p>In following up on the non-Western perspective, I have to admit that I've been quite ignorant of what the reality is on the ground. Sure, I can read about things that happen in other countries as well as anyone else can, but I don't think we in the West truly get the non-Western experience until we're in it, or at least have had some interaction with it. For example, we all read about the bus rape-murder case in India. Actually, this case was reported on simultaneously to the case in the US with the two football players and the girl who was passed out. We're equally outraged by these actions, but how do we Westerners approach the nuances that, perhaps, exist in terms of how each situation came to be -- Western and Eastern?</p> <p>I had the great fortune to visit Egypt a couple of weeks ago -- my first foray into a culture that was clearly not Western or with a Christian foundation. In the US, we hear lots of things about Muslims and Islam; sometimes, maybe not very helpful things in terms of making open-minded decisions. Overall, I have to say</p>

	<p>that the approach to women that we expected didn't actually appear, but there was certainly a different approach to gender relations than at home. I wonder how much better I might understand sexual violence in different cultures if I actually had the chance to see some of the dynamic in person.</p> <p>So, in this discussion, we've had a lot of perspectives on how we "should" encourage various stakeholder groups to view sexual violence differently. If we pay attention to ATSA 2, we need to consider the prevention side of the house, and she is entirely correct. If we listen to STOP IT NOW, we need to make sure that all persons are protected from victimization, regardless of faith, race, or other distinguishing cultural elements, and that those who are victimized need to have a voice, regardless of those differences. If we buy in to ATSA 3's perspective, we need to shift our thinking on these issues from crime and punishment to public health. They, too, are entirely correct. Without meaning to give any of the perspectives here short-shrift, we lastly need to go back to UWE's initial pleas for broadly based, multi-cultural, and international collaboration in achieving all of these goals. But, how do we get there from here?</p> <p>My thinking has always been that we, the so called experts, have often failed to successfully bring our message to the masses. We have the data, we have the evidence ... how do we get normal folks to listen to us when we tell them of the realities of sexual abuse in the 21st Century? Why is it that so many politicians and citizens just don't believe us, or say that they don't care what the research says, they know that these guys all reoffend and that they're all dangerous forever ... in spite of what we <b>KNOW</b> to be the truth? Is it time for a professional call to arms? How do we cogently and credibly defend our positions that much of the current legislation <b>won't</b> reduce risk, that treatment <b>does</b> work, and that most of our offending population <b>can</b> eventually return to the community and play a productive role -- with our assistance and that of ordinary citizens? Circles of Support and Accountability "proves" these points, with better odds ratios than our best treatment programs but, still, how do we get them to believe us? I'm not sure I know how to answer all these questions I'm asking, but I can sure tell you that I feel the frustration almost every day in my dealings with the community, probation and parole officers, the courts, and policymakers. Heck, sometimes even my own mother doesn't believe me...</p>
UWE	<p>Let me start by thanking everyone for their engagement in this debate.</p> <p>To me the overriding theme to come out of this conversation is the inherent complexity of responding to sexual violence in any coherent fashion, both internally (nationally) and externally (internationally). While we all agree that a more realistic approach, and maybe a change of dialogue/debate around this, is needed there are real issues in doing this, including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How do we change individual perceptions of sexual offending, sexual offenders and victims of sexual abuse? Is the current individual case example still working or do we need to rethink this approach?</li> <li>2. How do we change policy makers understanding of the impacts</li> </ol>

	<p>and realities of sexual violence, so that the related cost/benefits are realistic and inform good practice. How do we move away from reactionary policies to more preventative ones?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. How do we change government mindsets away from reaction towards more realistic approaches? Allow them to think long term and beyond short term policies which are often ill advised.</li> <li>4. How do we get local, regional, national and international representatives (and cross boarder groups) to fall in line and agree to work together. If we cannot all agree on what we are discussing and the best practice how can have a coherent response?</li> </ol> <p>One of the ways that we can do this is by focusing on a coherent message, which is simple and relates to everyone; which is the difficult bit. How do we talk about safety, punishment, justice, rehabilitation, support, cost cutting, evidence based policy, good practice and education in a few words; I don't know. But what is obvious from this debate is that this is a conversation that we want to have and resolve, whether this is through a summit, conference or, more widely, in the press. We need to change the societal dialogue about sexualised violence how perpetrators as well as victims are; this can be done through the press but can be done in other, more localised, ways. We had to large sexual abuse scandals last year which opened up the capacity for public dialogue; we have to build on this in a way which informs public/social knowledge in a realistic fashion. There is agreement that sexual violence is a public health issue and that this seems like a realistic platform to start from, so let's engage with the public health camp and learn from their mistakes and good practice</p>
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**Partner Organisations**

