Sexual violence: Raising the conversations

A literature review

Prepared for Te Puni Kōkiri and The Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs

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Executive Summary
This literature review is intended to contribute to efforts to raise awareness and conversations around sexual violence. It is focused on men’s sexual violence against adolescent and adult women.

Risk factors
Adopting an ecological model, we examine factors contributing to sexual violence at societal, community, relational and individual levels.

At the societal level, we argue that prevention requires challenging what various authors have termed the “rape culture;” that is, a culture in which male dominance and female subservience are seen as the natural state of affairs. Men are assumed to be driven by strong sexual urges and to be the initiators of sexual activity. Women, on the other hand, are seen as being passive. For boys, achieving intercourse may be regarded as an important marker of becoming a “real” man. Being a “stud” is likely to be valued. For girls, social esteem may require, on the one hand, that they be sexually attractive. But on the other hand, the expression of sexual desire may earn them the label of “slut.” Through such mechanisms, a rape culture constructs sex as something which men “get” and women may “give” – but not too easily. It is a culture in which “no” may quite literally not mean “no.” It is a culture in which women who cross imagined lines of chaste conduct are constructed as “asking for it.” It is a culture in which certain rape myths act to condone men’s sexual violence and to blame women for their victimisation. At a societal level, prevention requires addressing the power inequalities between men and women, including economic inequality.

For women of colour, the power relations of gender intersect with the power relations of racism. Taking a stand against sexual violence may be seen as disloyalty to one’s race or cultural group. For Māori and Pacific women, gender power relations cannot be fully understood without factoring in colonisation. Colonisation introduced a patriarchal ideology, redefined the roles of women, and undermined certain cultural practices which were protective against rape. Prevention requires challenging imposed ideologies and revitalising protective cultural practices.

Through the transmission of norms, community level-factors shape members’ beliefs and behaviour. Increasingly, norms are transmitted by the media, which often portray sexual violence in a way sympathetic to the perpetrator, and/or blaming of the victim. The increased availability of violent pornography via the internet is a risk factor, at least for some men. While sexual violence occurs across diverse communities, prevention requires understanding culture-specific protective factors which might be strengthened. It is important to recognise the influence of external pressures on communities such as racism, poverty and immigration.

At the relational level, the key risk factor for sexual violence for women is (historical) childhood neglect, abuse and the witnessing of family violence. Similarly, experiencing family dysfunction, including abuse and neglect, are risk factors for sexual violence perpetration by men. Among men, the peer group can be important in perpetuating rape supportive beliefs. Interventions targeting relevant peer groups may be a promising strategy.

At the individual level, men who hold rape-supportive beliefs are more likely to commit sexual violence than other men. Most rapists have committed or attempted a sexual assault before. For women, the single most important risk-factor is their partner or another man known to them, particularly partners who are physically violent. In contrast, the stranger rapist is relatively uncommon. Women who have been a victim of a sexual assault have an increased risk of further assault. Women with disabilities face a greatly elevated risk. Prevention efforts must pay particular attention to this group.
Prevention efforts
Most of the prevention initiatives which have been evaluated have been implemented in US universities and may have limited applicability here. They do suggest, however, that it is possible to change rape-supportive attitudes and to enhance empathy for victims through education programmes. However, some education has been counter-productive. For example, some attempts to build victim empathy have actually strengthened victim-blaming beliefs. Similarly, some education programmes have merely served to reinforce stereotypical beliefs about men as sexually aggressive and women as passive. Rape avoidance programmes for women are particularly problematic because they place the burden of prevention on women. Self-defence classes for women hold promise; communication, assertiveness and limit-setting classes do not. Sex education for young people can be problematic due to its focus on biology and danger, to the neglect of realities such as pleasure, relationships and peer pressure. Discussions of consent can be useful where the influence of traditional gender roles is discussed and critically examined.

The best results are likely to arise from a multi-level approach to prevention.

At the **individual** level, the aim is to strengthen individual knowledge and skills. Education leading to reduced rape-myth acceptance is advised, as well as programmes which recognise participants’ potential role as bystanders. Education for young people should discuss sexuality and the negotiation of ethical sexual relationships. While schools should be considered as an avenue for such education, other youth ‘groups’ should be considered as well to avoid missing those young people who truant and/or leave school early. Education should also address homophobia.

At the **community** level, the aim is to promote community ownership of the issue. Initiatives need to be matched with the level of readiness of the specific community. Educating **providers** such as midwives, migrant support services and police will be useful.

Social change is likely to be enhanced by **building coalitions** and networks, for example between rape crisis groups, women’s refuges and professional organisations. Mobilising men to make a stand against sexual violence is likely to be important.

**Organisational practices** can be a target of prevention efforts; for example, work place sexual harassment policies. Working with media organisations to improve media treatment of sexual violence may be useful. Churches and other community organisations ought to be involved. Finally, prevention should also address **policies and legislation**. Examples include policy regarding sex education, the availability of pornography and addressing women’s economic disadvantage. Social and economic development initiatives which enhance a community’s ability to protect women and girls and to ensure rangatahi develop healthy attitudes and behaviours may also be expected to reduce sexual violence.

In summary, sexual violence has causal roots in broad, societal phenomena, in community dynamics, in relationships and in individual characteristics, histories and behaviours. Prevention efforts can only hope to be effective if they work synergistically to address these issues at multiple levels.
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1. **Background to the project**

Te Puni Kōkiri is working with the Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs to raise awareness and conversations around sexual violence. This is part of wider Government initiatives to prevent sexual violence. This literature review is intended to contribute to the evidence base supporting such initiatives. Although we have made a particular effort to locate literature relevant to the prevention of sexual violence in Māori and Pacific Island communities, this review is intended to address issues of relevant to Aotearoa/New Zealand in general.

We begin our review by briefly considering the definition of sexual violence, its prevalence, and its impact.

In Section 2, following the lead of public health theorists, we use an ecological framework to discuss factors which contribute to – or are protective of – sexual violence. That is, we adopt a multi-level approach, considering risk factors at societal, community, relationship and individual levels. Although we look at each of these levels in turn, as will become evident, it is also important to consider the interactions between levels.

In Section 3, we review evaluations of various attempts to prevent sexual violence. Mostly, these evaluations have focused on individual level prevention efforts: prevention at community and societal levels seem to have received little attention from evaluators. Nevertheless, there are some useful lessons to be gained from the evaluation literature.

In section 4, we attempt to integrate the material considered in sections 2 and 3 into a framework proposed by the (US) National Sexual Violence Resource Center (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2006). Consistent with a public health approach, the *Spectrum of Prevention* is a multi-level model.

**Definitions and focus**

In this review, we take as our starting point the World Health Organisation’s definition of sexual violence, namely,

> any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work (Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002, p. 149).

There are three things to note about this definition.

Firstly, the definition is wider than those acts described as “Sexual offences” by the Crimes Act, 1961 (ss. 127-144c). The Act outlines various forms of sexual violation, of which “rape” is just one. While rape may be regarded as the “modal” form of sexual violence, in fact, sexual violence can take a multitude of forms, as is made clear in the list of Types of Sexual Violence prepared by the Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence (see box over).

Secondly, the definition refers to *unwanted* activity achieved through *coercion*. That is, it is not the act per se which is constitutive of sexual violence but the fact that one party has not freely consented to it. While this seems obvious enough, as we show later, the issue of consent is not necessarily straight-forward. Coercion can take many forms, including the powerful effect of certain social norms about sexual behaviour.
In this study, sexual violence was defined as “being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when the woman did not want to (and/or) having sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do (and/or) being forced to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating” (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004, p. 1174).

Thirdly, there is one point on which we depart from this definition. It is gender-neutral, but this review focuses exclusively on men’s sexual violence against adult women (both adult and adolescent-taitamawahine). This is not to deny the reality of other forms of sexual violence, including sexual violence against men, sexual violence in gay and lesbian relationships or sexual violence against children.

Estimates of the incidence and prevalence of sexual violence vary depending on the definition and methodology used. For example, in a survey carried out by Massey University researchers 9.3% of women reported being sexually assaulted as an adult sometime in the past, while 0.3% reported such an assault in the past year (Flett, Kazantzis, Long, MacDonald, & Millar, 2004). In contrast, the 2006 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey found that 4% of women had been the victim of a sexual offence in the previous year. The rate among Māori women was 8% (Mayhew & Reilly, 2007). Finally, Janet Fanslow and her colleagues (2004) interviewed 2,855 women randomly selected from addresses in Auckland the North Waikato. While ethnicity was not reported, the researchers did distinguish sexual violence by partners from sexual violence by non-partners. Substantially more women reported having ever experienced sexual violence by a partner than sexual violence by non-partners (14% versus 9% for women in Auckland; 20% versus 12% for women in North Waikato). Moreover, of the women who had experienced moderate or severe physical violence from a partner 42% had also experienced sexual violence.

It is important to note that the experience of sexual violence can begin at quite an early age. The Youth 2000 survey of high school students found that almost a quarter of young Māori (24.6%) had experience(s) of sexual abuse or coercion (defined as

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1 This included “Forced sexual intercourse,” “Attempted forced sexual intercourse,” “Distressing sexual touching” and “Other sexual violence.”

2 But excluding the 111 women who had never had a partner and 3 for whom information on partner status was missing, the following statistics were calculated on a sample of 2,674 women.

3 In this study, sexual violence was defined as “being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when the woman did not want to (and/or) having sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do (and/or) being forced to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating” (Fanslow & Robinson, 2004, p. 1174).
being “touched in a sexual way or made to do sexual things that they didn’t want to do,” slightly lower than the rate among young women overall (26%) (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2004; Clarke, 2004, p. 59). On the other hand, a study of year 10 and year 12 high school students in Northland found a difference between Māori and non-Māori rates. That is, almost a third (32%) of young Māori women had been forced into sex compared to 21% of young women overall (Tarrant & Scalen, 1995, cited in Pouwhare, 1999).

We have been unable to find published studies of the prevalence of sexual violence among Pacific women. The Pacific Island Families Study conducted by the Auckland University of Technology has provided prevalence data for intimate partner violence as measured by the Conflict Tactics Scale; of the mothers surveyed, 23% reported “any” violence from their partner in the previous year, while 11% reported “severe physical violence” (Paterson, Feehan, Butler, Williams, & Cowley-Malcolm, 2007).

Unfortunately, the researchers appear to have used an earlier version of the Conflict Tactics Scale which does not include items about sexual violence.

Sexual violence can have major implications for victims’ physical, psychological, social and spiritual health. These can include serious physical injuries, sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, depression, suicidal behaviour, ostracism, isolation and post-traumatic stress disorder (Bright & Bowland, 2008; Frazier & Berman, 2008; Grubaugh & Resick, 2007; Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002; Mahoney & Williams, 1998; Martin, Taft, & Resick, 2007; Martin, Young, Billings, & Bross, 2007; Muran, 2007). It is estimated that sexual violence costs the New Zealand economy $1.2 billion per annum (Treasury, 2003/04). And, as we argue below, it has implications for the status of women, being both a reflection of, and a contributor to, their lower status compared to men.

2. A public health framework for understanding prevention

Efforts to prevent a problem typically reflect our understanding of its causes. As understandings of sexual violence have changed, so have efforts to respond to and prevent it. Historically, theoretical explanations have been dominated by questions of morality and punishment, at least in the West (Chung, O’Leary, & Hand, 2006). This has given rise to some peculiar inconsistencies. On the one hand, as evident in nineteenth century British law, women and children had no legal standing as individuals in their own right, but were instead effectively the property of their husbands and fathers (Blackstone, 1857). In this context, rape was regarded as a serious crime invoking severe penalties, but only for those men who were not in “legitimate” positions of control over the victim (Chung, O’Leary, & Hand, 2006). At the same time, notions of morality have meant that certain kinds of sexual activity were seen as immoral and deserving of opprobrium (e.g. sex outside marriage) and, in certain instances, punishment (e.g. homosexual sex) (Chung, O’Leary, & Hand, 2006) – whether or not the parties consented to the activity. In some respects, we have not moved all that far. Only in 1985 did it become possible to prosecute a man for raping his wife.4 Notions of morality in sexuality have meant victims of rape have often been judged unworthy and “asking for it” (Cook, David, & Grant, 2001). Similarly, as we argue later, certain notions of morality concerning sex have sometimes served to undermine attempts to prevent sexual violence.

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4 The Crimes Amendment Act (no 3), 1985, repealed s.128 of the original (1961) Act which, at s.128(3) specifically excluded prosecution of a husband for rape of his wife unless the couple had divorced or there was a separation order in place.
More recently, as the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2004) has pointed out, various theories have been advanced to explain sexual violence. These include biological models, psychological models, cultural models and feminist, power-based models. Each of these may contribute something to our understanding but it is unlikely that any one will give a complete account of sexual violence.

On the other hand, an ecological model provides a framework for considering questions of causation at multiple levels. An ecological model, also has room for encompassing various theories about the risk and protective factors in sexual violence. (See box below.)

In the following section, we review the literature addressing factors which appear to contribute to the incidence of sexual violence at each of the four levels mentioned by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: societal, community, relationship and individual. As we will show, consideration of such factors at each of these levels can provide insights into prevention priorities.

**Societal determinants**

While sexual violence is (usually) the act of an individual man against an individual woman, it is important to place such acts in the context of prevailing societal values, beliefs and norms (Conway-Long, 2002; Dabby, 2007; Gavey, 2005; Kim, 2002). Various scholars have provided analyses of what they term the “rape culture” (Boswell & Spade, 1996; Carr & VanDeusen, 2004; Conway-Long, 2002; Stewart, 1996; Watson-Franke, 2002). In Watson-Franke’s terms, a rape culture is one in which male dominance and female resistance to male sexual aggression are seen as the norm, so that “Dominance and control (by men) over women become aspects of achieving and experiencing masculinity, and rape, while not condoned, becomes part of the culture at large” (p.600). As we argue below, dominant discourses about heterosexuality in New
Zealand reflect exactly these characteristics. That is not to say they are universal and unchallenged: as we also point out, dominant discourses are resisted in various ways. But unless we understand and challenge rape culture, we are unlikely to make much progress in preventing sexual violence.

Sexual violence, colonisation and racism

In the case of indigenous women and women of colour, the dominance and control to which they are subject is not only about gender. For them, the rape culture can only be fully understood by examining the intersections between gender and racism and between gender and colonisation.

The racial politics of rape are well-documented in the US where, during the nineteenth century, Black men suspected of raping White women were often lynched while White men could rape their Black women slaves with impunity (Hill Collins, 2000). During the twentieth century, 90% of the men who were executed for rape were African American (Gavey, 2005, citing Berger, 1977; Davis, 1978; and LaFree, 1989) but no man has been executed for the rape of an African American woman (White, 1999). As Patricia Hill Collins notes, in a racist society, Black women are torn between loyalties to their race and to their gender, and face intersecting oppressions. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, Māori and Pacific women face similar dilemmas and oppressions. Some Māori women’s advocates caution women against reporting rape to a “male dominated” criminal justice system which is “nothing short of institutional rape” (Pitman, 1996, p. 47). Within the context of intimate relationships, Māori women may be subject to racist put-downs and slurs from their partners (Glover, 1993).

Similarly, there is now an extensive literature supporting the notion that colonisation plays a role in the perpetration of sexual violence in indigenous communities by undermining traditional values and practices protective against sexual violence, by the colonisers’ construction of indigenous women as dirty and impure, and by the sexual harassment and rape by White men of the indigenous women providing them with domestic services. These factors been noted in various parts of the colonised world, particularly North America and the Pacific (Dabby, 2007; Donovan & Williams, 2002; Goldsmith, Hall, García, Wheeler, & George, 2005; Herbst et al., 2007; Kaufman et al., 2007; Kim, 2002; Lira, Koss, & Russo, 1999; McPhillips, Berman, Olo-Whaanga, & McCully, 2002; Petersen, Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Smith, 2003; Stewart, 1996).

In Aotearoa, a particularly dramatic example of the link between colonisation and sexual violence has been recorded by the Waitangi Tribunal. Government soldiers taking part in the invasion of Taranaki in the 1860s were known to rape local women (Waitangi Tribunal, 1996). In such instances, colonisation, often referred to as rape in a metaphorical sense, was literally rape.

More generally, colonisation in Aotearoa saw the “destruction of the whānau” (Mikaere, 1994, p. 133) and the undermining of the status of women as a Western ideology of patriarchy was imposed by Pakeha settlers, particularly through the church and the school (Balzer, Haimona, Henare, & Matchitt, 1997; Herangi-Panapa, 1998; Kruger et al., 2004; Milroy, 1996; Wainohu, 1991).

The first stages of this process are evident in certain accounts of Māori women by early European travellers and settlers. Joseph Banks, partly in a misinterpretation of the hongi, described young Māori women as “skittish as unbroken fillies” (quoted in Salmond, 1992, p. 166). Similarly, Survieille's crew, probably in a misinterpretation of whakapohane, interpreted the behaviour of Māori women they met as “lasciviousness” (Salmond, 1992, p. 330). As Linda Smith has pointed out,
Those who first wrote about Māori society at the time of early contact between
Māori and European were not Māori, neither were they female. Consequently,
Māori women were either ignored or portrayed as wanton, amoral and
undisciplined creatures. Māori society was portrayed as a hierarchy based on
gender, and by being left out of the accounts, Māori women were portrayed as
being excluded from participation and determining tribal policy (1992).

Early settlers often failed to understand the leadership roles played by women
(Johnston & Pihama, 1994). For instance, Crown agents seeking signatories for Te Tiriti
typically ignored the possibility that women might have the mandate to sign, and often
refused to let them do so if they tried (Orange, 1992).

Missionaries and mission schools too played a crucial role in re-positioning and re-
defining Māori women. That is, the missionaries often saw Māori women as
promiscuous. In mission schools, Māori girls were taught that the Virgin Mary was the
model of womanhood; pious and subservient (Jenkins & Matthews, 1998). Mythology
was recast.

Faced with the irrefutable expression of female sexual power that Hine-nui-te-po
posed, the redefiners of Māori cosmology recast her as evil and destructive. This
fitted nicely with biblical notions of women being responsible for sin. The negative
connotations that men attached to the female sexual organs were also entirely
consistent with Old Testament notions of women being unclean because of
menstruation (Mikaere, 1999, p. 41).

Such negative constructions of women and women’s sexuality stand in sharp contrast
to traditional notions such te whare o te tangata, “the only source from which all new
life flows” (Norman, 1992, p. 8). Similarly, the imposed ideology tended to undermine
the central role of women in ensuring continuity as reflected in the multiple meanings
of whenua, as both ancestral land and the placenta which nourishes the foetus as it
grows within the mother (Norman, 1992).

Mission schooling tended redefine the role of Māori women as it focused on training
girls in the domestic arts – Pakeha style – in the larger project of “Europeanising”
Māori. Such schools were preparing them for running Pakeha-style homes, in which
they were to minister to the needs of bread-winning husbands and caring for children
in nuclear family households (Jenkins & Matthews, 1998).

Such educational policies went hand in hand with the alienation of land. With the loss
of their economic base, whānau often had to break up into nuclear families who
migrated into the cities. Economic policies of the post World War II era exacerbated
the problem as large numbers of Māori left their turangawaewae, with the
consequential loss of the support structures and social control mechanisms the wider
whānau had provided (Kruger et al., 2004, 2002; Mikaere, 1994; Ritchie & Ritchie,
1990).

The role played by whānau in protecting women from violence has been described by
Annie Mikaere (1994). Citing Rose Pere, Mikaere points out that, traditionally,
“marriage” did not alter the fact that a woman’s primary relationship was with her
whānau, who held her “in-laws” responsible for her welfare. Thus, an assault against
her, sexual or otherwise, was regarded as a whānau concern. The perpetrator could pay
a high price, including death or banishment (See also Jackson, 1995). Stephanie Milroy
(1996) recalls an incident of domestic violence in her whānau’s history. The woman
returned to her whānau who approached the husband’s whānau and asked that he be
handed over. While that did not happen, they agreed to pay £5,000 compensation and
handed over the children of the relationship.

One of the people interviewed by Roma Balzer and her colleagues put it this way.
You never had your marriage by yourself. It was family marrying family. Women were valued: you couldn’t just whack her and get away with it because it was an insult to the whole family (1997, p. 21)

To some extent, the protective role of whānau has survived colonisation. Recent research investigating women’s experiences of protection orders included several examples of whānau support making a significant difference to Māori women who were being abused by male partners (Robertson et al., 2007b; see case studies Halle and Te Rina). More commonly, however, the isolation of women from whānau made them more vulnerable to violence.

More recently, the economic restructuring of the late 1980s and 1990s has had a disproportionately negative effect on Māori with predictable effects on health and well-being (Ajwani, Blakely, Robson, Tobias, & Bonne, 2003; Durie, 2001; Kelsey, 1995). The Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence referred to “social policy that creates whakapapa-less whānau” (Kruger et al., 2002). The key informants interviewed in a study specifically focusing on sexual violence had a very clear analysis of the impact of colonisation (McPhillips, Berman, Olo-Whaanga, & McCully, 2002). These included: the loss, for many Māori, of whānau, hapū and iwi links; the diminishment of te reo Māori; the alienation of land; and the loss of traditional values and beliefs.

Western rape culture
It is not difficult to find much in Western society reflective of a rape culture as that term is used by Watson-Franke (2002). An obvious example is the ambiguous position of rape within marriage. In most Western jurisdictions, married men were, until relatively recently, specifically protected from prosecutions for rape against their wives. As we noted earlier, New Zealand’s law changed in 1985 but prosecutions of husbands for raping their wives are very rare. The criminal justice system’s response to sexual violence has been widely recognised as deeply problematic, with low rates of reporting, low rates of prosecution and low rates of conviction meaning that very few perpetrators are held accountable for their behaviour. (For an analysis of some of these problems, see Jordan, 2001, 2004; McDonald, 1994, 2005)

Over the last quarter of the twentieth century, feminist scholars began to question the role of rape within the wider (Western) society. They pointed out that although rape was officially condemned as a crime, it was actively tolerated in various ways. In fact, the criminal status of rape, it was argued, owed much to the idea that in raping a woman, the rapist was violating another man’s property rights (Gavey, 2005), an implicit expression of the explicit legal position described by Blackstone (1857) in the previous century. Thus rape can only be fully understood in the context of the power relations between men and women. As it was it expressed in the New York Radical Feminists Manifesto of 1971, “The act of rape is the logical expression of the essential relationship now existing between men and women” (Manhart & Rush, 1974, p. xvi). Moreover, it has been pointed out that rape not only reflects the unequal power relations between men and women but contributes to that inequality (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002) by reinforcing the idea that women are vulnerable and in need of men’s protection.

These are not just abstract ideas but have very concrete implications. Recently, the first author (NR) was part of a group of researchers investigating women’s experiences of protection orders. As often happened, one of our participants (“Patricia”) reflected on why she had stayed with her partner despite the numerous assaults, some very serious, she had experienced. She noted that her partner was “a good earner” but also told us that she had twice been raped by other men. Despite his abusive behaviour,
Patricia saw her partner as at least being able to protect her from worse violence from other men (Robertson et al., 2007a).

Patricia’s comment draws attention to another important factor in understanding sexual violence against women: her partner was “a good earner.” Patricia had remained in the relationship partly because it enabled her children to have a better standard of living than was possible if she was to be a sole parent. The disparity between the wealth of men and women has long been seen as a factor shaping heterosexual relationships in general and sexual violence in particular. The crude “joke” about a woman “sitting on her best asset” exemplifies this. While the joke may be seen as distasteful in some circles, the fact that we immediately understand it reflects the extent to which the economic power of men relative to women shapes heterosexual relationships. Women who are more or less economically dependent on men have, as was the case with Patricia, relatively few options but to put up with sexually aggressive partners (Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985). In fact, such dependence raises troubling questions about the construction of consent in relationships in which one partner (usually the woman) is dependent on the other (usually the man). Economic dependence is part of what can make marriage a “License to rape” (Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985).

This is not to say that a relationship in which the couple have disparate economic power is necessarily abusive. Power comes in many forms and its negotiation is complex. Empirical studies of the relationship between economic status and the incidence of sexual violence are often limited by the fact that they rely on criminal justice statistics and thus exclude the large majority of sexual assaults. Nevertheless, various studies support the contention that economic factors can influence the prevalence of sexual violence. For example, women with higher levels of education (and thus higher potential, if not actual, earnings) have been found to experience lower rates of sexual violence than other women (Brown, Thurman, Bloem, & Kendall, 2006). Similarly, a number of studies suggest an inverse relationship between income and sexual violence (Crouch, Hanson, Saunders, Kilpatrick, & Resnick, 2000; Elliott, Mok, & Briere, 2004; Morris, 1997; O’Donnell, Smith, & Madison, 2002). Areas of relative poverty have been found to have higher rates of rape than more egalitarian communities (Peterson & Bailey, 1988). Locally, Pouwheae (1999) observed that educational and employment policies of the 1980s and 1990s had marginalised Māori women and increased their vulnerability to violence.

The feminist analysis of the late twentieth century led to the politicisation of rape (Gavey, 2005) and to slogans such as “all men are potential rapists” and “all men benefit from rape.” In 1977, Susan Griffin described rape as “the All-American crime,” arguing that, “rape is not an isolated act that can be rooted out from patriarchy without ending patriarchy itself” (p. 66). As the New Zealand psychologist Nicola Gavey has put it, “normative gender relations were argued to be thoroughly implicated in the maintenance and support of rape” (2005, p. 30).

Normative heterosex

Gavey’s use of the word “normative” is significant. As she and others argue (e.g. Allen, 2003a; Carmody, 2005), certain versions of the 1970’s and 1980’s feminist analysis of rape have not served rape prevention well (nor gender relations generally), principally because they risk essentialising masculinity and femininity. That is, they can be taken as suggesting that it is men’s essential nature to be aggressive and proprietorial towards women partners and that women are necessarily and inevitably passive and submissive. Patently, that is not the case. For example, the work of Lousia Allen in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Allen, 2003a, , 2003b, 2004, 2005) and Moira Carmody in
Australia (Carmody, 2005, 2006) is exemplary in showing how young people may resist dominant (normative) versions of masculinity and femininity in their sexual relationships. But the very idea of resistance confirms the power of those norms and dominant discourses, which, in the context of the present discussion, must be seen as significant societal-level risk factors for rape.

The norms and discourses of heterosexual sex in New Zealand and other Western societies are closely examined in Nicola Gavey’s (2005) book *Just Sex? The cultural scaffolding of rape*. Gavey examines the “everyday taken-for-granted normative forms of heterosexuality (which) work as a cultural scaffolding for rape” (p.2). She explicitly does not argue that “normative forms” of (hetero) sex are rape or even that they are *necessarily like* rape. As she notes “Even the most gender-stereotypically conformist patterns of sex might have nothing in common – for the participants – with the experience of rape” (p. 2). However, in Gavey’s analysis, the distinction between rape and consensual, mutually desired sex is not always as clear cut as is commonly assumed. Instead, the dominant construction of heterosexuality emphasises the man as being the active partner, initiating sex, and the woman as the passive partner, for whom open expression of sexual desire may risk her being seen as promiscuous and unworthy.

Much as these constructions have been contested, their power is evident in how young men and women talk about their sexual experiences. For example, young men have been reported as seeing themselves as having a much stronger sex drive than women. They saw themselves as driven by “hormones” and “wild desires.” These were seen as largely uncontrollable, although perhaps paradoxically, they also talked about sex as “go(ing) for it” (Hird & Jackson, 2001). For young men, first sex was commonly seen as a path to masculinity (Flood, 2008; Hird & Jackson, 2001). It was an achievement, exemplified by the term “I scored” (Carmody & Willis, 2006). Having heterosex separated them from “wusses” (effeminate men). While not all aspired to be one, being a “stud” was seen as positive (Hird & Jackson, 2001).

In contrast, young women tended to have more ambivalent attitudes about their developing sexuality. On the one hand, they are bombarded with images in the media suggesting that achieving adulthood requires that they be sexually active. On the other hand, they risk being labelled a slut if they are (Hird & Jackson, 2001). On the one hand, sexual attractiveness might bring admiration from their peers. On the other hand, there was a fine line between this and condemnation for being seen as too forward, too available or even slutty (Carmody & Willis, 2006; Hird & Jackson, 2001). The young women noted that stud was a positive term for men but that there was no positive equivalent for sexually active women.
It is easy to see how such constructions of heterosex provide the "scaffolding" of rape. Men are agents: initiators, assertive, even aggressive. Women are objects to be acted upon. They are expected to be passive. They are not expected to openly express sexual desires. To do so, would contravene the notion of the "good" woman, who may consent to sex, but not too quickly. One implication of this construction is quite literally that "no" may not necessarily mean "no". (See Scully, 1990, for a discussion of rapists' beliefs about women's expressions of (non) consent.)

None of this justifies rape. Neither should this construction of heterosexuality be seen as monolithic and inevitable. But it does suggest that rape prevention efforts are unlikely to be fully effective unless they include attempts to critically examine the norms of heterosexual relationships in contemporary society.

Unpacking normative heterosex raises other issues about consent. For a start, the normative position is that consent is something that men seek and women give (Gavey, 2005). As the work of Louisa Allen shows, couples may "resist" this dominant construction and negotiate sex on a more equal, reciprocal manner, a point we discuss later. But here we note that one of the implications of the dominant construction of heterosex is that women are placed in the position of being the "gatekeeper" for men's sexual desires (Hird & Jackson, 2001).

Not that the gatekeeper role necessarily comes with power. As Nicola Gavey points out, the option to not consent may be largely illusory. A choice can only be evaluated by considering the implications of acting otherwise. Gavey's conversations with women include numerous examples of women "consenting" to sexual activity which was at best undesired and unpleasant and at worst, brutal. These include instances of women agreeing to have sex with partners to meet some presumed normal frequency of intercourse in heterosexual relationships, to meet their partners expectations of "special" weekends away, and to avoid feeling guilty for denying their partners.

Neither Gavey nor the women she interviewed considered these to be examples of sexual violence, but other examples were understood as rape – or like rape – at least in retrospect. For example, "Pat" recounted having sex with a comparative stranger after she went home with him. He was "quite violent", biting her thighs and breasts, and leaving her body bruised and marked. She described herself as "terrified". In her view, it was not strictly rape because she "more or less consented." That is, she ended up having sex with him partly because of emotional blackmail: "He actually said, 'you know, you've come over here and, if you didn't want to make love, why did you come,' and, a lot of stuff like that' and began to undress her (p. 159). As Gavey points out, here the man has invoked traditional discourses about women's sexuality, positioning Pat as having already crossed the boundary of chastity, even though she was "stunned" by his logic. But it is not just the emotional blackmail that is at work here. Paradoxically, Pat "gives up" resisting his advances in order to avoid being raped. She recognised that if she tried to keep her clothes on, "he'd simply force his way into me without even bothering to take my clothes off." At this point, the only possible way of viewing this as "not rape" is to uncritically accept as true and natural the precepts of normative heterosex.

Young New Zealand and British women's stories, as reported by Myra Hird and Sue Jackson (2001), provide other examples of the way the norms of heterosex are enlisted to coerce "consent." Men's sexual desires were often understood to be so strong – and largely uncontrollable – that they would over-ride what their girlfriends wanted. Men saw women's reluctance as an impediment to be overcome. In some instances, notions of romantic love were invoked ("If you really love me you'd have sex") along with
threats to leave and find another girlfriend. For women, “constant harassment to engage in sexual activity created pressure that wearied them into submission” (p.37).

A crucial insight from this line of research is that the negotiation of heterosex does not occur in a vacuum. Neither can consent and coercion be adequately understood solely as issues played out between two individuals. Instead, it is important to “address the larger issues of social forces that impact the free communication of consent” (Beres, 2007, p. 98). Thus, a young woman who “consents” because everyone else is doing it, a married woman who “consents” because sex is considered a normal part of married life, a woman who “consents” because she feels obligated having gone home with her date, or a woman who “consents” because she feels the man will rape her otherwise – all of these suggest that coercion might be best thought of as a two-level construct: interpersonal and social (Beres, 2007, p. 99). The prevention of sexual violence requires addressing coercion at both levels.

Rape myths
Some of the discourses and beliefs mentioned in our discussion of normative heterosex have come to be codified in what many researchers have called rape myths and rape supportive beliefs. These might be thought of as corollaries of the dominant constructions of Western masculinity and femininity. They are “attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women” (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, p. 134).

Typical statements of rape myths or rape supportive beliefs include “Women often make false reports of rape... Women secretly enjoy being raped... Only 'bad' women get raped... Most rapes occur as a 'spur of the moment' act in a dark alley by a stranger... Women 'ask for it' by their dress or actions” (University of Minnesota Duluth, nd). Various scales have been developed to measure these beliefs, the most commonly used being the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980, see box; Ryan, 2004). Others are the Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale (e.g. “In a dating relationship, a woman is largely out to take advantage of a man”), the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale (e.g. “Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women”) and the Hostility Towards Women Scale (e.g. “I feel that many times women flirt with men just to tease them or hurt them”) (Burt, 1980).

There seems little doubt that such cognitions do play a crucial role in the aetiology of sexual violence. Numerous studies have consistently shown that high scores on such scales are associated with sexual coercion in various samples, including convicted rapists, marital rapists and sexually aggressive men (see Ryan, 2004, for a review of research into the cognitive component of rape). Of course, an association does not necessarily mean causation; it is always possible that rape-condoning beliefs are adopted to justify behaviour after the event. However, some of the studies reviewed by Ryan (2004) do demonstrate that rape supportive beliefs are a precursor to sexual violence (e.g. Pithers, Kashima, Cumming, Beal, & Buell, 1988). Such beliefs are also likely to play a part in undermining support for victims of sexual violence, in discouraging victims from reporting sexual violence, in shaping juries’ views of trial evidence, and in discouraging bystanders from intervening in risky situations (e.g. Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Franiuk, Seefelt, Ceppress, & Vandello, 2008; Kalof, 1999; Petersen, Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Ryan, 2004; Schewe, 2002; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004; Ullman, 2007; White, 1999).
Homophobia

Before leaving the subject of societal level factors, it is important to acknowledge the role homophobia plays in sexual violence. As the title of Suzanne Pharr’s (1988) book put it, along with the economic system and violence, homophobia is “A weapon of sexism.” In her view, heterosexism (the assumption that the world is and must be heterosexual) and homophobia combine “to enforce compulsory heterosexuality” (p.16). Pharr paid particular attention to homophobia directed against lesbian women but perhaps even more important in the context of rape prevention is the link between violence against women and homophobia directed against gay men.

In 20 years of facilitating programmes for male perpetrators of domestic violence, the first author has been struck by the intensity of anti-gay feelings expressed by programme participants. The link is not difficult to see: both sexism and homophobia stem from a patriarchal social structure with its specific expectations of the proper roles of men and women (Capezza, 2007). Homophobia is a strong enforcer of compulsory heterosexuality. Even though they may sometimes be shorn of their sexual connotations, terms such as “gay”, “queer” “fag” or “poofter” serve as powerful shapers of young boys’ behaviour (Flood, 2008; Pascoe, 2005). Later, homophobic ideology may be explicit in peer pressure to have heterosex, as in “Don’t be a wuss” (Hird & Jackson, 2001, p. 32)

Homophobia may also be a driving force in hypermasculinity. That is, to avoid any risk of being seen as possibly gay, some men may go out of their way to prove themselves...
unquestionably macho – and one way of doing this is to “keep women in their place”, including the use of sexual violence (Parrott, Adams, & Zeichner, 2002; Truman, Tokar, & Fischer, 1996). It has also been argued that the rape of women and attacks on gay men fulfil a similar role for certain heterosexual men for whom the subordination of women and those men perceived as feminine promotes social bonding, celebrates power, and provides a public display of heterosexual masculinity (Franklin, 2004).

There is empirical support for believing that homophobia is implicated in the culture of rape. For example, large sample attitudinal studies have found that homophobia (towards both gay men and lesbians) is associated with greater acceptance of rape myths (Aosved & Long, 2006; Parrott, Adams, & Zeichner, 2002; Stevenson & Medler, 1995; Truman, Tokar, & Fischer, 1996).

Societal-level risk factors are not a sufficient explanation for sexual violence. If they were, then all men would, quite literally, be rapists, and women inevitably the victims. But as we move on to community, relationship and individual level factors, it is important not to lose sight of the bigger picture. Unless we can deconstruct the dominant rape culture, prevention efforts at lower levels will be less than fully effective. At best, we will be giving individual women and men mixed messages about sexual violence.

**Community level determinants**

The term community is quite broad. It has been used to describe groupings based on place (e.g. “the local community”), shared interests (e.g. “the rugby community”), ethnicity and/or culture (e.g. “the Chinese community”) or other shared demographic characteristics (e.g. “the deaf community”) – and we will do likewise in this section. However it is used, the defining characteristic of a community is the sense its members have of belonging, a sense of community (Bess, Fisher, Sonn, & Bishop, 2002). Communities are important to consider in the prevention of sexual violence for their role in shaping members’ beliefs and behaviour through the transmission of community norms (Kelly et al., 2003).

**Mass media and pornography**

Increasingly, people’s experience of community is mediated by the mass media, including the internet (Hodgetts & Chamberlain, 2007). This is made more so by the proliferation of media targeting particular audiences or communities. Unsurprisingly, some researchers have examined the role of the media in shaping attitudes to sexual violence, finding that its portrayal is often sympathetic to perpetrators and/or blaming of women victims, with film, music (especially rap), music videos and video games all attracting critical attention (Adams & Fuller, 2006; Bretthauer, Zimmerman, & Banning, 2007; Bronstein, 2008; Derne, 1999; Eveland & McLeod, 1999; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Franiuk, Seefelt, Cepress, & Vandello, 2008; Kalof, 1999; Petersen, Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Schewe, 2002; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004; Ullman, 2007; White, 1999). A typical example of this sort of work is the analysis by Jana Bufkin and Sarah Eschholz (2000) of 50 top-grossing films in 1996. Their conclusion: the depiction of rape tended to be unidimensional, reinforcing myths that it is committed by psychopathic lower-class men against vulnerable victims. In ignoring the reality of rape, the films were considered to contribute to the perpetuation of rape and sexual abuse.

Of particular concern in relation to the media is pornography. Pornography is not new but its availability has increased dramatically with the advent of the internet, which provides enhanced accessibility to pornography in general, and to violent pornography
in particular. Merely typing “rape” into a search engine gives access to countless “rape sites,” some free and others requiring the payment of a subscription. Such sites carry text, still images and video clips depicting rapes. Some of these are claimed to be actual rapes. Typically, the sites are quite explicit about the pain being inflicted: indeed, such statements seem to be part of the promotion of the content. The more technically sophisticated sites are highly interactive, offering the user the opportunity to choose from a menu the sort of woman they want to see victimised and the ability to click on parts of a woman’s body to receive more images (Gossett & Byrne, 2002).

Along with what the media shows, there is also the question of what the media does not show. It has been pointed out that generally missing from media depictions are stories of attempted rapes successfully resisted. The relative absence of such stories serves only to heighten notions of women’s vulnerability and may contribute to a tendency to underestimate women’s agency and ability to resist sexual violence (Rozee & Koss, 2001).

The impact of pornography and other media depictions of sexual violence has been the subject of some debate. It would be wrong, for example, to assume that viewing pornography and images of sexual violence inevitably increases the likelihood that a man will commit such violence. Such a view would suggest that people are unthinking, reactive consumers of media images and lack the ability to interrogate the images and text to which they are exposed. Certainly, the research points to significant differences in the effects of viewing pornography. For example, young men may be particularly vulnerable to having their attitudes to women and sex shaped by viewing pornography (Bonino, Ciarano, Rabaglietti, & Cattelino, 2006). In the case of adult men, there is evidence that those pre-disposed to sexual aggression may become more aggressive as a result of viewing pornography whereas it may not have that effect on non-aggressive men (Malamuth, Addison, & Koss, 2000; Seto, Maric, & Barbaree, 2001). Where there is an effect, it may be exacerbated by the consumption of alcohol (Davis, Morris, George, Martell, & Heiman, 2006; Lalumiare, Harris, Quinsey, & Rice, 2005). While such research alerts us to the complexity of the processes involved, the weight of evidence seems clear: the availability of violent pornography and other depictions of sexual violence in the media is a significant risk factor for the perpetration of sexual violence (Oddone-Paolucci, Genuis, & Violato, 2000).

Cultural communities

Researching sexual violence within specific cultural communities has been somewhat controversial because of the risk that non-dominant, minority cultural groups will become further stigmatised. This can happen when researchers, especially those conducting comparative studies, attribute to culture things which might more properly be attributed to other factors such as colonisation, poverty, racism, discriminatory policing and the like. It can also happen when abusers try to justify their behaviour by hiding behind cultural constructs. For example, the Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence described as “imposter tikanga” the use of “bastardised or mutated” cultural constructs to justify violence (Kruger et al., 2002, p. 25).

Stigmatisation occurs when researchers fail to understand the difference between such self-serving rationalisations and the authentic, tika use of cultural constructs. (For an example of this, see Māori flagged in rape review (Woulfe, 2008).)

Stigmatisation can also happen when researchers focus on culture-specific risk factors to the neglect of culture-specific protective factors. Both sorts of factors are important to consider in planning prevention efforts. A further complicating factor is that sexual violence and activism about sexual violence have quite different implications for
women and men within a non-dominant cultural group. That is, minority women’s activism (e.g. to get more culturally appropriate services) may be seen as being disloyal to the community and undermining community solidarity. This may be exacerbated by the fact that minority-group men may be over-policed relative to dominant group men and at higher risk of being arrested, convicted and imprisoned for sexual crimes (Kruger et al., 2002; White, 1999).

These issues are eloquently summarised by Firoza Chic Dabby of the San Francisco-based Asian and Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence.

Violence against women is a universal problem; the cultural expressions of the violence differ. Drawing attention to gender violence in particular cultures is risky because the nuances of cultural differences are hard to convey and can serve to confirm stereotypes. Culture is not the sum of tenaciously maintained traditions, but the intersection of dynamic forces that include social and political histories, practices and ideologies that are defined and re-defined by a plethora of its members and institutions. Women and children resist gender violence in the ways and spaces available to them, expressing agency (self-determination) through covert or overt strategies. These struggles occur in the contexts of additional structural oppressions, be they racism, anti-immigrant sentiments, homophobia, class elitism, etc. (Dabby, 2007, p. 1)

Just as it is important not to essentialise the dominant constructions of masculinity and femininity (as we have argued above), it is important not to essentialise culture. As Dabby points out, cultures are dynamic and changing. Moreover, members of cultural groups may be subject to oppressions and forces from outside their cultural group. Racism, poverty and immigration law are examples of such “external” pressures which need to be factored in to any analysis of risk and protective factors in relation to sexual violence.

For example, according to the key informants interviewed by Kathryn McPhillips and her colleagues, poverty is a major disincentive for Pacific women seeking help for violence (2002, p. 99). Similarly, immigration law can have major implications. This is graphically illustrated by the situation of non-resident women abused by the man who effectively controls their ability to remain in Aotearoa/New Zealand, either because he is the principal applicant for residence or because he is a New Zealand resident sponsoring her application for residence. (For examples of this, see the case studies of Amira, Amy, Eve, Laura, Sripai and Titiana in Robertson et al, 2007a.) Such risks may be accentuated by relative isolation, especially in the case of immigrant women brought into the country by Kiwi men and/or when abusive partners obtain orders from the Family Court preventing the removal of the women’s children from the country (Robertson et al., 2007b, see especially the case studies of Amira and Sripai). Faced with the loss of their children, such women are likely to “choose” to remain with the abuser.

As Dabby (2007) has pointed out, notions of culture can be used against immigrant women when abusers hide behind certain constructions of culture.

When ‘culture’ is used by our communities to explain and justify violence against women these claims are mostly based on frozen, male-defined ideas of culture. Cultural freeze refers to how traditions become tenaciously maintained, allowing in little change – the culture of the home country becomes frozen in time, making for more rigid attitudes (2007, p. 6).

Such rigid attitudes might be more likely when the immigrant culture is struggling to maintain itself and/or comes under attack from the dominant cultural group (Robertson et al., 2007a, see case study Sonal). Similarly, fear of the apparent immorality of Western culture can make immigrant parents especially vigilant and restrictive of their children’s freedom, particular their daughters. When young women
see that such restrictions are generally not so tightly applied to peers from the
dominant culture, they may rebel and run away from home and thus, ironically,
increase their vulnerability to sexual and other violence (McPhillips, Berman, Olo-
Whaanga, & McCully, 2002; Tyler, Whitbeck, Hoyt, & Cauce, 2004). One way of
thinking about this is that immigrant parents – and indeed other parents in high risk
neighbourhoods (e.g. those in which drugs, gangs and violence are prevalent) – have
less room for error than do middle class parents for whom being over- or under-
protective is less likely to have catastrophic results.

However, to rephrase Dabby (2007), violence against women, including sexual
violence, is no respecter of community membership. The point of considering
community-level factors has less to do with distinguishing high-risk communities from
low-risk communities as alerting us to some of the differences in the way sexual
violence may be manifested and responded to. It should particularly alert us to the
importance of community-specific prevention efforts. Because communities are so
important in shaping member’s values and beliefs (Kelly et al., 2003), community-level
interventions are likely to be crucial in efforts to prevent sexual violence (Centers for
Disease Control and Prevention, 2004).

Relationship level determinants
The ecological model of prevention (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004)
calls for consideration of relationship level factors. Here we are concerned with risk
factors which arise in the context of relationships with family and whānau, and with
peers.

At the level of family and whānau, there is one risk factor which stands out. Women
who have been neglected and abused as children, either physically, sexually or both, –
or who have witnessed violence in their family - have an elevated risk of becoming a
victim of sexual violence in later life (Dahlberg & Krug 2002; Foshee, Benefield, Ennett,
Bauman, & Suchindran, 2004; Frye, El-Bassel, Gilbert, Rajah, & Christie, 2001; Petersen,
Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004; Yuan, Koss, Polacca, &
Goldman, 2006). We think it important to emphasise the notion of elevated risk. One
of the problems of what might be called the current moral panic (Cohen, 1980) about
child abuse is that sometimes, the impact of child abuse is talked about in absolutist
terms, such that the impression is conveyed that experiencing child abuse will
necessarily and irreversibly blight one’s life. This is clearly untrue. It ignores the
resilience of children and negates the possibility of healing, replacing it with a fatalistic
attitude of abused children being irretrievably damaged. Without wanting to minimise
the impact of child abuse, we think it important to remember that risk assessment is
about relative chances of certain outcomes. Risk analysis can never predict what will
happen in individual cases.

Bearing the same caution in mind, among boys, family dysfunction has been identified
as a risk factor for the perpetration of rape as an adult (Gannon, Collie, Ward, &
Thakker, 2008). Childhood abuse and neglect have received particular attention by
researchers. Men who have been abused as children – or witnessed violence in their
family – have been found to have an elevated risk of perpetrating sexual violence as an
adult (Dahlberg & Krug 2002; Foshee, Benefield, Ennett, Bauman, & Suchindran, 2004;
Petersen, Bhana, & McKay, 2005; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004; Watkins &
Bentovim, 1992). However, it is less clear whether experiencing sexual abuse – as
distinct from other forms of child abuse – increases the risk a boy will sexually offend
as an adult. For example, Carr and Vandeusen (2004) found that it did not.

Nevertheless, the weight of research, unsurprisingly, tends to support the view that
boys raised in violent, chaotic and dysfunctional families are more likely to be violent – sexually and physically – than boys raised in more favourable circumstances.

Male peer group relationships have been identified as a potential influence on the risk of perpetrating sexual violence. For example, according to Ryan (2004), most date rapists report that their friends would approve of their behaviour. North American research on peer group influences has focused particularly on college fraternities and on male sports teams (e.g. Foubert & Perry, 2007). Membership of both sorts of organisations has been shown to be associated with higher levels of rape supportive beliefs (Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004). In Aotearoa/New Zealand, various commentators have identified rugby as playing an important role in supporting and perpetuating the expression of male violence (Phillips, 1987; Ritchie & Ritchie, 1990) but whether this translates to rugby players (of either or both codes) representing a high risk population is unclear. Nevertheless, it is likely that some male-only groups, such as sports teams, will provide opportunities for the sort of misogynist, homophobic male bonding described by Franklin (2004). At a minimum, they ought to be considered as a possible point of intervention in efforts to prevent sexual violence. (See discussion of Purple Armband Games, 2008, below.)

**Individual-level risk factors**

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the English-language social science literature, dominated by North American sources, has paid extensive attention to individual level explanations for sexual violence, both as they related to women’s risk of being victimised and to men’s risk of perpetrating sexual assault.

In relation to women, it is clear that the major individual-level risk factor is one’s partner, particularly if that partner is physically violent. As mentioned earlier, Janet Fanslow and her colleagues (2004) found that substantially more women reported having “ever” experienced sexual violence by a partner than sexual violence by non-partners (14% versus 9% for women in Auckland; 20% versus 12% for women in North Waikato). Moreover, of the women who had experienced moderate or severe physical violence from a partner, 42% had also experienced sexual violence.

In Fanslow’s study, sexual violence was defined as “being physically forced to have sexual intercourse when the woman did not want to (and/or) having sexual intercourse because she was afraid of what her partner might do (and/or) being forced to do something sexual that she found degrading or humiliating” (2004, p. 1174). A slightly broader definition was used in another New Zealand study (Robertson, Simpson, Whiteman, & Karapu, 2008). Of the 54 women who participated in this study, all residents of women’s refuges, 70% described themselves as having experienced “unwanted sexual activity” in the relationship with their current or most recent male partner. The implication from these studies is clear: sexual violence is strongly associated with domestic violence.

Fanslow and Robinson (2004) did not provide information on non-partner perpetrators of sexual violence, but presumably at least some of them were also known to the victim. Australian crime statistics do include such information. In 2003, 58% of sexual assaults against women reported to the Police were committed by someone known to the woman (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004). (If we omit those 26% of assaults in which the relationship was not recorded, the percentage increases to 78%.) It is likely that the proportions in Aotearoa/New Zealand are similar. Thus the main risk factor could be re-stated: the overwhelming greatest risk comes from one’s partner or another known male. The huge discrepancy between these statistics and a still-
common notion of a real rape being that committed by a stranger, poses a major challenge for prevention efforts (Rozee & Koss, 2001).

A less significant individual risk factor for women is having previously been a victim of sexual assault (Brownlie, Jabbar, Beitchman, Vida, & Atkinson, 2007; Garcia-Moreno, 2002; Greene & Navarro, 1998). By definition, this is not of much use in planning primary prevention strategies, but it does suggest the possibility that secondary prevention strategies may have a role to play in reducing the overall prevalence of sexual violence. The implication is that an affirming and supportive response to women who report sexual violence may reduce the likelihood of re-victimisation. Health services of all kinds may be particularly important in this regard (Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Helfrich, Fujiura, & Rutkowski-Kmita, 2008; Stermac, Reist, Addison, & Millar, 2002).

One other individual-level risk factor for women is important to mention; disability. This seems to be an under-researched topic, but a population sample study in the United States has calculated that women with disabilities are four times more likely to experience sexual assault than women without disabilities (Martin, Langley, & Millichamp, 2006). According to Canadian research, 83% of women with a disability will be sexually abused in their lifetime (Stimpson & Best, 1991, cited in Rajah, Frye, & Haviland, 2006), with caregivers often being the perpetrators. Poverty is likely to be an aggravating factor. For some women with a intellectual disability, recognising what has happened to them as an assault may be difficult (Rajah, Frye, & Haviland, 2006). Estimates of life-time prevalence for sexual assault among women with an intellectual disability range between 40% and 70% (Roehrer Institute, 1992, cited in Rajah, Frye, & Haviland, 2006). Women with psychiatric disabilities may face particular problems. They may fear being disbelieved and/or being institutionalised if they report a sexual assault (Rajah, Frye, & Haviland, 2006). Mobility problems or deafness may hinder some women’s ability to get help, both at the time of the assault or later (Rajah, Frye, & Haviland, 2006). Prevention efforts need to pay particular attention to women with disabilities.

It is also important to mention factors which are not predictive of risk, contrary to popular belief. Chief among these is age. Women of all ages are at risk of sexual violence (Dabby, 2007). Even if women between 16 and 24 may be slightly more at risk than younger and older women the overall pattern suggests that prevention efforts should include women of all ages (Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Vicary, Klingaman, & Harkness, 1995). Moreover, given the prevalence of sexual violence among quite young women (6% of women in the Christchurch longitudinal study reported being sexually assaulted between their 16th and 18th birthdays (Ferguson et al., 2005) and the young age at which a significant minority of young women begin sexual activity (17% of 13-year olds in a New Zealand sample of high school students reported having had sexual intercourse (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2003)), prevention efforts should begin at an early age.

Among men, the risk factor for the perpetration of sexual violence which has received the most attention is holding rape-supportive beliefs (Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; O’Donohue, Yeater, & Fanetti, 2003; Schewe, 2002; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004). The role of such beliefs seems beyond question (Ryan, 2004) and addressing them has been, and should remain, an important goal for prevention efforts (Ryan, 2004; Schewe, 2002). This is not necessarily because changing the beliefs of individual men will make it less likely they will commit sexual assaults: there is limited evidence that the attitudes and beliefs of the men most likely to rape will be easily amendable to change (Rozee, 1993). Probably more important is
the difference it might make to such beliefs being expressed within influential peer groups, to the preparedness of men to support victims of rape and to their willingness to intervene in risky situations (see the discussion of bystander education below).

Parallel with the risk factors for victimisation among women, a risk factor for men of committing a sexual assault is having done so before – or having attempted such an assault. In Ryan’s analysis, US college men who have coerced women into sex have usually made several previous attempts which were unsuccessful. As she notes “Men are not born rapists. Rape is a learned behaviour” (2004, p. 598).

In addition to the risk factors discussed above are another set of factors relating to the place and time of sexual assaults. Chief among these is the consumption of alcohol. Alcohol consumption, by either or both parties, is believed to be implicated in 40% to 65% of rapes (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton, & McAuslan, 2001; Becker & Reilly, 1999; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Flack et al., 2008; Greene & Navarro, 1998; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004; Testa, Vanzile-Tamsen, & Livingston, 2004), although it needs to be said that most of these studies relate to rape on university campuses. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, key informants interviewed by Kathryn McPhillips and her colleagues (2002) noted that alcohol was “often” involved in sexual violence. For some women, the consumption of Viagra (or similar impotency medication) by their partner can be a precursor to coerced sex (McPhillips, Berman, Olo-Whaanga, & McCully, 2002).

In contrast to its profile in the media, drink spiking has not been identified in the research as a high risk. An analysis of sexual assaults reported to British Police concluded that there was little evidence of offenders surreptitiously adding drugs to their victim’s drink (Horvath & Brown, 2007). While taking precautions against drink spiking may be sensible, the attention given to that tactic may be disproportionate to the frequency of its use. Similarly, it is far more likely that sexual violence will occur in the victim’s home (this was the case in 48% of rapes reported to a Auckland service (McPhillips, Berman, Olo-Whaanga, & McCully, 2002) than near bars or night clubs (Ullman, 2007).

In summary, an analysis of individual-level risk factors does provide some guidance as to how we should approach prevention. Firstly, the role played by rape-supportive beliefs in the perpetration of sexual violence confirms the importance of addressing the overarching societal values discussed earlier. Secondly, that alcohol is implicated in certain types of rape suggests that addressing hazardous drinking behaviour could be part of an overall strategy, although a focus on women’s drinking has the potential to be victim-blaming and, therefore, counter productive. Thirdly, prevention efforts must include women with disabilities, who face a particularly high risk of being victimised. And finally, the fact that the vast majority of sexual assaults are committed by men known to the victim makes it very clear where the focus of prevention should lie. In particular, the huge overlap between domestic violence and sexual violence suggests that there is much to be gained by addressing the two issues together.

### 3. What can be learnt from prevention efforts

Searching on “sexual violence” and “prevention” in research databases produces a large number of hits but these come from quite a narrow range of programmes. That is, the bulk of sexual violence prevention programmes which have been subjected to published evaluations have been implemented in US universities, a direct result of a requirement for those receiving federal funding to conduct sexual assault prevention efforts on campus (Anderson & Whiston, 2005). While these are not necessarily the
sort of programme which we would recommend implementing here, the evaluations do provide some lessons which could be useful in developing prevention initiatives in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Table 1 sets out a list of the components typically found in such programmes (Schewe, 2002), together with a statement of the rationale for inclusion (from Schewe and others), and a brief summary of our reading of the various evaluations conducted of them.

Table 1: Components of a (US) “standard” sexual violence prevention programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape myths and rape supportive beliefs (addressing common misconceptions)</td>
<td>These may encourage perpetrators, discourage reporting and make others unsupportive of victims.</td>
<td>Most common component of programmes. Programmes can change attitudes and beliefs but the effects may not last.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim empathy (usually addresses effects of rape)</td>
<td>Men who understand the impact of rape will never inflict it on others.</td>
<td>Potential perpetrators unlikely to be influenced but may be useful in making men less victim-blaming. Some efforts to improve victim empathy among men can be counterproductive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative consequences for perpetrators (particularly on their relationships)</td>
<td>Men less likely to be sexually aggressive if they understand the cost to them.</td>
<td>Relatively few programmes include this but it may be an important component of mobilising men against sexual violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge and rape awareness (definitions, statistics, characteristics perpetrators etc)</td>
<td>Accurate information enables women to take protective action. Knowledge on legal definition of consent may act as a restraint on men. Knowledge may improve support given to victims.</td>
<td>Participants do become more knowledgeable but little evidence that attitudes or behaviour change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-risk situations (e.g. alcohol, drug rape, date rape)</td>
<td>Help women avoid dangerous situations.</td>
<td>May be victim blaming. May be counter productive if men learn how “normal” rape is and how to accomplish it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self defence strategies</td>
<td>Women will be able to resist attacks and will feel more confident.</td>
<td>Some evidence of reduced victimisation but this strategy can be victim-blaming.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication, assertiveness, and limit setting</td>
<td>Men may misunderstand cues women give them.</td>
<td>No evidence of effectiveness. Can be victim blaming. Men probably do understand non-consent perfectly well.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As mentioned above, there are good reasons for addressing rape myths and rape supportive beliefs in prevention programmes. Evaluations of rape education programmes show that it is indeed possible to change attitudes which condone rape and/or blame victims (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Brecklin & Forde, 2001; Flores & Hartlaub, 1998; O’Donohue, Yeater, & Fanetti, 2003; Schewe, 2002; Schewe & O’Donohue, 1996) although some of these studies suggest that such changes may not necessarily persist in the long term.

Similarly, evaluations show that programmes can enhance empathy for victims (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Barone, Wolgemuth, & Linder, 2007; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Foubert & Perry, 2007; O’Donohue, Yeater, & Fanetti, 2003). However, such findings do not tell the whole story. It is unlikely that attempts to build victim empathy will make much difference to the men most likely to be sexually violent (but
see the discussion below). More importantly, some attempts to build empathy among men may backfire, serving simply to reinforce unhelpful rape myths (Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008; Schewe, 2002). This may be because some men will react to troubling portrayals of victims by blaming the women depicted.

On the other hand, more positive changes among men may be achieved if educators begin by inviting them to consider the possible impact of rape on themselves. This is the strategy adopted by The Men’s Program (Foubert, 2005), a scripted, one-session programme designed for young men, which begins with a video depiction of the rape of a policeman by a group of heterosexual men. Participants are then invited to reflect on the video, including the impact on the victim, not only of the rape but also the impact of the reactions of others from whom he seeks help. Parallels and contrasts with the experiences of women victims of male rape are considered. Attention is then turned to what men can do to help a victim of rape and what else they can do to reduce the incidence of rape. Participants of this programme have shown significant changes in attitude, increased preparedness to support a victim of rape and reduced likelihood of telling rape jokes. Men who, prior to the program, indicated some likelihood of committing sexual assaults were reported as being less likely to do so afterwards. Encouragingly, these positive effects were largely maintained seven months after completing the programme (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cremedy, 2007; Foubert & McEwen, 1998; Foubert & Perry, 2007). As Schewe concludes, “Victim empathy interventions are very intense. If done carefully, they have great potential to create positive change. If done poorly, they have serious potential for harm” (2002, p. 110).

A more problematic aspect of US rape education programmes is rape avoidance. Aimed at women, rape avoidance focuses on supposed high risk situations such as those relating to the use of alcohol and/or drugs, drug rape, date rape, dating older men and isolated places, and on the importance of looking after one another (Schewe, 2002). While these may be, to varying degrees, risk factors, focusing on them in rape education may be counterproductive, as they can serve to reinforce some rape myths, teach men how best to commit rape and avoid negative consequences, and convey the message that preventing rape is the responsibility of women (Carmody, 2006; Lonsway, 1996; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Schewe, 2002).

A second component aimed at women is less problematic: teaching women self protection strategies (e.g. hitting, punching, kicking and screaming or yelling to attract help) and specific self-defence training. There is some evidence that these do have a measurable effect in reducing victimisation for women who receive such training (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Söchting, Fairbrother, & Koch, 2004). Moreover, they can help women’s sense of self efficacy and may serve to help overcoming the passive socialisation of women among participants (Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2008). However, as Kimberly Lonsway (1996) notes, even if rape avoidance and self protection are effective for individual women, men deterred by those tactics will simply target other women. At best, rape avoidance and resistance can be an answer for individual women: they cannot be a solution for women as a group.

A final component of what we have dubbed the standard US approach is communication, assertiveness and limit setting. The rationale here is that rape may be a consequence of men misunderstanding women’s cues about consent and non-consent. If women can be clearer and more assertive, the logic goes, they are less likely to be victimised. The logic is seriously flawed. Although men may well rely on discourses about women saying “no” when they mean “yes” in their attempts to explain rape, there is no evidence that they cannot understand when women are refusing sex. For example, the young Australian men interviewed by Rachel O’Byrne (2008) had no
problem in describing the sort of body language and conversational strategies used by women to signal that they did not want sex, despite the fact that such refusals rarely included a verbal “no.” Consent and refusal are communicated in a myriad of verbal and non-verbal ways, which are generally well understood by both parties within the context of time, place and the nature and status of their relationship (Beres, 2007). There is no evidence that including communication, assertiveness and limit setting in sexual violence programmes improves their effectiveness (Schewe, 2002). Indeed, doing so may well serve to reinforce powerful traditional discourses about gender and sexuality, such as the belief that men are subject to powerful sexual drives and that women are passive, non-desiring subjects whose responsibility it is to manage male sexual aggression (Carmody, 2006). This is victim-blaming and has no place in efforts to prevent sexual violence.

Young people and sex education
Carmody’s concern about the way some sexual violence prevention efforts may be counter productive is well founded. Her work (in Australia) and that of Louisa Allen (in Aotearoa/New Zealand) raise major issues for the prevention of sexual violence. Both researchers have undertaken extensive studies of young people’s experiences of negotiating sexual relationships and how they learn about sexuality. We discuss this work at some length because we think it has major implications for prevention efforts targeting young people.

Moira Carmody’s critique of current educational approaches preventing sexual violence encompasses three main points. Firstly, as mentioned above, there is much in most education programmes that essentialises male aggression and female passivity. That is, the hegemonic discourses about masculinity and femininity, the very discourses which are believed to play a crucial role in sustaining sexual violence, may actually be reinforced by certain educational approaches.

Programmes that teach rape avoidance by focusing on refusal skills... reinforce women as passive non-sexual reluctant subjects with men the assertive sexual aggressors (Carmody, 2006, p. 346).

Secondly, such prevention efforts place the responsibility for stopping sexual violence on women. Women must be clearer in communicating non-consent; they must not do anything which might suggest an interest in sex in case it is taken the wrong way; they must not wear clothing which shows them to be sexual beings. Such messages perpetuate the oppression of women and allow men to avoid accountability for their sexually aggressive behaviour.

Thirdly, such approaches invisibilise women’s sexual desire. In fact, the logic of rape avoidance requires women’s sexual desire to be rendered invisible because the expression of it would be seen as “asking for it.” Such an approach is oppressive, denies women’s agency and is quite incongruent with women’s experiences of their sexuality.

Louisa Allen (2005) makes a similar point about sexual and reproductive health education in New Zealand schools. In her view, the approach in this country reflects a negative view of young people’s sexuality as being deeply problematic. Education policy in the area is problem-focused, driven by a desire to reduce teenage pregnancy, abortion and the incidence of sexually transmitted infections. The result is a curriculum that focuses on the biology of reproduction and on sexual health. Predominately, sexual activity is portrayed as dangerous. This is at odds with the images of sexuality portrayed in music, films and other media.
involving fun, pleasure and power, sexuality education’s warnings can appear
didactic and boring (Allen, 2005, p. 169)

The “official” portrayal of sexuality is also at odds with many young people’s experience of sex. As noted earlier, 17% of New Zealander school students have had sexual intercourse before their fourteenth birthday; almost half by their eighteenth birthday (Adolescent Health Research Group, 2003). Even if they have not experienced intercourse, young people are almost inevitably dealing with complex issues of developing sexuality, sexual identity and sexual desire. Thus, while the curriculum portrays sexual activity primarily as dangerous and discusses it primarily in terms of reproductive biology and health, in the experience of young people it is a complex physical, psychological and sociological phenomena involving strong emotions, questions of sexual orientation, issues of identity, questions of reputation, powerful sexual desires, complex relationships with sexual partners and peers, and, usually, erotic pleasure. It is unsurprising that they often find the “official” view of sex unconvincing.

They also find it relatively unhelpful. As one young New Zealand women told Louisa Allen, “You don’t actually get told how to have sex and stuff” (2005, p. 54). In an Australian study, young people reported that while they received instruction on biological aspects of sex and safe sex practices, they received very little formal education on relationships, on handling peer pressure, and importantly in this context, on negotiating consent and on the potential for violence (Carmody & Willis, 2006).

Absent from formal education was any consideration of erotics. Instead, friends and, in the case of boys, pornography, served as important sources of such information.

As Allen points out, this approach to education has been largely unsuccessful: despite what they have been taught, young people often engage in risky sexual behaviour.

Sexuality educators have thought of this problem as a knowledge/practice gap. But as Allen argues,

The idea that knowledge learned in sexuality education should be translated into practice without hiccups presumes a youthful subject who does what they are told.

This construction denies young people as actively desiring sexual subjects who may be more motivated by physical or emotional concerns than the fear of sexually transmissible infections (2005, p. 166).

As mentioned above, these critiques of sexuality education are largely grounded in young peoples’ accounts of their sexual experiences. These accounts, along with the work of Melanie Beres (2007) raise other issues for the prevention of sexual violence, namely consent, power, desire and pleasure.

Negotiating sex

Consent goes to the heart of sexual violence. It is often a matter of dispute in sexual violence trials. The issue of consent is dealt with in some detail in section 128A of the Crimes Act, 1996, which states for example, that it is not consent if a person allows sexual activity because of force or threat of force. A person incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, or “impaired” in other ways (e.g. a relevant disability) cannot be held to have consented to sexual activity. Because of the central role of consent – or rather non-consent – in sexual violence, some prevention efforts include information about how consent is legally defined. And some US universities have established policies that require members of their campus to verbally ask for consent for every type of sexual activity before embarking on it (Beres, 2007).

But the way consent is discussed in sexual violence programmes is often problematic in at least two ways. Firstly, there is often an implicit assumption that consent is
expressed verbally. That is clearly not the case. Instead, consent – or refusal – is typically conveyed by a range of behavioural and verbal cues. (Allen, 2003b, 2004, 2005; Carmody, 2005, 2006; Carmody & Willis, 2006; Gavey, 2005; O’Byrne, Hanson, & Rapley, 2008). In fact, as Melanie Beres points out, studies which have examined sexual consent behaviours have found that non-verbal behaviours are used much more frequently than verbal. Moreover, as has already been pointed out, the means by which sexual refusal is expressed are well-understood by young men (O’Byrne, Hanson, & Rapley, 2008).

A second common assumption in sexuality education – an assumption we have discussed earlier – is that consent is something men seek and women give (Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004; Beres, 2007; Carmody & Willis, 2006; Gavey, 2005; O’Byrne, Hanson, & Rapley, 2008). Talking about consent in this way merely serves to reinforce the very constructions of masculinity and femininity which are fundamentally implicated in sexual violence. And it leaves little space for the acknowledgement of women’s sexual desires.

As Beres (2007) states, prevention efforts need to include realistic information about how sexual activity is negotiated in practice. Again, the work of Moira Carmody and Louisa Allen is instructive. The picture which emerges is not an uncomplicated one of active men and passive women. In fact, many of Allen’s (2005) participants dismissed the idea of young women as sexually passive and young men as sexually predatory as being old-fashioned. On the whole, they described their sexual activity as mutually initiated and negotiated, with neither partner in control. For example, one couple told the researcher;

*Cam:* I reckon it’s… I reckon it’s equal it’s like we decide equally, like when and how often and how.

*Chris:* Yeah, see the decision, yeah, it’s not just decisions about sexual activity we make together it’s like everything. Cause there is no one in charge here (Allen, 2005, p. 130)

But while many participants saw the idea of active, dominant men and passive, submissive women as old fashioned, gendered power relations were nevertheless evident in their accounts. One young woman described a time in her relationship in which her partner tried to coerce her to perform oral sex on him by pushing her head down. She resisted, successfully (“I’d go ‘ow don’t do that” (Allen, 2005, p. 132)). Other women recounted coming under emotional pressure to agree to have sex. Other accounts included instances in which women prioritised their partner’s sexual pleasure over their own, faked orgasm so that their partner got the impression he had pleased her, or decided not to talk to him about things they found unsatisfying in case it upset him. As Allen says, such accounts can be read as complying with dominant narratives of heterosexuality in which male sexual gratification is privileged and male power is unchallenged. On the other hand, they can be read as accounts in which women successfully resisted male power (“Don’t do that”) and/or saw themselves as exercising power in making decisions to put their partner first in a particular instance.

Such nuanced accounts of young people’s experiences of sexual activity have important implications for the way we approach the prevention of sexual violence. The point is not that hegemonic discourses about masculinity, femininity and gendered power relations are “old hat.” Clearly, they do still play a role in shaping relationships, particularly (hetero) sexual relationships. Rather, the point is that such discourses are not immutable. Neither is male power monolithic (Carmody, 2005). Power is more fluid and can shift as women and men negotiate their relationships on a daily basis. In this way, dominant discourses are being resisted, by both women and men. It is
unhelpful to talk about such dominant discourses in absolutist terms. Young people are likely to find them “old fashioned.” But neither does it make sense to pretend that they don’t exist. Instead, we must find ways in which these discourses can be subjected to critical inquiry and their implications examined.

Such research also challenges the current model of sexuality education which largely reduces sex to physiology and anatomy. Instead, to connect with young people’s experiences of sexuality, education, including education about sexual violence, needs to recognise young people as sexual beings with sexual desires. In contrast to the current overly medicalised approach, Louisa Allen calls for the inclusion of a “discourse of erotics” in sexuality education.

Leaving out the sensual body in sexuality education and only portraying a de-eroticised and medical physiology denies young people information about an essential component of sexuality. Including information in sexuality education about the potential pleasures of embodied sexual experience should be young people’s right. Without this information about what feels pleasurable and what doesn't, young people, and especially young women, have minimal knowledge upon which to base their decisions about engaging in sexual activity (2005, p. 171).

In Allen’s view, teaching young people to value the sensual experience of their bodies will help them develop respect for themselves – and for their partner. Such realistic discussions about the intricacies of sexuality and the complexities of negotiating sexual relationships will be necessary if we are to heed the call of Moira Carmody and Karen Willis to move sexual assault prevention from a focus on danger to a focus on Developing ethical sexual lives (2006).

4. A multilevel approach

The ecological model (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004) which we have followed in our discussion of risk factors, also provides a framework for planning prevention efforts. That is, interventions can be aimed at whole societies, at communities, at family and whānau, and at individuals. The (US) National Sexual Violence Resource Center has developed a slightly more elaborate framework, the Spectrum of Prevention (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2006). These authors set out six levels of intervention as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Strengthening individual knowledge and skills</td>
<td>Enhancing an individual’s capability of preventing violence and promoting safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Promoting community education</td>
<td>Reaching groups of people with information and resources to prevent violence and promote safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Educating providers</td>
<td>Informing providers who will transmit skills and knowledge to others and model positive norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Fostering coalitions and networks</td>
<td>Bringing together groups and individuals for broader goals and greater impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Changing organizational practices</td>
<td>Adopting regulations and shaping norms to prevent violence and improve safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Influencing policies and legislation</td>
<td>Enacting laws and policies that support healthy community norms and a violence-free society</td>
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Ecological models have pointed to the importance of intervening at multiple levels if our prevention efforts are to be effective. The Spectrum of Prevention (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2006) is not a menu from which one should choose one or two items. Instead, the levels are inter-related, such that efforts at any one level will be enhanced by efforts at other levels. Conversely, efforts at one level may be undermined by countervailing actions, or inaction, at other levels. For example, individual level interventions which attempt to educate men about respectful sexual relationships might be supported by workplace (organisational) policies and procedures dealing with sexual harassment. Conversely, they may be undermined by the widespread availability of pornography. Or efforts to enact laws and policies restricting the availability of pornography may be strengthened if there are strong coalitions and networks lobbying for such changes. Intervening on multiple levels produces a synergy because it addresses not only individuals but the community, organisational and societal environments in which they live (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2006).

In the final section of our review, we consider each of these levels, with some preliminary suggestions about what might be done at each level. We want to emphasize that these are very preliminary ideas. They are based on our analysis of risk factors. With the few exceptions noted, most have not been subjected to evaluation, so we cannot assume that they will be effective or even practical. Moreover, many of the interventions which have been evaluated have been used in other parts of the world: their applicability to local communities, especially Māori and Pacific, remains questionable. Nevertheless, the literature we have reviewed does provide some potential starting points in our efforts to raise conversations about preventing sexual violence.

**Strengthening individual knowledge and skills**

Rape myths and rape-supportive attitudes and beliefs featured large in our analysis of risk factors. Ensuring that individuals have more accurate information about the incidence, nature and impact of sexual assault should be part of our prevention efforts. While we might not expect that this will make much difference to the likelihood that high risk men will commit assaults, it should reduce the expression of rape-supportive attitudes within peer groups, help ensure a less victim-blaming environment and increase the likelihood that sexual assaults will be reported and victims provided with effective support.

The last point deserves emphasis. Most rape education programmes have, implicitly at least, addressed participants as potential perpetrators or victims of sexual violence. Victoria Banyard and her colleagues have pointed out that there may be greater value in programmes in which participants are addressed as bystanders: that is, as people who may be able to intervene in risky situations before violence occurs, during incidents and afterwards, with either victims or perpetrators (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). An experimental evaluation of such a programme with both men and women showed promising results (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007). We do not suggest that their US programme would necessarily fit local conditions but the basic idea of encouraging young people to “look after their mates” does have much to recommend it in encouraging a sense of community responsibility. It would be strengths-based and appeal to notions of peer group solidarity.

Prevention efforts focusing on individual knowledge and skills must include education to support young people’s learning about sexuality and the negotiation of sexual relationships. Adolescence may be a key period for prevention efforts, as it is then that “normative sexual behaviours” can become entrenched (Petersen, Bhana, & McKay,
2005, p. 1234). As suggested by Moira Carmody and Louisa Allen, such education needs to engage young people as sexual subjects, not passive recipients of medicalised information. It requires engaging young people in a “discourse of erotics” (Allen, 2005) and in discussion of ethical sexual relating (Carmody, 2005). This sort of approach can be strengths-based and focused on positives, rather than negatives. In this regard, it is consistent with the sort of approach recommended by Terryann Clark in her discussion of sexual and reproductive health among taitamariki (2004).

One issue for consideration in education programmes for young people is the use of peer educators. An evaluation of a sexual health programme implemented in secondary schools in Hamilton by Te Ahurei provided encouraging results for the use of peer educators (Nikora, Tamatea, Fairbrother, & Te Awekotuku, 2001). On the other hand, it will also be important for education programmes to enjoy the support of parents and whānau (Clarke, 2004).

Schools are a logical site for this sort of education but will miss those young people who truant and/or leave school early. Youth “groups” of all kinds offer other opportunities, including trainings schemes, wananga, sports clubs and church groups. Reaching informal groups such as those built around particular interests (e.g. music, skateboarding etc) will also be important.

Whatever the setting, it is important to make sure that such education meets the needs of the diversity of students. In particular, it will be important that it addresses the needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgender students, who are very poorly served by current education programmes (Allen, 2001; Carmody, 2006; Clarke, 2004). Education should also address homophobia, particularly among boys and men, as that has been identified as risk factor in sexual violence.

There is some cause for optimism about this sort of education. The Safe Dates programme developed for eighth graders in the US has some of the elements we are advocating. This includes a theatre production performed by students, a curriculum composed of 10 45-minute sessions taught by health and physical education teachers, and a poster contest based on curriculum content. The programme resulted in significant reductions in both victimisation and perpetration at followup (Foshee et al., 2004).

The sort of education will be difficult to implement in some communities in which there are strong taboos against talking about sex. Yet without it, it is unlikely that we will make much progress in ending sexual violence. It will also be important to appreciate that education programmes will inevitably come into contact with victim/survivors and perpetrators. Programme facilitators will need to know how to respond them (Kim, 2002).

There are some qualifications about individual-level prevention efforts which should be noted. Firstly, to emphasise an earlier point, focusing on individual change is unlikely to have much effect if community and societal norms which support or condone sexual violence are not addressed. Secondly, as the World Health Organisation contends, efforts to prevent violence have paid too much attention to individual level initiatives as opposed to community and societal level initiatives (Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002). And thirdly, it is somewhat artificial to discuss individual-level prevention independently of community context. The particular content and process of individual level prevention will need to match the community context. In this regard, cultural context will be particularly important. A one size fits all approach is unlikely to be effective.
Promoting community education

Because of their importance in transmitting values and norms, communities are an important focus for prevention efforts. "Effective community education not only alerts individuals to new information, but also helps build a critical mass of support for safer behaviour, norms, and policies" (Davis, Parks, & Cohen, 2006, p. 9). Community-level interventions allow prevention efforts to be designed for the needs of particular groups. Best results are likely if prevention efforts are planned in collaboration with community members so that the community takes ownership of the issue (Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsbury, Jacobson, & Allen, 2001; Wolff, 2001). In this context, it is useful to recall one of the conclusions of the Second Māori Taskforce on Whānau Violence:

> If whānau violence interventions continue to be delivered from a Pakeha conceptual and practice framework that isolates, criminalises and pathologises Māori individuals we are adamant that nothing will change (Kruger et al., 2002, p. 3).

A wide range of groups could potentially benefit from community-level interventions. An obvious example would be the deaf community, for whom addressing sexual violence requires attention to particularities not relevant to other communities. Similarly, prevention efforts can – indeed must – be tailored to meet the needs of particular cultural, ethnic and faith communities. For example, communities in which there are strong taboos against talking about sex – or in which sex is talked about in particular ways – will need a different approach to communities in which conversations about sex are less restricted (see Dabby, 2007; Dabby & Poore, 2007; Kim, 2002; McPhillips, Berman, Olo-Whaanga, & McCully, 2002). Similarly, prevention efforts in communities in which there is a high value placed on family unity may face additional challenges in dealing with sexual violence (Rimonte, 1991).

A potentially useful tool in planning community level initiatives is the Community Readiness Model (Edwards, Jumper-Thurman, Plested, Oetting, & Swanson, 2000; Kelly et al., 2003). This is based on the recognition that prevention efforts are unlikely to be implemented successfully unless the community is ready for them. Borrowing from and adapting Prochaska and DiClemente’s trans-theoretical model of personal change (1983), the Community Readiness Model postulates 9 stages of readiness for prevention efforts (see box). A methodology has been devised, principally key informant interviews, for ascertaining what stage a community is at. For each stage, there are particular goals for prevention efforts, beginning with awareness raising and working through various stages of planning and implementation. The model has been used for various prevention efforts including drug abuse and smoking – and in various communities, including Native American communities. It may well be that the model has something to offer community level efforts to prevent sexual violence here.

In the context of community education, one Australian initiative is worth mentioning. Purple Armband Games are "sports fixtures
where players, spectators and officials wear purple armbands to show their opposition to violent behaviour against women” (2008). According to the Purple Armband website, over 850 teams in a variety of sporting codes have worn the armbands to demonstrate “Respect for women; Compassion to sexual assault victim/survivors; (and) Leadership against gender violence and abuse.” There are campaign resources for organisations sponsoring the campaign and for participating teams, including guidelines and templates (e.g., a model for PA announcements at sports grounds). Although it does yet appear to have been evaluated, given the importance of male peer groups in shaping attitudes, this sort of initiative may well be worth further investigation.

Community level initiatives should be broader than education as that term is often understood. Healthy, strong communities are likely to be able to communicate healthy norms of behaviour and to respond appropriately if sexual violence does occur. To this end, interventions which strengthen communities may also be seen as preventative. Terryann Clark makes this point in relation to Māori communities.

Māori communities are diverse and hold greatly varying views on sexuality and the ways that these are portrayed in our social, cultural and spiritual values. What Māori do have in common is our desire to protect our taitamariki and to protect and nurture our future generations. Families must be supported to talk to their children and taitamariki about relationships and sexuality in ways that are appropriate for their cultural and social beliefs. To address these personal health issues, whānau need to have increased access to appropriate, quality information, resources and parenting support. Through strengthening Māori communities and whānau with accurate information that is culturally acceptable and exploring societal values in regard to sexuality we will look toward an increased understanding of sexuality and sexual behaviour for all taitamariki. All community development must have a Māori philosophical base, with strong participation by taitamariki to enable them to find solutions, which are self-determining. Strengthening Māori communities requires a commitment to economic development and policies and programmes to reduce socioeconomic disparities (2004, p. 59).

While Clark is writing about sexual and reproductive health, in our view, her comments are equally applicable to the more specific issue of preventing sexual violence.

**Educating providers**

Service providers of all kinds are often in a position to influence people and to incorporate the prevention of sexual violence into their work. Midwives, general medical practitioners and migrant support services are obvious examples (Dabby, 2007). So too are police officers, lawyers, income support workers, sports team coaches, counsellors, librarians and Citizens Advice Bureau workers. Given the fact that child abuse and neglect and exposure to domestic violence are risk factors for both victimisation and perpetration of sexual violence, child protection workers may be particularly well placed to ensure vulnerable children receive relevant support. Given their important role in the lives of children and young people, teachers at both primary and secondary level are well placed to support the development of healthy attitudes in relation to sexuality and relationships. Finally, given that prior victimisation is a risk factor for further sexual violence, professionals of all types who deal with victims of sexual violence are an important group for targeting education.

Over the past 15 years, the Institute for Child Protection Studies (2008) has provided training for a wide range of service providers to help them detect and intervene appropriately in cases of suspected child abuse. Such an approach could offer much to the prevention of sexual violence.
Fostering coalitions and networks

Ending sexual violence is going to require fundamental social change. Building a critical mass will require building coalitions and networks. There are some obvious allies: rape crisis groups, sexual violence educators, Stop Demand. Given the large overlap between domestic violence and sexual violence, women’s refuges, stopping violence services and child protection agencies are also obvious allies.

Coalitions might also be developed with relevant professional organisations. The New Zealand Association of Counsellors, the New Zealand Psychological Society, the College of Clinical Psychology, the Medical Council, the New Zealand Law Society, the New Zealand Institute of Education, the Post-Primary Teachers Association and the New Zealand Social Workers Association are all organisations which might be presumed to have a professional interest in the issue and, arguably, an ethical responsibility to become involved in prevention efforts. Such organisations could be expected to have within their membership people with relevant expertise.

One strategy worthy of consideration is the men against violence approach. Recent years have seen such initiatives in the US and Australia (End Abuse, 2008; Funk, 1993; Katz, 2008; Men Ending Rape, 2008; My Strength, 2008). Adopting a socio-cultural model, men against violence initiatives aim to mobilise men to take a stand against sexual violence and to “sever the ties between violence and traditional male gender roles” (Choate, 2003, p. 168). They have typically focused on community action and awareness raising, in much the same way as groups of men have organised against sexism or domestic violence. New Zealand has seen such groups in the past, but none seem to have lasted more than a few years, instead folding into the domestic violence movement.5

There does not seem to have been much evaluation of these sorts of initiatives but two we found suggested positive effects as men became more confident and active in challenging sexism and homophobia in their communities (see earlier discussion of the work of Barone, Wolgemuth, & Linder, 2007; see earlier discussion of the work of Carmody, 2006; Choate, 2003; Hong, 2000). Such groups have the potential to make a useful contribution in gaining wider support among men and demonstrating that men do have a responsibility to prevent sexual violence. On the other hand, as is the case with men’s groups organising around domestic violence, it will be important that they develop good models of accountability to women (Robertson, 1999).

Changing organizational practices

According to Davis et al., this is the least well understood part of the prevention spectrum. Yet, “by changing its own regulations and practices, an organization can have a broad effect on community norms” (2006, p. 12). Examples would include workplaces of all sorts. By establishing clear policies about sexual harassment, employers can do much about ensuring respectful gender relations.

Media organisations have an important role. For example, journalists could be trained to ensure responsible and informative reporting of sexual violence, rather than the sensationalising and often fear-mongering depictions which often appear. Media outlets of all sorts could make a significant contribution by declining to accept advertising which included demeaning portrayals of women.

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5 For example, this is what happened to the Men Against Rape group that existed in Hamilton in 1983–1985. (The first author was a member.)
Churches are influential organisations in relation to their members. As the key informants interviewed by Kathryn McPhillips and her colleagues noted (2002), enlisting the support of church leaders will be particularly important for prevention initiatives within many Pacific communities.

**Influencing policies and legislation**

Many prevention efforts will require changes to policy and legislation. For example, to implement the sort of sexuality education we are advocating will require changes in educational policy. To reduce the availability of pornography and the use of demeaning images of women in advertising may require legislative changes.

The prevention of sexual violence will be enhanced by some policy changes in areas which do not seem, at first glance, to be at all related. Given the role of racism and colonisation in undermining traditional protective practices, policies which strengthen indigenous and other cultural communities may be expected to reduce sexual violence. Economic development, as well as community development, may be relevant here. For example, policies which strengthen the economic basis of Māori communities may enhance their ability to protect women and girls and to ensure rangatahi develop healthy attitudes and behaviours in the context of strong whanau networks. Conversely, economic policies which force workers to migrate in search of employment could be expected to increase sexual violence (Brown, Thurman, Bloem, & Kendall, 2006; Conway-Long, 2002). Similarly, given the fact that economic dependence on their partner is implicated in some women’s vulnerability to sexual violence, policies which support women’s economic independence may be seen as a prevention strategy. Indeed, in a general sense, any policy which reduces gender inequality will help (Jewkes, 2002).

**5. Conclusions**

It seems to us that the reduction of sexual violence is not going to be achieved easily. As we have shown, some prevention efforts have been counterproductive, especially those which tend to reinforce the norms of hegemonic heterosexuality and/or blame women for their victimisation. Similarly, prevention efforts which fail to connect with the experience of community members or reduce the complexities of negotiating sex to simplistic legal definitions of consent are unlikely to improve the situation. The often heard “No means no” is a case in point. Sexual violence is a part of most stopping violence curricular. In the experience of the first author, to a man, group participants will agree that “no” indeed means “no” and that if you continue, “Then that’s rape.” But as shown by many of the researchers whose work we have drawn on, consent and non-consent are only sometimes communicated verbally. We have to confront the fact that in certain circumstances, saying “no” is simply not an option. When women consent to sex to avoid being raped, that’s rape (Carmody, 2006; Carmody & Willis, 2006; Gavey, 2005; Hird & Jackson, 2001). We have to confront the limitations of a view of heterosex as something men “seek” and women may “give”. We have to engage people in critical, reflective discussions about the norms of masculinity and femininity, including homophobia. We have to promote a “discourse of erotics” in which there is explicit recognition of young people as “sexual subjects” (Allen, 2005), conversations which consider the possibilities of ethical sexual relating (Carmody & Willis, 2006).

Our best hopes lie with multi-level approaches. While educating young people is obviously important, our efforts are unlikely to achieve very much if the wider society continues to promulgate rape-condoning messages. We will need to engage diverse communities, whether they be defined by whakapapa, ethnic identity, immigrant
status, (dis)ability, faith or religious affiliations, or sporting, cultural or other interests. Strengthening whānau will be important (Kruger et al., 2004). So too will be re-invigorating communities and strengthening protective processes and structures. We will need to address the intersections of sexism with racism, colonisation and poverty. All this is needed to dismantle “The cultural scaffolding of rape” (Gavey, 2005). Nothing less will do.
6. Appendix: A sample of web resources

A Long Walk Home
(http://www.alongwalkhome.org/)
“A Long Walk Home, Inc. is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization that uses art therapy and the visual and performance arts to document, to educate and to bring about social change. We use the testimonies, poetry, music, photographs, and videos of and by women and children to provide safe and entertaining forums through which the public learns about healing from trauma.”

Programmes include
- Story of a Rape Survivor (SOARS)
- Girl/Friends: Adolescent Girls Preventing and Healing from Sexual Assault

Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence
(http://www.apiahf.org/apidvinstitute/default.htm)
“The Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence is a national network of advocates; community members; professionals from health, mental health, law, education, and social services; survivors; scholars; researchers; and activists from public policy, community organizations, youth programs, immigrants' rights networks, communities of color, women's groups, lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender communities, and other social justice organizations. We serve as a forum for, and clearinghouse on information, research, resources and critical issues about violence against women in Asian and Pacific Islander communities.”

Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault
(http://www.aifs.gov.au/acssa/)
The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault is funded by the Office for Women, Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, through the Women's Safety Agenda.

The Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault aims to improve access to current information and resources in order to assist those committed to working against sexual assault. ACSSA will help to support and develop strategies that aim to prevent, respond to, and ultimately reduce the incidence of this crime.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
(http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/dvp/SV/default.htm)
Extensive resources on sexual violence, including conceptual papers, programme guidelines, information about programme funding and evaluation.

Men Ending Rape
(http://www.menendingrape.org)
Men Ending Rape “is committed to ending rape by encouraging men to play a significant role in ending the perpetuation of a campus rape culture.” It offers a presentation, “She Fears You,” which addresses both the male privilege of not having to think about rape and the cost to men of the existence of rape. Men Ending Rape also provides consultancy and support to men wanting to organise rape awareness and prevention groups and other services on campuses.
My Strength (Is not for hurting)
(www.mystrength.org)

"Maybe you've come to this site for a specific reason, or maybe just to look around. Either way, we're happy you're here.

We created this site to help you as a Man of Strength, so you can learn about other young men like yourself who are living a life based on equality, caring and respect. Here at MyStrength.org, you are an ally in taking action in your community to stop rape.

So, how can you use your strength to make a positive difference? Find out right now by clicking on our Share Your Strength section.

Thanks for visiting. We expect to hear great things from you soon."

Purple Armband Games
(http://www.purplearmband.org/main.htm)

"Purple Armband Games are sports fixtures where players, spectators and officials wear purple armbands to show their opposition to violent behaviour against women." Web site has resources aimed at sports teams and administrators.

Rape Is
(www.rapeis.org)

This site has resources for
- rape survivors,
- educators and activists,
- people wanting awareness raising presentations in their school or organisation,
- discussion resources for use with the movie, Rape is (see www.cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org

Sexual ethics

"The sexual ethics project is a joint research and education project of the University of Western Sydney and the NSW Rape Crisis Centre. This project is funded through a grant from the Australian Research Council 2005-2008.

The project aims to understand how young women and men aged 16-25 of diverse sexualities negotiate sexual relationships and their views on the adequacy of current sexuality and sexual assault prevention education. In particular we want to assess whether education based on sexual ethics is useful to young people in negotiating sexual intimacy and can assist in preventing sexual assault in dating contexts."

United Methodist Church, Commission on the Status and Role of Women
(http://www.umsexualethics.org/)

Resources on sexual ethics, including what to do if abused.
Working with Men and Boys to Prevent Gender-Based Violence
(http://toolkit.endabuse.org/Home.html)

“This web site is a comprehensive tool kit designed to help you work with men and boys to prevent gender-based violence. It provides readings, case studies, handouts, exercises, and other resources as well as community-building tools. We suggest following the Recommended Work Plan to fully explore these extensive materials, but you are free to go directly to the sections that address your priorities.

Either way, we urge you to share your experiences and ask questions on the Discussion Board, an online forum for registered users. In doing so, you’ll become part of a vital community that’s working to end gender-based violence. Sharing your challenges and successes will also enhance these resources: the continued growth and usefulness of this site depends upon the active participation of community members.

Anyone is welcome to use these materials, whether you are already working with men and boys to prevent gender-based violence or are simply investigating the possibilities. You will need to register, however, to access the discussion board.”
7. References


