



EVOLVING A CONSENT-BASED SEXUAL ENCOUNTER

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ABSTRACT

Recently, the news media have been saturated with reports of sexual assault of women by men of high social status. In this article, the author examines sexual abuse from an evolutionary and socio-psychological perspective. The piece is based on a desk research (as opposed to a field research). It draws upon evolution as well as literature on human and animal behaviour, so as to re-examine how men may have evolved psychological mechanisms that compel them to sexually dominate women. Of particular concern to the author is the mating game apparently inherited from the lower animals. The article questions the persistence in modern society of such primitive attitude towards sexual relationship between men and women. Finally, it calls for further discussion and research enquiry about the human socialization process as a way of deconstructing the prehistoric mating game. While the issues highlighted in this paper are global in nature, they are pertinent to the Asian context – where there have been widespread reports of sexual abuse against women. It is important for readers in the South East Asian region to be informed of such transnational perspective on this world-wide phenomenon.

Keywords: Gender, mating game, rape, sex in animals, sexual abuse

1.0 INTRODUCTION

According to a recent poll, six in ten women say they have been sexually victimized (Malloy, 2017). The following string of examples further highlight, globalize and contemporize, the problem. Within the month of October 2017, dozens of women accused Hollywood movie mogul, Harvey Weinstein, of various forms of sexual harassment or assault. On the 29th of October 2017, hundreds of people assembled in eleven cities in France to rally against sexual harassment and abuse of women. October 30th saw the indictment of two New York police detectives (Eddie Martins and Richard Hall) for the rape of an 18-year old girl. Next day, the 31st of October 2017, the *New York Times* produced a detailed report of two Indian men who raped a 10-year old girl. On the feast of All Saints, November 1st, the British Minister of Defense was forced to resign over accusation of sexual misconduct – namely for inappropriately touching a female journalist, Julia Hartley-Brewer (Reuters, 2017). Africa also

has had its share of these recent sexual abuse cases. On the 10th of November, a provincial lawmaker (Frederic Batumike) and 17 other men went on trial for kidnapping and raping 40 young girls in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Two of the girls died following the sexual assault (DR Congo's Kavumu Child Rape Trial Opens, 2017). These are only a few varied examples to highlight a worldwide problem that has recently dominated the global news media. The psychological and social consequences have similarly been extensive and devastating.

The list of sexual abuse cases around the world continues to grow daily across different walks of life. Whether in politics or in the entertainment industry, within the police force or the military, the health sector or any other profession, even in the church, stories abound worldwide of sexual abuse of women by men. The academic world is far from immune to this crisis. In a 2015 study, women in their early years of university studies were found to be about five times more likely than other women to be sexually assaulted (Carey et al., 2015). What is at the root of this widespread sexual abuse of women, and what more can the human society do about an apparent male weakness? That is the underlying question in this paper.

It is easy to dismiss the above problem as 'madness' on the part of a few men. Much research work has already been done from various psychopathological perspectives (Murphy et al., 2012; Levant & Wong, 2017). Yet it has been long asserted that most men who sexually abuse women are not psychotic, nor are they mentally deranged (Petty & Dawson, 1989). There is also evidence examining sexual harassment or abuse from the perspective of culture and the role of strong laws that punish abusers. Such studies have indeed found that sexual violence is more likely to occur when and where sexual offenses against women go unpunished (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2017). This still leaves open the ultimate question of root cause. According to one cross-cultural viewpoint, "Sexual violence is likely to occur more commonly in cultures that foster beliefs of perceived male superiority and social and cultural inferiority of women" (Kalra & Bhugra, 2013, p. 244). It is the view of this paper that the problem of sexual impropriety against women transcends any particular culture or cultural considerations, and its solution should also not be left to the legal system alone.

There are other recent research studies from around the world, too numerous to mention here, that have examined this problem (Starzynski et al., 2005; Dunne, Clark, & Pearlman, 2015; Weekes-Shackelford & Shackelford, 2014; Wong et al., 2017). While existing research publications have contributed significantly to current understanding of the sexual abuse of women by men of different age groups and walks of life, one area that has not been adequately explored is specifically how such abuse is linked to evolved social norms regarding who takes the initiative in sexual relationship. It is uncertain why this has not garnered substantial research attention. As will be argued in this article, that inadequately explored area is highly significant in the sexual abuse of women by men. Admittedly, there are also cases of sexual abuse by women (Malinen, 2017). However, the purpose and focus of this brief piece is rather to look into a deeper root-cause of the prevalent tendency in a lot of men to sexually harass and even abuse women.

Two specific premises in psychology are presumed in this article. Evolutionary psychology believes that human behavior is best understood by taking into account human evolution and natural selection. Secondly, human behavior depends on evolved psychological mechanisms that are functionally specialized for a specific task or to solve a specific problem - towards greater reproductive success for the species (McKibbin et al., 2008; Buss, 2004; Tooby & Cosmides, 2005).

Since, according to the theory of evolution, the human species evolved over millennia from the lower animals, I shall begin with a brief background on an aspect of sexual behavior in the animal world. The rest of the structure of the paper is a three-pronged approach. First, there is an examination of the mating game through which men express their sexual attraction towards women. Secondly, the inevitable danger associated with this game is emphasized. Lastly, after arguing that it is the human adherence to a primitive mating game that is at the heart of the historical and recent cases of sexual abuse by men, there are outlined three suggestions on the way forward. Section 2.0 below is the brief background on a pertinent aspect of sexual behavior among animals.

2.0 ECHOES FROM THE ANIMAL KINGDOM

As with humans, the sexual drive is innately planted in the genes of all animals for the purpose of reproduction. Of course there are asexual animals, like the desert grassland whiptail lizard and some species of geckos. Such animals have no males. Otherwise, with the exception of those few creatures, sexual intercourse is extremely vital in the rest of the animal world. Sex ensures the exchange of genes towards a hybrid that is more disease-resistant. It is the two billion years' history of sex that created the huge diversity of creatures in the world today. In addition to this beneficial shuffling of genes, sex appears to revitalize the genes themselves. Hence there is naturally a strong drive to engage in sex. The praying mantis and the red-back spider even sacrifice their own lives for the sake of mating (Wrangham & Muller, 2009).

While the sex itself happens naturally, the crucial issue is picking sexual partners. The male has to convince the female to mate with him. This is because the male produces millions of sperm and so have the potential and willingness to father as many offspring as possible. The female, on the other hand, produces relatively few eggs. A good example is the kiwi. The female kiwi produces only a few eggs in her lifetime. Consequently, most female animals have to be choosy about mating. If she chooses a dud male, it could have disastrous reproductive consequences. For example, the female elephant has a gap of about five years between offspring. She therefore has to choose aright, due to the long gestation and weaning periods. Hence she is not in a hurry to mate. This means that the male is constantly reaching out for sex, while the female tends to hold back. The power of consent thus rests mostly with the female. Male animals therefore evolved ways of attracting these reluctant females for mating. One finds in the animal world various tactics (attractive plumage, inviting sound, gift, dance or a show of physical strength, etc.) through which the male seeks the consent for sexual encounter with the female. Among scorpion flies, the male would normally gain sex from the female by presenting a gift of food during courtship. In the bird kingdom, the males with more ornate plumage have a higher success rate with females than those with less attractive feathers (Linder & Rice, 2005).

Nonetheless, there is sexual coercion in the animal world. What happens when there is food scarcity, such that the male scorpion fly has no appetizing gift for the female? In that case, the sex is not consensual. The male scorpion fly without food, and who is thus denied sex, resorts to a default alternative of forced sex by using the notal organ. Apparently, not only is there behavioral evidence but also proof of a specific anatomical trait (notal clamp) that has evolved to make forced sex possible in the animal world. Subsequently, non-consensual sex is rampant among animals. This is an integral part of the mating game, for it ensures that any male would succeed in partaking in the gene shuffling. Some authors have pointed out that the closer the animal is to humans, as with apes, the more widespread is forced copulation evident. Among

the orangutans (*Pongo pygmaeus*) forced sex accounts for about half of all their copulations (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000). This sexual coercion in the animal world is conceptualized in this article as “the default alternative” of the mating game. Apparently, the reason forced copulation is rampant in the animal world is because of the above mating game in which males necessarily initiate the sexual encounters.

3.0 MATING GAME IN HUMANS

In relation to humans, the following sports analogy may help to understand the mating game. Let the reader imagine a special game of football or soccer, which could be referred to here as Fooccer. The basic strategy of the game is that team A is instructed to roam freely across the field, while team B is to be passive and allow team A to dribble and score at will. All the players in team A are given a heavy weapon to hit any member of team B who would not cooperate with this way of playing the game. Given the threat of physical harm, the game is played lopsidedly for centuries - with everyone more or less acquiescing.

The above hypothetical match is the mating game of the animal world. Team A represents the males, team B the females, and the heavy weapon is the physical ability for violence available to the males to guarantee their presumed right to initiate sexual activity. Rape represents the number of times that members of team A use the heavy weapon to ensure compliance on the part of team B. The directive for Team A to dribble or score freely, as well as for team B to be passive, is evolutionary. The purpose of the instruction is to ensure more goals and thus increase the home crowd. There is no necessity inherent to the male in this instruction; the heavy weapon could have as well belonged to the female. However, this random evolutionary instruction has a lasting tendency far beyond the particular sports season during which the order was given to the players.

Now imagine modern humans inheriting the game of Fooccer, and the evolutionary instruction has become a distant memory many centuries later. There is now an unsustainably huge home crowd and massive interest in the game. Members of both teams realize that Fooccer is better enjoyed without use of the heavy weapon against any player. Hence *both* teams are now allowed to dribble and score freely. Any use of that ancient weapon during the match is a crime. However, many team A members continue to carry their heavy weapon, and some occasionally use the weapon against members of team B. That tendency to follow the previous instruction continues to impede the free flow of the modern game and causes animosity between members of both teams.

The above sports analogy is obviously limited. As a social construct, the Fooccer depiction does not immediately convey an underlying similarity between the mating game in animals and the human sexual interaction. The basic similarity is at the biological level. The human male produces millions of sperm that are replenished at a rate of about 12 million per hour. Women, on the other hand, produce a fixed lifetime supply of about 400 ova (Buss, 2003). This biological fact echoes the basis of the mating game described earlier among animals. Hence in both humans and animals “the sexual impulse can be adequately defined as the impulse to evacuate” (Ellis, 2013, p. 14). Just as the males hound the females in the animal world, so too men have traditionally taken the initiative in creating opportunities for sexual relationships with women. This biologically driven pattern to the mating game has remained the case in many societies.

However, the Fooccer analogy is apt at the level of human socialization. Why is it that the man is still expected to initiate the male-female sexual encounter in many parts of the world? Without any universal set of rules for how the man should go about that initiative, the prerogative is left to particular personalities and societal expectations. The scope of the Fooccer weapon has become limitless. Men with money have often used their wealth to win over women. Others have touted their physical appearance, just like the plumage of male birds. A lot of men rely on their personal gifts, charm, and other natural skills. Many have used deceit, such as lying to women about their social status. As the cliché goes, many have ‘used love to get sex’; in other words, men have lied to women about their true feelings in order to receive sexual favors. All these male efforts at sexual relationship should be considered as tools in service of a perceived role as initiator in the mating game.

Another Fooccer tool is generally unique to humans: social power or influence. This tool particularly places women in a vulnerable position for sexual abuse. A woman may refuse financial offers. She can turn down the advances of a handsome man, or even a ‘sweet talker’. At the more complex level of social power structures, the situation is more complicated. In most societies, the social structures were created and are maintained by men. Hence polygamy is far more widespread than polyandry. Polygamy indeed remains rampant in male-dominated societies, such as in the Muslim and traditional communities. In September of 2017, the king of Swaziland married a 19-year old girl as his 14th wife in the annual Reed Dance ceremony. That ceremony is an example of a structure that enables a man with social power to exercise his presumed role in the mating game. Social power or influence is also used outside a legally sanctioned structure like the Reed Dance. The men accused in most of the recent cases of sexual assault are people of social power and influence. Whether it is Dominic Strauss-Khan (who resigned as head of the IMF due to sexual assault charges), Donald Trump (boasting in the Access Hollywood tapes about his sexual violation of women) or Harvey Weinstein (in the October 2017 sexual accusations), men use their social power to procure sexual activity. Such use of power is another form of adherence to the ancient mating game that expects the male to be the one to initiate sexual activity – using the Fooccer tool where necessary. This does not have to be the case. It is a game that requires, presupposes, and sanctions, female passivity.

The human mating game is therefore an extremely ancient practice that has lingered in our collective unconscious. It served a useful purpose but has outlived its relevance, especially now that the human society even has sperm and ovum/egg banks. Yet men continue to be gleefully socialized into an anachronistic role, because it grants them the prerogative to take the initiative in creating sexual encounters. Unfortunately, that role of initiator - as long as it is a prerogative of a particular sex - has the aforementioned default alternative. The next section expounds how that alternative is inherently linked to sexual harassment, assault and rape.

4.0 LEGACY OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT, ASSAULT AND RAPE

When a man feels at a given point that he does not possess the wherewithal to achieve consensual sex, he is like the scorpion fly that lacks the gift of food necessary to obtain the consent of the female. Since unconsciously such a man does not believe that the woman could sooner or later approach him of her own accord, for she is generally not socialized to do so in the current Fooccer order, he may resort to the “default alternative” of the mating game. This is what has been described earlier as forced copulation in the animal world. In the human world it is called rape. (For the sake of clarity, rape among humans is a heinous act. It is typically defined as the use of force or the threat of force to achieve penile-vaginal penetration of a woman without her implicit or explicit consent - Thornhill & Palmer, 2000). Some authors

have tried to explain such rape in terms of the action by a disadvantaged man who is otherwise unable to get sex (Malamuth, Huppert, & Paul, 2005). However, this goes beyond the many motives or subtypes of rapists. To use the Fooccer analogy, rape is a potential weapon that *any* man in that primitive game may deploy at will. Studies have shown that “at least one-third of men admit they would rape under specific conditions, and many men report coercive sexual fantasies” (McKibbin et al., 2008, p. 88). Hence I argue that the underlying issue is the lingering adherence to the mating game, with its ever-present default alternative. Sexual harassment, abuse or assault, and rape, constitute the default alternative in the current mating game among humans. The consequences of adhering to a game that grants the initiative to the male party, just as still obtains in much of the animal world, are dire for modern humans. I will mention a few of such consequences.

Obviously, the first major consequence of the mating game is the preponderance of rape – even in the so-called civilized societies. In the United States of America, someone is raped every seven minutes (Harding, 2015). According to a November 2017 poll, 60% of women have experienced sexual harassment or abuse. “There is no gender gap, as 88% of men and 89% of women say sexual harassment of women is a serious problem” (Schwartz 2017, p. 1). Worse still, many women do not speak out when sexually harassed, partly because of the unconscious presumption that the human society has deigned (as in Fooccer) that it is men’s prerogative to initiate sexual activity. A cone of silence is thus placed around the sexual harassment and assault of women. The women who speak up often get discredited, victimized again, which is why many others remain silent for a long time. Male predators know this and feed on it. Even ‘normal men’ tend to expect women to accept sexual advances from men. For the majority of men, it is the way males have related to women for ages. For most women, remaining silent about unwanted sexual advances becomes a matter of self-interest – the only path to survival in a misogynistic society. All, male and female, are enablers of the Fooccer game.

As a result of this culture of silence/secrecy, or helpless acquiescence on the part of some women, the game of sexual harassment or abuse thrives. Yet it is ultimately not a game. Women have endured great emotional and physical pain at the hands of countless harassers, gropers, grabbers, nudists and outright rapists. It is therefore worth noting the social and psychological costs of Fooccer. The effects of this persistent sexual harassment on women are already well documented (Wrangham & Muller, 2009; Harding, 2015; Donde & Ragsdale, 2017). A recent publication stands out in a self-revealing way. In his autobiographical book, *I Was Raped and You Were Born - My Mother’s Letter that Nearly Killed Me*, Mncube (2017) recounts the devastating effect of rape in his own life and in the lives of his extended family members in South Africa. Mncube is a famous South African comedian. His tale is a poignant example of the socio-psychological devastation of sexual abuse.

The second major consequence is what could be described as a counter evolutionary effect. After centuries of predatory behavior by men there is bound to be some adaptive reaction on the part of women, which will have long-term effect on the relationship between the sexes. There is already evidence from evolutionary biology of possible “genetic variation among females for resistance to harm from males” (Linder & Rice, 2005, p. 568). What is further emerging in the social sphere is that women now increasingly view sexual violence by men “as a collective privilege, not an individual aberration” (Martin, 2016, p. 32). My own observation as a psychologist and educationist is that there seems to be an evolving-sensitivity on the part of women. That would mean, for instance, that most ladies would increasingly react more negatively to male advances. Even a gentleman’s innocuous touch would instantly raise a red

flag in her mind. This female reaction should be taken seriously. The future of courtship may be at stake. It is unhelpful to simply use terms such as *angry feminists* or *gold-diggers* to dismiss women's current response to the culture of male domination.

Given the importance of women in the development and survival of the human race, it is important to pay extra attention to this particular effect of sexual harassment/assault – namely, women's reaction. Women may become truly “over-sensitive” in reaction to the historical and recent cases of sexual abuse by men. The result will include increased sexual harassment lawsuits. There will be more false accusations, even among consensual partners. More people will avoid marriage and long-term commitments. A lot of men will feel emasculated. Some men may even begin to unconsciously believe that anytime they approach or look at a woman they could be committing a crime. According to a male reaction to one of the sexual abuse accusations in the media, maybe men should begin to act as if women are invisible (Social Media comment). There will indeed be excessive repercussions regarding some of the accusations. In the November 2017 case involving the resignation of the British Defense Minister, it is worth noting that Michael Fallon resigned as a result of touching the knee of a female journalist (Julia Hartley-Brewer) during a conversation. The incident took place at a dinner fifteen years previously, namely, in 2002. In some of the other cases of sexual abuse recently reported by the media, several of the alleged perpetrators have vehemently denied the sexual allegations (Fox, 2017). Over time the multitude of sexual accusations will incredibly damage male-female relationship. These and other consequences will continue to ruin lives and personal careers - until humans end their participation in the primitive mating game. The next section suggests three ways of overcoming the Fooocer instruction still ingrained in the mind of man.

5.0 CURING THE PRIMITIVE EVOLUTIONARY INSTRUCTION

The first point to be made here is *awareness*. Given that the male tendency towards sexual harassment is lodged in deep and distant evolutionary recesses of the human psycho-sexual development, it is most likely that men are often not aware or conscious of this tendency. To recall, the evolutionary instruction is that Team A should dribble or score freely and team B to act as passively as possible in that game of Fooocer. Consciousness of this evolutionary logic to sexual behavior is essential. Humans are different from animals, but only to some extent (Ibhakewanlan, 2016). The mating game of animals is not only apparently still strongly present among humans but is made worse by a lack of awareness of the root of this game. Men, in particular, are still too far behind in the process of transiting from the traditional mating game to a consent-based sexual encounter. For example, some men still consider or perceive a woman's skimpy dressing as a subtle sexual invitation. (There is also the strange perception that a woman would often say *no* when she means *yes*.) Such perceptions exist because in the primitive mating game the woman is not expected to take the overt initiative. The problem is thus not the skimpy dress but the mind of men playing a primitive game. They know not what they do. The mind of woman also needs to become alert or conscious of the evolutionary logic to human sexual behavior. She needs to be aware that sexual misdemeanor on the part of men is not typically as a result of hatred for women. (Hence “the good guy” can also let her down). Rather, both men and women need to become conscious of their part in a primitive game. This awareness of the primitive in man is only a first step.

The second recommendation is re-socialization. I believe human behavior is alterable, after becoming aware of the root cause of our actions or tendencies. As our social structures become

more complex, we need to confront the unwritten rules of social/sexual encounters. Humans of the 21st century have no need of a primitive mating game that requires men to take the initiative in creating sexual encounters with women. Therefore human institutions of socialization, beginning with the family and then the school, should neither enhance female passivity nor encourage boys to approach girls as if it is their prerogative or natural right to take the initiative. That would only perpetuate the primitive mating game. The roles of these two institutions of socialization, the family and the school, will now be stated separately.

At the level of the family, parents should treat their little boys and girls as equally as possible. It does not help in this regard to buy Christmas gifts of monster trucks or violent toys for boys and soft dolls or flowery items for girls. The choice of such gifts sanctions gender aggressiveness and gender passivity respectively. Nature does not need our help, in this case, to ensure the uniqueness of the male and the female. Boys and girls should therefore be raised as similarly as possible – while acknowledging the natural biological differences. They should experience similar environments throughout their lives. For example, there is no need to associate the color blue with boys while girls are introduced to the color pink. This norm of blue boys and pink girls is merely cultural and is ultimately not inherent to the nature of the sexes. These early paths that parents set for their baby boys and girls ultimately lead to the future differences seen in personality and career paths or in approach to relationships.

At the level of the school, there is need to promote early coeducation. There are still too many single sex schools, as if the male and the female are two different species. As boys and girls study together, schools should actively ensure to teach young girls not to necessarily be the passive counterpart in the initiating of relationship with boys. As acknowledgement of female passivity sets the tone for sexual harassment and assault, girls should be taught that initiative in social encounters could be by any given sex or gender. As long as social initiative remains male, girls' *no* will not mean *no*. Schools would have only succeeded in training their students in the lopsided game of Fooccer. When these young students thus become adult men and women in society, the sexual signals will remain unclear and the boundaries blurred. Therefore, schools should more actively adopt an affirmative action for girls. This includes a broadening of the sex educational curriculum to encompass modern technology, use of the internet, and general online learning.

The third suggestion is equal power sharing. According to the US Department of Labour, there is still a huge disparity in the gender earning ratio (Women's Bureau, 2017). Women's earning as a percentage of men's, among fulltime all year-round workers, is 79.6%. In Europe, women also earn about 20% less than men for the same job. In October 2017, women accounted for only 7% of board chairs and 6% of chief executives or CEO in the largest companies in the European Union or EU (UK Gender Inequality as Bad as 10 Years Ago, 2017). This situation is far worse in non-EU countries, as shown in the United Nations' current Gender Inequality Index of 159 countries (United Nations, 2017). As mentioned earlier, social power and influence is an important human tool in the mating game. Clearly, women have comparatively little social power and influence. To end the primitive game, which seems central to sexual harassment and abuse, we must more actively redress "the so called structural powerlessness of women" (Buss, 2003, p. 45). There should be more practical/active measures put in place to ensure a fair sharing of power between men and women across all professions. In summary, this final suggestion is a call to dismantle the structure of male privilege evident across all strata of the human society.

To end this discussion on a futuristic note, imagine a world where women completely have equal social power as men. Will such a future eventually lead to a reversed domination? In

other words, after team A members have downed their weapons for an equal playing field, would members of team B pick up those weapons and use them against team A? St. Augustine would argue that the *libido dominandi* is a propensity or natural tendency ingrained in humans. He describes that tendency as the lust for lordship or the desire to dominate others and to lord it over them, which is the natural state of both men and women after the proverbial fall in the Garden of Eden (Jones, 2000). If a desire to dominate the other is indeed deep-seated in all humans, does it follow that women would oppress men in the future? Given the present circumstances, that should be a research question for a much later generation of *Homo sapiens*. A few of my male students once insisted that such a “dreadful” future is already a reality. Is patriarchy really being gradually replaced by an equally oppressive matriarchy? With the prehistoric game of Fooccer seemingly still in the collective psyche or unconscious of both sexes, a reversed domination is theoretically a future possibility. However, this hypothetical future is not necessarily one to be dreaded. To those who fear the possibility of a widespread female domination or oppression of men, I would say that it is a risk we should be willing to take towards achieving a world of greater justice and true love.

6.0 CONCLUSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

In this paper I have looked at the problem of sexual abuse of women by men, and have done so from a socio-psychological perspective. Drawing upon evolution, I identified a psychological mechanism that urges men to sexually dominate women. I called it the primitive mating game and related it to that found in animals. The adverse consequences of this game have also been highlighted. Finally, I pointed out three ways we can overcome the ancient game: awareness, re-socialization and equal power sharing.

However, this is not a thorough investigation – partly because it is a desk research. The central premise of this article needs to be further tested in the field. I have maintained that the problem of sexual harassment and assault by men is linked to the male prerogative over sexual initiative. Hence the argument that the problem could be well addressed if the male sex is not socialized to presume that he must necessarily be the one to take the initiative in creating sexual encounters with the female. It may not be sufficient that such a central thesis be based only on a rudimentary review of facts from evolutionary psychology and a basic socio-psychological analysis of current events. More evidence is needed across cultures and societies. It is important to emphasize that the research evidence being suggested here is not about seeking findings on the prevalence of sexual misdemeanor among males in various ethnic or cultural groups and nationalities. This author believes that sexual abuse should be seen as a global human problem, transcending cultures and societies. Hence a process of *human* re-socialization is suggested.

The future enquiry this article therefore recommends is a more empirical and vastly transnational research study to better understand specifically the relationship between sexual misconduct and norms of initiating sexual encounters. Is rape more likely to occur in a society where men are expected to take the initiative in matters of sex? How less likely to occur is rape in a culture where women are expected to take the sexual initiative? What is the comparative level of sexual misconduct (harassment, assault, rape, etc.) in both sets of ‘cultures’ - across cultures and nations? Thus this paper has only succeeded in raising some questions. The responses are far from obvious today, but it is expedient to seek for further answers through new and more thorough research investigations.

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