Studying Sexual and Gendered Violence Prevention in Higher Education

Local/Vertical, Global/Horizontal, and Power-Based Frames

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Les récents travaux sur les programmes de prévention de la violence sexuelle et sexiste dans les campus des collèges et universitaires à travers le monde ont révélé le peu d'efficacité de ces initiatives qui sont plutôt des pratiques qui l'interdisent et dont les concepts sont ignorés par les érudits du milieu. Cet article explore avec l'aide de cadres analytiques basés sur le pouvoir et ancrés dans la théorie et les pratiques féministes transnationales, utilise trois scénarios. Le premier rapporte les notes d'un groupe de chercheurs qui ont colligé les données sur la violence sexuelle dans une grande université publique de Bulgarie et examiné comment les recherches selon une méthode de l'Union européenne, selon une ONG internationale féminine et des approches préventives et imaginatives américaines furent appliquées à l' épistémologie bulgare. Le deuxième scénario questionne les actions contradictoires des universités responsables de la violence envers les femmes et autres participants une éducation supérieure tout en les protégeant contre cette violence. Le troisième scénario suggère des programmes de prévention envers une population spécifique d'étudiants, dans ce cas, envers les cinq millions d'étudiants qui transitent dans le monde de l'éducation et qui sont invisibles dans le champ de la prévention.

Sexual and gender-based violence[1] prevention on university and college campuses has become an international field of study examining the design, implementation, and effectiveness of prevention interventions aimed at stopping sexual violence from occurring in educational spaces, and creating social environments supportive of non-violent relations and inclusion. Such interventions include university and college policies defining sexual violence, specifying the formal procedures to be followed in reporting and addressing such acts, as well as the services provided to victims (see Ontario Ministry of the Status of Women). These policies are often accompanied by institutionally supported prevention programs seeking to change individual attitudes, behaviours, and social structures. For example, rape awareness programs target male beliefs in myths supporting sexual violence against women (Stephens and George). Commonly implemented prevention programs train college women to detect dangerous situations, resist perpetrators, and overcome emotional barriers in recognizing and reporting violence by strangers, intimate partners, and family members (Lonsway et al.; Edwards and Hedrick; Senn et al.). Widely practiced 'bystander programs' teach participants in higher education to act as allies of victims, speak out against gendered and sexual violence, and diffuse potentially violent situations using specially designed tools and tactics (McMahon, Postmus and Koenick; Banyard, Moynihan and Plante).

Recent reviews of these and other prevention programs, however, reveal their limited success in preventing sexual violence from happening, prompting comments about "stagnation" of the field, both in terms of the quality and quantity of prevention approaches that could address the issue in effective ways (DeGue et al. 352). The stagnation is evident in the lack of richer, multidisciplinary, and expansive theoretical frameworks to provide deeper and wider understanding of the global contextual worlds of 'sexual violence prevention' in higher education. For example, prevention programs overwhelmingly fail to address structural forces causing violence, focusing instead on changing the attitudes and behaviours of individuals (Gibbons). However, the reasons driving such focus on individuals rather than the social or economic structures that are the root causes of violence remain under-examined

by researchers. Comprehensive assessments of globally diffused prevention programs have also revealed that the majority of these initiatives originate in the United States and lack "cultural reach," as their success is measured based on samples consisting of predominantly White heterosexual male students (Nation et al.; Ricardo, Eads and Barker). Most programs also fail to follow recognized positive practices in the field related to intervention duration, professional facilitation, and theory-informed strategies (Nation et al. 453). Prevention initiatives are not always matched to, or designed for, the student populations they target; instead they are often transplanted from one context to another, which limits their effectiveness (DeGue et al. 347). The common notion that "university administrators" are, and should be, in charge of prevention policies and programs (see Vladuiti et al.) has not been interrogated by scholars, especially in light of research identifying university administrations as major perpetrators and accomplices of sexual violence by intimidating students who are victims, protecting perpetrators (e.g., influential professors or male athletes), and refusing to acknowledge and deal with the issue fearing that public exposure will diminish the university's reputation and revenue (Fitzgerald et al.; Dziech and Weiner; Eyre; Cantalupo).

The notion that "university administrators" should be in charge of prevention policies and programs has not been interrogated by scholars, especially in light of research identifying university administrations as major perpetrators and accomplices of sexual violence by intimidating students who are victims, protecting perpetrators, and refusing deal with the issue.

This article explores these issues from within local/vertical, global/horizontal, and power-based analytical frames anchored in transnational feminist theory and practice. Drawing from these multi-directional and feminist paradigms can help reveal how these issues are connected to local, state, and global sites simultaneously, and within a historical nexus of social relations of power (see Grewal and Kaplan; Maguire and Shaikh; Fontes and McCloskey; Ruspini et al.; Montoya). These research orientations constitute a 'glocal' field of study, wherein the researcher could map and analyze the interplay between multiple and unequal local, state, international, and global agents, institutions, and structures that together "are governing the response to violence against women" in higher education and beyond (Chowdry 23). These governing forces can be identified by tracing the origins of various agendas, influences, and effects to the actors exerting them, as well as the broader material and non-material structures supporting these actors (see Foucault; True). This expansive paradigm for studying sexual and gendered violence prevention reveals further how the issue is not bound to a college campus; rather it is infused with state and global influences related to the "international dimensions" and "boundary-crossing" of global educational policies, the world-wide diffusion of curriculum and teaching practice, the cultural diversity and mobility of learners, and the increasing role of state, international organizations, corporate interests, and global markets in tertiary education, where sexual and gendered violence is recognized as a global problem as well (Verger, Novelli and Altinyelken). Mapping these glocal linkages, and understanding prevention programs in relation to them, enriches studies of sexual and gender-based violence prevention on university and college campuses, helping to revitalize the field and foster safer educational spaces.

The remainder of the article focuses on the epistemological prowess of glocal power-based paradigms using three vignettes. The first involves the field notes of a team of researchers collecting data on sexual violence against women in a large public university in Bulgaria, a middle to low income former socialist country in Southeastern Europe that joined the European Union (EU) in 2006. This vignette examines how EU-based research activities, international women's NGOs, and dominant U.S.-based prevention approaches and imaginations extend 'West-to-rest' epistemologies to Bulgaria. This extension contributes to a social and institutional atmosphere of resistance to research on sexual and gendered violence in Bulgarian universities, which in turn, limit the possibilities for prevention.

The second vignette examines "the university" as the organizing unit of research and analysis in the prevention field. In this vignette, I probe questions about the contradictory actions of the university as a perpetrator of violence against women and other vulnerable participants in higher education, and a protector from such violence. The vignette relates this contradiction to the university's relationship with state and capital.

The third vignette addresses the issue of matching prevention programs to specific student populations, in this case over five million international students worldwide,

who remain largely invisible in the prevention field. This vignette examines the possibilities of providing local universities with international violence prevention benchmarks to contribute to local university and college-based prevention efforts.

The article uses data, examples, and experiences documented by researchers in multiple countries around the world. Data and experiences from Canada are presented in all three vignettes in part because of the author's epistemological location as a researcher and academic in this country. In addition, the issue of sexual violence against women in Canadian universities has been widely-debated in the past few years. Positioning Canadian institutions of higher education within glocal and power-based feminist paradigms would hopefully clarify important aspects of the issue that have so far escaped the attention of these debates.

Vignette 1: West-to-Rest Prevention Flows: Field Notes from a Bulgarian University

Bulgaria is a former socialist country in Southeastern Europe experiencing rapid and dramatic economic and cultural transformations. Currently, neither state nor university authorities in the country collect data on the prevalence and manifestations of sexual violence against women in Bulgarian universities and colleges. Multiple media reports have documented murdered, sexually assaulted, and raped female university students, including one case where the government of Bulgaria was convicted of violating human rights for not prosecuting diligently the kidnapping and gang rape of a female student (Alma Mater TV; Vesti.Bg; Blagoevgrad-News). University students across the country have also organized mass protests against a practice whereby state educational authorities address diminished educational budgets by renting out spaces to casinos, night clubs, and bars near student housing and classrooms thus contributing to increased violence. Documented cases of sexual harassment of female students by university professors, or at the hands of the police, reveal the scope of the problem (Infomreja; Mediapool.BG; 24Hours.BG). Reports of female students offering sexual favours in exchange for higher grades also highlight the need for comprehensive studies to map the structures, values, attitudes, and behaviours supporting forms of sexual and gendered violence in Bulgarian higher education (Todorova, conversation with Alexey Pamporov). However, there is a lack of systematically collected data upon which institutional policies or prevention efforts could be developed.

In the spring of 2016, a research team including myself (associated with a Canadian university), a sociologist from the Bulgarian Academy of Science, and a graduate student at a public university in Bulgaria, initiated data collection activities including a survey probing the issue among students at a large state university. However, our project was met with resistance from faculty and administrators, who prevented us from accessing students. One administrator referred to our survey about student sexual life and violence as "inappropriate" (Dimitrova). The Dean of a large faculty agreed to the research, but told students that "Once upon a time, there were no surveys for the sake of the surveying.… I believe not even one of you has ever been a victim of sexual harassment or violence, unless, you yourself had imagined that." Very few students in this faculty took part in the survey. A prominent professor and Chair at another faculty who is known for her progressive and feminist public work, gently rejected our request for access to her students, claiming that the number of students in her courses would be too small to be of importance, and referred us to another female faculty who would "know more about these things" (Todorova, "Research Field Notes: Personal Communication with Nelly Ognyanova and Ralitsa Dimitrova"). The Student Union also politely rejected us, even though a representative confirmed they had received complaints about sexual harassment (Dimitrova). One woman who was previously affiliated with the university asked: "Who will study the loose female students who force themselves on male professors for grades?" (Todorova, "Research Field Notes: Conversation with Alexey Pamporov).

These reactions to our study present actions and speech attempting to prevent conversations about sexual and gendered violence from happening at the university; in other words, these reactions are manifestations of resistance to the study. Resistance, writes Michel Foucault, is always present in the face of power, hence modes of resistance are opportunities to map the power relations organizing a given social setting, using resistance "as a chemical catalyst so as to bring to light power relations, locate their position, and find out their point of application and the methods used" (780). In this context, the sources of power being resisted originated in the geopolitical "West"—mostly Western (European and North American) agents of power shaped how Bulgarians perceive themselves, and what they know and consider important in terms of sexual and gendered violence.

For example, the European Antibullying Network, supported by the European Commission and associated local organizations, has collected data on bullying and other violence among school children in Bulgaria (Markarian; European Antibullying Network). The ensuing media campaign disseminating the study findings focused public attention on the issue and moved the Bulgarian Ministry of Education to come up with a plan to address

it. This campaign was certainly important, but the research neglected to explore how violence in middle- and high-schools is a major precursor and cause of sexual and other violence against women in higher education (see Proto-Campise, Belknap and Wooldredge). This reflects the compartmentalization of prevention campaigns led by international and women NGOs, which tend to specialize in one area of violence because it is important in the societies and countries where they originate. The visibility and activities of other international NGOs backed up by high-income states and private donors in the global North, such as Women Against Violence Europe, Coalition for Gender Equality Karat, the Swiss-Bulgarian Cooperation on Identification and Long-term Assistance of Children and Adult Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings, and the Gender Education, Research and Technology Foundation, also shape how Bulgarians understand violence against women, and what forms of violence are considered more pressing and important.

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One effect of this dominant international presence is that sexual violence against university women is not considered an important manifestation of gendered violence. As a result, research initiatives on this issue are scarce in Bulgaria, and when undertaken they tend to be ignored or dismissed by university administrators and faculty. This nexus of power mutes the voices of women who are survivors of violence, or have witnessed such violence in academia.

Research by Western scholars has shaped the field of research in Bulgaria in many ways. In 2016 alone, the European Commission for Research and Innovation's largest program Horizon 2020 was supporting more than 20 research studies involving Bulgaria (European Commission). This intense presence of research and researchers has led to research fatigue and resistance among Bulgarians, as these mostly Western gazes stress the economic, social, cultural, and political shortcomings and deficiencies in the country (European Commission). These narratives of deficiency extend centuries-long Western discourses narrating Bulgarians and "the Balkans" as underdeveloped people and lands, whose deviance and shortcomings are linked to their racial, cultural, and geographic proximity to "the Orient," or the "near East" (Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*). As a result, Bulgarian and other peoples and cultures in the region are seen as requiring study and reform by "developed," "modern," and "civilized" Western nations.

Bulgaria's communist and socialist past marks it for continuous surveillance assessing its "progress" and fit for membership in "Europe" proper. Mentions of the country as a site of positive practices related to violence against women, or other important social issues, are rare (European Institute for Gender Equality). Bulgaria has been named Europe's "most corrupt country" (Kuebler) and has been qualified as "falling behind" and "last" in terms of the digital economy and prosperity index (European Commission). Bulgaria is also ranked behind other EU members in its rates of young people achieving secondary and higher education, its employment rates, and its progress toward elimination of poverty; its funding for research and development in the country is considered "insufficient" (Eurostat). These research data comparing Bulgaria to wealthier European countries and societies echo historical "West and the rest" discourses and power relations, wherein knowledge about those deemed "lacking" or inferior has been continuously produced in relation and comparison to "Europe" and "the west" (Hall 221). Within this context, the collection of data on sexual and gender-based violence in Bulgarian institutions of higher education could extend these discourses and imaginations.

For example, the basic units of analysis, methodological approaches, and research designs that are commonly used in the field originate in mostly American and Western epistemologies and social sciences. Categories such as "university campus," "college campus," and "campus-based sexual violence" are bound to largely American geographies and experiences that do not translate well in other cultural or academic settings. The etymology of the word "campus" originates in Latin and refers to a "field" or "expanse surrounded by trees." The term "university campus" was originally used in 1774 to describe what is now Princeton University in the United States, and the architecture and landscape used on campuses is considered to serve "as a metaphor for the American experience" (Chapman 7). Green lawns and trees between the buildings, open pas-

sages, proximity of structures, and location at the edges of towns and cities signifies a desire for closeness to nature, openness of frontiers, and pursuit of greatness espoused by the fathers of the American nation, such as Thomas Jefferson, who spend the last years of his life designing the University of Virginia (ibid 3). Yet the casual way in which 'college campus' is used across the otherwise international body of literature about sexual and gendered violence and its prevention in higher education presumes the term's universality; hence, researchers working in historically, linguistically, culturally, and socially different settings across the world have used (and continue to use) the concept when participating in this social scientific field of study.

During a preliminary testing of our survey in a focus group of 19 students, it became clear that references to the "campus" do not fully describe the experiences of Bulgarian university students. Bulgarian universities tend to consist of one or multiple adjacent buildings located in the heart of a city. Students live in various residential arrangements in the city; student housing or "dormitories" like those in the United States are rare. Students in the group did not consider their university a "campus" where violence happens; rather, they considered it a "safe" space away from perceived hostility, crowdedness, and violence of the surrounding urban landscapes. The buildings surrounding the university, including cafeterias, gardens, public squares, and commercial buildings, are not part of "the university" or related to it. Instead of serving as a "campus," these spaces signify social, political, and even sexual violence and danger that students do not experience within the university itself. Therefore, by asking about sexual violence on "campus," we were imposing foreign epistemologies attached to hegemonic political and cultural power. We failed to ask the equally important question: "How and why are university spaces safe, or safer, for those who inhabit them?" Omission of this type of question inhibits research and analysis; it is important to examine how local student experiences of a "safe university" could help enrich the design of effective violence prevention efforts and initiatives in higher education worldwide.

Vignette 2: (Re)conceptualizing "The University" in Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention

Research about sexual and gendered violence prevention in higher education advances two contradictory views of "the university" that are largely unexamined and undertheorized by scholars. On one hand, the university is considered a perpetrator or accomplice of violence, as reflected by cases of deliberate institutional indifference, intimidation of student-victims and their parents, slowness in responding to incidents, lack of services for victims, and protection of powerful male professors or student star athletes (Fitzgerald et al.; Dziech and Weiner; Eyre; Cantalupo). On the other hand, the university is seen as an engine of social change and place to foster non-violent masculinities, gender equality, acceptance of various sexualities, and practicing of intimate and social relations supportive of equity, equality, tolerance, multiculturalism, and inclusion (Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg). Global initiatives advocating for the education of girls, women, Indigenous peoples, and racial and ethnic minorities, especially in so-called "developing countries," are premised on these notions of education as a propeller of social change and economic prosperity (Maslak; United Nations Division for Social Policy and Development Indigenous Peoples).

This duality can be situated within a glocal, power-based, feminist, and queer of colour analytic. Roderick Ferguson conceptualized the U.S. academy as the inventor of a mode of power, described as an "adaptable hegemony" and a training ground where state and capital learn how to engage the political unrest and grievances among women and minorities (6). The civil rights, women and feminist, gay rights, and ethnic pride movements in the 1960, 1970s, and 1980s produced student unrest and political radicalism that opened universities in the United States for women and racial and sexual minorities. Student campaigns and activism threatening the established social order also led to the institutional inauguration of women and gender studies, sexuality studies, ethnic studies, and Black studies programs and departments. Together, these undermined the domination of White, masculine, heteronormative, and largely Eurocentric subjects and knowledges in the U.S. academy.

However, nearly half a century later, an audit of this "reorder" of the U.S. academy reveals that the representation and presence of women and racial, sexual, ethnic, and other minorities at the university has taken place without redistribution of economic, social, political, and cultural power, privileges, or wages—inside or outside the university. From this perspective, while the university has been a leading force in the inclusion and accommodation of women and minority students in spaces of social and knowledge production, this inclusion has also protected the U.S. academy, the U.S. state, and U.S. capital from ruptures or revolutions. The university has preserved the state, as well as the dominant and privileged social classes, from the threat posed by the political activism of women and marginalized groups, while also responding to the needs of capital by including and training minorities and women as consumers and workers in the global economy. In so doing, the university has participated actively in the invention of a new technology of power, whereby unrest,

struggle, and political and social radicalism initiated by women and minorities is subdued and tamed through inclusion in educational spaces and promise for political and material uplifting and access.

The international literature on sexual and gendered violence in higher education illuminates the proliferation of this technology of power worldwide. For example, more than 900 women and gender studies programs, institutes, centers, and degree concentrations have been established in 65 countries since the early 1990s (Korenman). These have helped change how knowledge is produced and imparted in and outside universities (Awumbila; Anderson; Beeson; Cushing and Smith; Mahr and Yaqubi). However, these programs have not produced substantial changes in the patriarchal, raced, sexed, and classed state and the local political, economic, social, and cultural hierarchies responsible for the oppression and marginalization of women and minority groups in the first place. In fact, the university has protected these structures from collapse or radical change by maintaining policies, practices, and curriculum that are largely supportive of these structures and the sexual and gendered violence they produce. Indeed, universities around the world have included more women as students, faculty, administrators, and staff, but a cross-national study of women's representation at senior university/academic positions in Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Turkey, and the UK found that women are under-represented or absent from the higher echelons of academia, where decisions about national curriculum, accreditation, policies related to student admission, faculty promotion and salary scales, distribution of resources, research directions, and knowledge production in general remain in the hands of men, and a domain of largely masculinist and heterosexual power (Özkanli et al.).

The scope and manifestations of sexual and gendered violence in institutions of higher education globally signifies the presence of these structures and the role of national academies in maintaining them. Numerous studies have documented the prevalence of sexual and gendered violence against women on college and university campuses in high-, middle-, and low- income countries, ranging from Australia, the United States, Japan, Spain, and Canada in the global North, to Nigeria, Chile, Brazil, and China in the global South (Lehrer et al.; Ohnishi et al.; Odaleye and Ajuwon; D'Abreu, Krahe, Bazon; Canadian Federation of Students Ontario; Wang et al.; Valls et al.; Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network). Victims are overwhelmingly female, racialized, queer, gender non-conforming, differently abled, and members of Indigenous and ethnic minorities (Kalof et al.; Paludi et al. 106; Silverschanz et al.). Research has also documented how universities participate and support this violence by remaining ignorant, indifferent, and "notoriously weak" in addressing and preventing sexual and gender-based violence on campuses (Bott, Morrison and Ellsberg 32; Underhalter and North; Ricardo, Eads, and Barker).

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Within this context, it is not surprising that a recent audit of sexual and gender-based violence prevention efforts in British universities found that despite institutionally supported policies and programs, sexual violence against women and a "lad culture" asserting masculinist and heteronormative views of the world persisted, as did the "existence of negative attitudes towards feminism and gender-related topics within courses" (The All-Party Parliamentary University Group 8). The culture of violence and hostility to women-centred curriculum and teaching was also illustrated in a 2015 case of online death threats against feminist faculty in sociology and women and gender studies in a large public university in Ontario, Canada. The university's initial indifference, and then slow response to the threat, normalized the culture of misogyny, in stark contrast to its public commitment to gender equity and justice (Group of Graduate students from the Department of Sociology at the University of Toronto). Well-documented cases of sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, and murder of female students in the region since the 1980s also stand in contrast to the universities' proclaimed commitments to women and minorities. In fact, it took nearly half a century and a provincial government regulation, initiated by a queer and femocrat Canadian Prime Minister in 2014-2015, to push the 45 publicly-funded colleges and universities in Ontario to start collecting and reporting data on sexual

and gendered violence, and to implement sexual violence policies and prevention programs (see Ministry of the Status of Women 2015).

A technology of inclusion without redistribution of power, nor safety from violence, is illustrated further by the related phenomena of nation-states becoming signatories to international treaties committed to eliminating violence against women in their societies. Since 1980, 185 states have signed the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women; many states have since 1993 also supported the related UN Declaration to End Violence Against Women. However, little has actually changed: gender inequalities remain rampant everywhere and one in three women worldwide is experiencing physical or sexual violence (United Nations Women). In her powerful analysis of why former socialist states have signed international treaties to enact legislation protecting women from violence, yet have actually delivered little or nothing, Olga Adveyeva has argued that states and state institutions sign such treaties to signal to global markets and capital that they are "modernizing," "democratizing" and thus measuring to standards associated with so-called "developed" or "first-world" states; they are open for business and safe for Western capital because their national civil laws and educational policies are on par with Western social practices.

Public institutions of higher education align their policies, curriculum, teaching, and "campus culture" with international policies to which states are signatories, as well the needs of national economies. Such positioning allows universities to align further with global discourses on gender equity advanced by powerful economic organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, which advocates for women's equality in access to education as a way for states to increase their labour force and gross domestic product (Elborg-Voytek et al.). Many universities have responded to the sexual and gendered violence that has taken place on their premises with either ignorance or prevention strategies that come short in dealing with the issue (Nation et al.; Ricardo, Eads and Barker; Vladutiui et al.; Gibbons and Evans; DeGue et al.). A major shortcoming of these prevention programs is their continued focus on changing the views and attitudes of individual participants in education without addressing or undermining the broader context of state, economic, and social structures supportive of patriarchal and heteronormative cultures, material inequalities, and political subjugation and marginalization of groups and subjects (see McMahon, Postmus and Koenick; Senn et al.).

One way to disrupt this technology of hegemonic power is to design and enact prevention initiatives that are "in the university but not of it" (Ferguson 18). When working against sexual and gender-based violence, this means designing and practicing prevention approaches that are not invented, approved, and regulated by university authorities but are created, enacted, and overseen by local grassroots communities, as well as drawing on international collectives and networks, that include members of the groups who are most likely to experience violence in these spaces. Internationally recognized positive practices and benchmarks in prevention of violence against women recommend that such approaches bypass hegemonic institutions, and link local prevention practices to global prevention know-how. The next vignette explores how these international prevention benchmarks could be developed, what they might look like in the area of higher education, and how they could enhance the effectiveness of prevention programs in meeting the needs of culturally diverse groups of students, such as international learners in higher education.

Vignette 3: International Students, Global Higher Education, and Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Prevention

Matching prevention programs with the populations they target is key to their success. "Culturally tailoring" prevention programs would go beyond simple translation into various languages to instead pursue "deep structure modifications" to match the cultural and local specificities of the targeted population (Nation et al.). Extensive data has shown that cultural attitudes, local customs and traditions, social and gender relations, as well as historical and broader structures of power play important roles in sexual and gender-based violence in educational spaces. Additionally, comparative studies have identified significant differences in the ways that male and female university students from various countries and societies perceive women, gender roles, sexual intimacy, domination, and behaviours constituting "sexual harassment" (Nayak et al. 334; Paludi et al.; Jewkes et al.; Ozaki and Otis).

Recognizing cultural specificities and differences is especially important in prevention efforts concerning international students, who come from diverse cultural, social, and linguistic backgrounds. In 2014, more than five million students travelled abroad for education; this is a fifty percent increase in international student mobility compared to the year 2000. This so-called "massification of higher education" is occurring within the context of economic growth in many regions, heavy state investment in international and higher education, as well as demographic trends contributing to the growth of international education worldwide (International Consultants for Education and Fairs). Universities in the United States,

Australia, the UK, Japan, Russia, China, Malaysia, Canada, and South Africa are among the top destinations for international students (UNESCO Institute for Statistics). For example, Canadian colleges and universities hosted 360,000 international students from 215 countries in 2015 (Canadian Bureau for International Education). Universities in Malaysia admitted 32,000 international students in 2014, from countries as diverse as Kazakhstan, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and Yemen (UNESCO). In academic year 2015–16, universities in Russia welcomed 283,000 international students from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Grove). The same year, universities and colleges in the United States hosted 1,043,839 international students, while one in ten domestic students pursued studies abroad (International Consultants for Education and Fairs). In 2016, Australia had 554,179 international learners from 200 countries (Doyle). Students from China are one of the largest groups of international learners worldwide, yet Chinese universities are also internationalizing fast, hosting 442,773 international students in 2016, mainly from Africa and Asia, especially South Korea, Indonesia, Pakistan, and a few other countries (International Consultants for Education and Fairs). Universities in South Africa have attracted a growing number of international students from neighbouring African countries, as well as Asia and Europe; in 2014, they welcomed 72,000 international learners who were attracted to the "stability," "peaceful environment," and quality of higher education in South Africa (MacGregor).

However, institutions of higher education have fallen short in ensuring learning environments free of sexual and gender-based violence for both international and domestic students. For instance, researchers have found that female international students in Australia have been forced to participate in "transactional sex" to support their basic needs for food, clothing, shelter, and student fees (Forbes-Mewett and McCulloch 350). They have also found that loneliness, confusion, and struggle with the foreign language among international students in the U.S. makes them especially vulnerable to sexual violence and abuse (Le, LaCost and Wismer). Their spouses may also be vulnerable to violent domestic situations due to their visa status, forcing them into complete dependency on the international student (Teshome and Osei-Kofi 2012). In Canada, student organizations and researchers have called for special services supporting international students amid reports of "widespread sexual violence" and the existence of "rape cultures" on Canadian university and college campuses (Bergeron et al; Enos). Recent student protests in South Africa calling on universities in that country to address the growing number of rape incidents highlight the seriousness of the issue, as well as the lack of prevention programs or support for survivors of violence in the largest South African universities (Mpofu). A study of intimate partner violence among male and female university students in Russia shows "fairly significant" rates of victimization, constituting "a real social problem" in Russian higher education, which is positioned for further and intense internationalization by the Russian government (Lysova and Douglas 1580; Kamimura et al.). Likewise, reports of high incident rates of sexual violence in Malaysian universities suggest "somewhat unsafe" educational environment for both domestic and international female students in this country as well (Endut et al. 11).

One way to disrupt this technology of hegemonic power is to design and enact prevention initiatives that are "in the university but not of it." This means designing and practicing prevention approaches that are not invented, approved, and regulated by university authorities but are created, enacted, and overseen by local grassroots communities.

Acknowledging the global realities of higher education, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has developed a policy document urging institutions of higher education to better meet the needs of international students by setting international benchmarks for their policies, programs and curriculum, as well as receiving and acting on the feedback of international students (OECD 1). Extending this recommendation to university policies and programs preventing sexual and gender-based violence could improve the effectiveness of these initiatives, by positioning them to address culturally and socially diverse domestic and international learners, while effectively linking campus-specific needs to global and international prevention know-how.

However, some international organizations have been criticized for practicing violence prevention approaches laced with power inequalities, assumptions, and Euro-centricity. For example, Dewey and Germain argued that the best practices for sexual and gender-based violence prevention in conflict and war zones compiled and

recommended by the United Nations were constructed from within a "privileged position" and exported "flawed solutions" from the North American criminal justice system to the global South. By using legal and political notions of "women's rights" and "human rights," these approaches displace cultural and local understandings of the issues. By focusing on rights-driven prevention agenda, international policy-makers seek to transcend differences and specificities within and across countries and societies. However, feminists and women activists, especially in the global South, have deconstructed these international rights-based approaches as situated texts anchored in Western and Eurocentric ideas and ideals, calling instead for prevention interventions rooted in local needs and knowledges.

Mindful of these biases, some international organizations have recently designed complex processes guarding against power-based standpoints in identifying "positive practices" and "international benchmarks" in gendered violence prevention. These practices could serve as a useful point of reference in thinking through equity-based process in the design and implementation of prevention programs in the area of higher education. For instance, the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women defines "positive practices" of violence prevention as experiences that "emerge in particular contexts and circumstances, often building on and learning from what has been tried before," including "transferable practices" that could be adapted to local specificities and applied to other contexts (United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women 7-9). Positive transferable practices are based on data collected in multiple countries and different social settings in order to identify specific local issues that may involve shared experiences. These kinds of positive practices are compiled by international research collectives including academics, clinicians, service providers, survivors, people working directly with victims, policy-makers, women's rights advocates, and community activists from low-, middle- and high-income groups and countries in both the global North and South (European Parliament Directorate General for Internal Policies; World Bank Group). In some cases, researchers and experts compiling international evidence and recommendations of good prevention practices are screened to ensure geographical representation, gender balance, and power relations as a way of avoiding hierarchical knowledge production (WHO). This allows these interventions to include a wide range of cultural, racial, national, economic, and power standpoints, so they can generate representative 'international benchmarks' to guide local, state and international initiatives. Importantly, the international organizations recommending these best practices insist on adapting them to local needs and specificities by including local communities, regional networks, and national institutions in their assessment and adoption.

International prevention positive practices further rest upon holistic prevention paradigms resembling the "methodological relationism" described in feminist theories of women's education (Maslak). From this perspective, prevention of violence against women in educational spaces, based on international benchmarks, must consider both the structures supporting individual attitudes and behaviours conducive to gendered and sexual violence, as well as how individuals can act as agents to change oppressive structures. In this context, individual agency is linked to historical and overarching systems and forces related to patriarchy, global markets, media and popular culture, gender inequality in professions and political life, as well as legacies of colonialism and racism. Internationally recognized positive prevention practices transcend awareness programs to promote state policies, cultural practices, and worldviews that undermine homophobia, racism, neo-colonialism, gender inequality, poverty, and social marginalization, locally, nationally and globally. The following recommendations illustrate what internationally recognized positive practices might look like in the area of higher education. They draw primarily from positive practices compiled by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, and the World Health Organization (Harvey, Garcia-Moreno and Butchart):

Recommended institutional practices:

•Ensure data collection related to sexual and gender-based violence within the institution is conducted by non-institutional and non-governmental women's groups and community groups, to eliminate institutional and state self-interest and to reduce structural gender, racial, and heteronormative power and bias.

•Negotiate affordable or free media time, and invite community members and survivors to speak to the public about sexual and gender-based violence in the university. Encourage institutional leaders (university presidents, deans, and other figures with power and authority) to speak publicly and honestly about the issue.

•Create budget advisory bodies, including representatives of the various campus communities, and practice gender-sensitive budgeting to ensure adequate funding for prevention programs; seek state cooperation in securing continuous funding.

•Prioritize sexual and gender-based violence prevention in all institutional policies and programs.

•Support women, gender and sexuality studies, as well as critical educational programs addressing racism, patri-

archy, colonization, globalization, and other structural forces across the curriculum.

•Support community groups and community consultations to collect feedback from international students, visiting scholars, distance learners, part-time students, and undergraduate and graduate students; and adjust initiatives continuously to respond to these fluid and mobile communities of students.

•Recruit survivors of violence to serve as councillors, facilitators, auditors, and community liaisons.

•Work with state immigration authorities and campaign for visa status for international spouses/families, to ensure that their access to social services and local communities is not dependent on the international student.

•Support community-led needs assessment studies among the different student groups to create delineated databases sensitive to how students may or may not experience sexual and gendered violence. Tailor prevention approaches to deliver effective and appropriate services that meet the needs of various learners, including women, queer, transgender, racialized, Indigenous, differently abled, mature, distance, and international students.

Recommended practices in education and training:

•Encourage faculty and students to perform curricula audits and create processes so that units, departments, institutes, and student and professional organizations in the university are encouraged to embed gender and sexuality studies, social justice lenses, and critical understanding of structures and individual agency in their curriculum.

•Faculty associations and faculty caucuses should embed critical medial literacy education across the curriculum to undermine common stereotypes related to gender, sexuality, race, class, and ability, and provide tools so that young people are aware of social and mass media and popular culture messages regarding women, sexuality, masculinity, and violence. Train learners to produce different and alternative media/culture and messages supporting new and non-violent social forms and identities.

•Practice community-led public awareness campaigns and conversations about how different cultures and societies around the world understand "sexual violence."

Recommended services and delivery:

•Develop internationally recognized quality standards for delivery of services to survivors, and adopt measuring and monitoring tools to enforce these standards overseen by representatives of students, faculty, staff, and other stakeholders.

•Connect services for survivors to language capacities and community-based programs.

•Provide free and accessible opportunities to all survivors of violence to take self-defence training, which is known to improve mental and emotional health.

•Provide services designed to meet the needs of international students, their spouses, and their families.

These campus-based prevention initiatives and international benchmarks can incorporate cross-national and global knowledge to match the multicultural realities of higher education. They can also help position institutions of higher education for more collaborations and knowledge exchanges to make higher education safer for all learners.

Conclusion

Local/vertical, global/horizontal, and power-based lenses and paradigms enrich and deepen our understanding of key issues in the field of sexual and gendered violence prevention in higher education. By connecting the university to state and international agents and sites of influence, exploring the relationships between these sources of power, and analyzing how they affect the scope and manifestations of violence in higher education, it will be possible to develop prevention initiatives that avoid West-to-rest epistemologies, resist technologies of hegemonic power, and adequately address the realities of international higher education. This will allow universities and colleges worldwide to become safer spaces where all learners pursue their educational goals freely and equally.

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Endnote

[1]Sexual and gender-based violence includes sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, rape, sexual assault, cyberbullying, and stalking of participants in higher education. The 1993 United Nation's Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women uses the term "gender-based violence" to highlight how violence against women, as well as transgender and gender non-conforming individuals, is inflicted because an individual is a 'woman' or practices a non-binary and fluid gender. It is important to recognize that men are also victims of violence due to gender stereotyping (see True).

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