



# Sexual Assault and Abuse: Sociocultural Context of Prevention (Prevention in Human Services)

*By Robert E Hess, Carolyn F Swift*

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## **Sexual Assault and Abuse: Sociocultural Context of Prevention (Prevention in Human Services)** By Robert E Hess, Carolyn F Swift

Prevention of a chronic societal problem such as sexual victimization requires looking beyond individuals to the systemic factors that maintain the problem. Sexual Assault and Abuse addresses the need to change social and cultural beliefs and practices that permit the sexual victimization of women and children. Potential rapists and victims are viewed within the context of the social and cultural factors that shape sexual behavior. The book discusses rape prevention approaches ranging from changing individuals and groups to changing the social and cultural factors that permit and promote sexual victimization. Research in the social sciences, in education, and in the media documents the promise as well as the problems with efforts to change social and cultural beliefs and practices to create a sexually safe society. Sexual Assault and Abuse integrates recent advances in research on sexual assault and prevention into strategies to prevent sexual victimization, with a focus on the role of sociocultural factors. In Sexual Assault and Abuse, editor Carolyn F. Swift brings together authors who thoughtfully examine the perpetrators and victims of sexual assault/abuse in an effort to change or obliterate sociocultural factors which maintain or promote this behavior. Topics covered include:

- the sociocultural context of sexual assault/abuse
  - the need to develop multiple-level prevention programs
  - development of sexually abusive behavior in men and boys
  - the relationship between pornography and sexual assault/abuse
  - the need for culturally-sensitive prevention programs
  - the significance of sexual revictimization in the lives of African American women
  - an ecological approach to the prevention of sexual harassment
  - utilization of social science research to develop public policy on pornography
  - use of public information campaigns to prevent intrafamilial child sexual abuse within Hispanic families
- Sexual Assault and Abuse identifies sociocultural risks associated with sexual assault/abuse and explores ways to reduce these risks, from a prevention perspective, for diverse populations. Risks addressed include gender inequities, pornography, worksites hostile to women, previous

victimization in African American females, sexist and racist beliefs, and media violence against women. Prevention programs range from interventions to stop the development of sexually abusive behavior in boys and men, through programs that take account of ethnic diversity in language, history, and culture, to those that promote empowerment of women. By addressing the environmental context in which sexual assault occurs, the authors in *Sexual Assault and Abuse* broaden their focus to incorporate both potential perpetrators and potential victims in an ecological perspective which permits new approaches to prevention. This book is of special interest and value to academics and practitioners of psychology, psychiatry, and social work, therapists and counselors, women's studies professionals, sociologists, anthropologists, feminists, rape crisis center staff and volunteers, and battered women center staff and volunteers.

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