



Susan Walker, Editor  
CSOR Newsletter  
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### Update from:

The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)  
(Summary by Susan Walker, Editor)

ATSA recently released information to the public that was adopted by their board of directors on June 23, 2014. Here is a summary of their release, broken up into eight short sections.

1. **What is sexual abuse?** ATSA's definition goes like this: "Sexual abuse is a broad term that includes any sexual or sexually motivated behavior that is the result of someone being forced, coerced, or manipulated into witnessing or experiencing sexual harassment, exploitation or activity for which they did not, or could not, consent". Some examples ATSA gives of sexual convictions are as follows: an adult touching a young child in a sexual manner, someone engaging in sexual activity with someone who is incapacitated or unconscious, a person exposing his or her genitals publicly, someone using physical force on another adult to make sexual activity happen, or a person in their 20's involved in a sexual dating relationship with a teen who is 15 years old.
2. **Who commits sexual abuse?** ATSA says that sexually abusive behaviors are perpetrated by "an extremely diverse group of individuals crossing all socioeconomic, educational, gender, age, and cultural lines". The Association states that the term used to describe individuals who are sexually abusive, **sex offender**, is a misleading word that suggests that all offenses are committed by the same type of person and that this type of person's behaviors around this issue are the same as all others currently called **sex offenders**. Research shows that a one size fits approach to this group of folks is not correct. In reality, this group is extremely diverse, has varying frequencies for sexual offending behavior, and displays a variety of risk levels for future sexual offending behavior. The term also suggests that these individuals are "hard-wired" or cannot change (i.e. once a sex offender, always a sex offender) when, in reality, the research clearly indicates that people who have abused sexually can and frequently do change.

Men commit 95% of sexual abuse, and women 5%. Stranger danger is made to look like the most common type of sexual abuse, when in fact, most of those who are sexually abused know their attacker. Children are usually molested by someone in a position of trust, again not by a stranger.

Teens who commit sexual offenses do not look like adults, and are generally not on an ongoing path to reoffending. Approximately ¼ of sexual offenses are committed by adolescents 13 – 17, who also perpetrate around 1/3 of sexual offenses against minors. One size fits all also does not work for this group.

Children under age 12 have what is frequently called atypical sexual behavior, not "sexually abusive behavior".

"I mean, you could claim that anything's real if the only basis for believing in it is that nobody's proved it doesn't exist!"  
— J.K. Rowling

Who are the victims of sexual abuse? Those with disabilities, children, and individuals who are LGBTQ, are in groups that are at higher risk for victimization. It is difficult to ascertain offense rates, as sexual offending behavior is underreported.

Whatever the relationship between the person offended against and the person who offended, the person who offended is responsible for having made the choice to perpetrate. The person victimized should not be held responsible.

## FACTS

“Facts do not cease to exist because they are ignored.”

— Aldous Huxley, Complete Essays 2, 1926-29

“Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing ever happened.”

— Winston Churchill

“No persons are more frequently wrong, than those who will not admit they are wrong.”

— François La Rochefoucauld

3. What motivates sexually abusive behavior? Primary motivation for some adult sexual abuse may be sexual preference (such as primary sexual preference for prepubescent children); for other sexual offenses it may be sexual arousal to violence, intimacy deficits, antisocial attitudes etc. Adolescents as well as adults have complicated and interwoven motivations for committing a sexual offense. Factors present in juveniles that have experienced delinquency, such as at home violence, neglect and physical and emotional abuse are also shown to be related to sexual offending.

4. Do sex offender's recidivate? According to research, the majority of people who have been adjudicated for sexual offenses don't continue to commit them. Risk for any new misdemeanor or felony offense is based on a variety of factors. People who commit different types of sexual offenses recidivate at different rates, all of them lower than for the general felony population. While risk to offend goes up over time, the literature also shows that the longer you stay in the community without reoffending, the less risk you pose to reoffend.

5. What is sexual offense specific treatment? According to ATSA, adults who are convicted of a sexual offense(s) are frequently told they must take part in sexual offense specific treatment as a “condition of their sentencing, supervision, civil commitment, or family reunification”. Treatment targeting individual processes related to the commission of sexually abusive behavior can include developing strategies to avoid, control, or address in a productive way, risk factors that may contribute to re-offense. Sometimes medications are used as well to accomplish this.

The program used today by many treatment programs is one based on Risk, Need and Responsivity. Most treatment programs meet in a group format, but individual, family, behavioral and pharmacological methods are used as well.

6. Does treatment work? Risk, Need and Responsivity based treatment, when utilized, is associated with lower rates of sexual recidivism compared to programs that do not use that approach. Adolescents who have abused sexually generally do not continue to do so and are usually responsive to treatment interventions.
7. How are adult sexual offenders managed and supervised? “Public safety is enhanced when scientific evidence about risk is used to guide dispositions about length of incarceration and management post release”. Parole/probation should provide structure, support and oversight. Other partners include treatment, community support persons, victim advocates etc.

ATSA ends this position paper with this statement: "Sexual abuse is a complex issue which impacts everyone – individuals, communities, institutions, and society as a whole. Despite this reality, addressing sexual abuse is often viewed only as a criminal justice responsibility; however, due to its widespread impact, preventing sexual abuse is a responsibility of us all. Current responses to sexual abuse typically focus on intervention and prevention *after* an assault. ATSA joins a growing movement which recognizes and responds to sexual abuse as a public health issue, thus directing our efforts on prevention of sexual abuse *before* it is perpetrated. Public health approaches also move beyond ensuring the health of individuals, to the health and safety of an entire population. Through education, collaboration, and the involvement of everyone – community members, violence prevention professionals, victim advocates, law enforcement professionals, those who provide treatment to victims/survivors of sexual abuse, and those who provide treatment to persons who have perpetrated sexual abuse – the prevention of sexual abuse can become a reality".

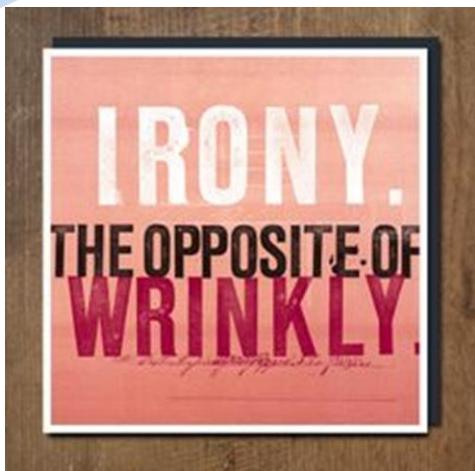
**AUTHOR'S PERSONAL NOTE:** I NOTICED THAT IN THIS PARAGRAPH, THE FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SEXUALLY OFFENDED AND THOSE WHO OFFENDED THEMSELVES, WERE NOT INCLUDED AS PART OF THE SOLUTION. I WROTE TO ATSA AND ASKED THAT THEY CONSIDER INCLUDING US. I GOT A NICE E-MAIL BACK SAYING THEY WERE CURRENTLY STUDYING THE LAST PARAGRAPH IN REGARDS TO HOW THAT CHANGE COULD BE MADE! I WAS VERY PLEASED. LET'S SEE IF IT HAPPENS.

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## Circle of Irony – Report on the RSOL (Reform Sex Offender Laws)

Conference of July 16 – 19, 2014

Attended by: Susan Walker, Jess Haines and Darlene Lopez



Life is crammed full with moments of irony, moments where almost humorously, things are quite the opposite of what we would assume them to be. The concept of irony was filling my mind as I first stepped into a church building in the Bible belt of Texas for the national RSOL (Reform Sex Offender Laws) conference. I look like a punk that belongs in the art district of Seattle or perhaps near the beach of San Fran, but here I was surrounded by people that were for the most part far older and better dressed than me.

In the first session of the conference my sense of not belonging was shattered, Paul Shannon (founder of RSOL) spoke and called out to the thing within us all that beats for value and beats for the rights that being human gives us. This is the thing that causes us to shed a tear when see a picture of a starving child, get fighting mad when we watch an innocent person beaten or cheer when someone wrongfully accused is exonerated. He spoke to the passion for Justice and asked us to consider at what point we decide someone no longer has the

right to basic human dignities and if we are willing to walk down a path of conditional human rights.

With a fire burning in my soul we sat down to listen to our keynote speaker Lenore Skenazy. In the spirit of irony we spent over an hour laughing till our sides hurt while discussing topics such as safety, fear and sex offenses. When did we decide that being safe is far more important than living a meaningful life? Lenore asked when we will quit 'imagining our kid's dead' and began to empower them to live strong, independent lives. I heard some of the best advice on parenting from 'Americas Worst Mom', ironic isn't it?

There was much conversation about ‘othering’, the practice of using a difference to distance ourselves from those around us. Perhaps you are scary because you have darker skin, or a different sexual orientation, a different past story or so on. As I heard the story of so many at this conference I realized I could easily have been in the category of ‘other’. So many here had been convicted of a sexual offense or someone they loved had. This is not my story, my story is one of intimately knowing the damage of sexual abuse. In a room full of people used to being the ‘different’ ones, this time I was the minority. But, I was not an ‘other’, because I am not a ‘victim’ any more than they were ‘offenders’ or family of offenders. We all are humans, full of value and deserving of dignity. They let me know their fears and triumphs, shared their stories and valued the human frailty deep within us all.

Sitting in the south, Bible belt of Texas we listened to Dr. Davidson, an African American preacher call us to action against the injustice that is the punitive registry system. He preached to us, to not just accept the law, while neglecting the weightier matters of Justice. Not too long ago, those with darker skin had to fight to prove they had enough worth to deserve basic human rights and now Dr. Davidson is the one fighting for the rights of others, humans who have committed a sex offense. Yes, the irony continues.

There were far too many sessions presented, far too many moments experienced and far too many wise words spoken for me to record them all for you here. We all had a different story to tell, but we all came together because we believed that humans have value. I look forward to seeing many of you in the days to come, as we face one of the greatest ironies (or tragedies) of all, a willingness to passively allow injustice to continue because it is not ‘us’ affected. Let us stand together as humans, embrace our differences and work toward a world of wellness for us all.

Written by Jess Haines

### **My First Circles of Support and Accountability With a Core Member!**

Monday August 11 marks the first date with Beyond Containment for meeting with its first Circles of Support and Accountability Core Member. I am pleased and excited.

It took a very long time to get all of the pieces in place – i.e. identify the most appropriate core member out of all of the people in CDOC looking for a circle, wait for that person to actually get out of prison, be patient until the appropriate venue was selected by the Department of Corrections for this man to live and be supervised in, chill until the halfway house, parole and treatment could decide, along with Beyond Containment, whether this man’s already overly demanding life requirements could be met and add a Circle, which was supposed to be “supportive”.

After many inquiries to parole, the half-way house etc. it was finally decided that in spite of his already heavy load, the team thought that a Circle would be a good thing for this man.

I am anxious to meet him, and hopefully he is anxious to meet all of us. He has met the Circle Coordinator and one other person on the Circle for a disclosure meeting. Tomorrow night it is time for him to get acquainted with all of us that have done the training and have waited such a very long time to see the Circle materialize. Our hope and prayer above all is that we can provide that sense of family that this man does not have, and that a little of the craziness of parole and half-way house restrictions and requirements will soften just a bit; not that supervision is not necessary, but sometimes it seems that it is so overwhelming that it makes it difficult for the parolee to just survive!

There are hundreds of guys waiting on the inside for a Circle, as a “support person” or “support team” such as Circles is required in order to be considered by the Parole Board for release from prison IF you are a lifetime offender in the State of Colorado. Many of you could spare one evening a week to help one more person get out of prison that has already served way too many years, meeting all other criteria required. Perhaps you have a loved one in prison who has a very long sentence, and you will not be able to officially support them for a number of years yet. Or perhaps you are reading this website article and you have someone in prison who does not need an official support person to get out of prison. Or, maybe you are working with those who have a sexual offense in your day job, but could spare two hours a week in the evening to be on a Circle for someone who has no family, and is otherwise stuck inside of CDOC?!

Life is very short, and there are guys who could be on the outside being productive and recovering from institutional overkill. Why not check into Circles of Support and Accountability and see what you can do to help? There is no time like the present to do your part to change the world!

Susan Walker

## KUDOS to MAUREEN CAIN Champion of State Criminal Justice Reform Award Recipient

Maureen Cain, an attorney known well to all of us who care about issues related to sexual offense and other laws concerning criminal justice issues in Colorado, recently received a prestigious award from the NACDL (National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers). The award, presented yearly by the NACDL State Legislative Affairs Committee to an attorney who has worked tirelessly for reforms to the criminal justice system, recognizes Maureen for her knowledge of procedure and law, her ability to work in the midst of difficult political circumstances, and her humanity and decent treatment of all who seek her assistance.



True, we [lawyers] build no bridges. We raise no towers. We construct no engines. We paint no pictures—unless as amateurs for our own principal amusement. There is little of all that we do which the eye of man can see. But we smooth out difficulties; we relieve stress; we correct mistakes; we take up other men's burdens and by our efforts we make possible the peaceful life of men in a peaceful state.

(John W. Davis)

[izquotes.com](http://izquotes.com)

I have personally worked with Maureen on a number of difficult issues, such as the last Sunset Review of the Sex Offender Management Board, and the creation of legislation that would make sexual offense laws in Colorado more humane and just, and she has always been most gracious, available, efficient and effective. Thank you, Maureen, for being helpful to many over the years when your plate is so continuously full!

## RECENT IMPORTANT CONTACTS

In an effort to keep up, and to continue moving forward, we have recently contacted a couple of people whose names you should learn or remember. They are Dr. Jill Lampela and Mr. Bruce Harrelson.

Dr. Jill Lampela recently replaced Peggy Heil as the Chief of Behavioral Health at CDOC. She is the direct supervisor over the SOTMP Administrator. I look forward to meeting Jill in the near future, so that we can discuss mutual concerns and the progress of the SOTMP.

Mr. Bruce Harrelson is from DORA (Department of Regulatory Agencies) and wrote the report on the SOMB at the time of their Sunset Review five years ago. I contacted Mr. Harrelson the second week of August 2014 because I wanted to find out when he would start interviewing stakeholders for the next Sunset Review of the SOMB, which is coming up in 2015. We had asked that it be done in five years rather than the usual ten, in order to hold the SOMB responsible for continued, efficient and effective progress in changing the Standards and Guidelines and addressing other significant issues.

Mr. Harrelson informed me that their department would finish the 2014 work in October and begin on the Sunset Review of the SOMB in November of 2014. At or around that time, it is crucial that all of us are checking in with Mr. Harrelson and DORA to be sure that our concerns are made known regarding how the SOTMP and the SOMB are doing in terms of changes that need to be made! To that end, writing letters to Mr. Bruce Harrelson at DORA would be a very good thing for those of you who are inside CDOC to do around the end of October or the first of November 2014! Stand up and be counted.

**LOSS of LAURA WOLNOFER**  
**FROM THE SOTMP and the PROGRAM'S FUTURE**

It was so exciting when Laura Wolnofer was hired a couple of years ago to become the SOTMP Administrator. About the time of the release of the Outside Evaluator's Report on the SOTMP, CDOC started looking for someone to move forward with the recommendations of the Report. There has consistently been a firm sense from CDOC Leadership that they were committed to the process of a switchover to the principles of Risk, Need and Responsivity (RNR). With the shooting death of Executive Director Tom Clements, Kellie Wasko and Laura worked closely together to continue to move things forward in terms of the SOTMP Treatment Program, and with the continued support of Executive Director Rick Raemisch, made some remarkable progress.

In Laura's absence, and while CDOC is searching for her replacement, Christina Marquez will be covering the SOTMP Administrator's desk. Christina has reached out to me in terms of completing work Laura was doing for me based on releases from some clients regarding their progress toward or in SOTMP Treatment. She has also appointed a therapist to attend the next CSOR Meeting on September 10, 2014, and hopes to come to a future meeting herself.

A mid-August conversation with Deputy Executive Director Kellie Wasko revealed that the SOTMP is ready to work with the SOMB toward an "adjusted" use of the polygraph both inside and outside of CDOC. The Department is sitting down with SOMB representatives and addressing the overuse and sometimes abuse (my words and OER words) of this treatment tool that the Outside Evaluators' Reports make clear is supposed to be utilized in CERTAIN circumstances, with CERTAIN people, not with EVERYONE in EVERY circumstance!

It is great that the CDOC Administrative Regulation (AR) regarding support persons has been changed to allow people to support more than one person, and that the Circles Program now counts as a support person! All you have to do is ask the SOTMP Administrator, and if the fit is good, you will be able to support someone who is ready to get out of prison right now, whether your loved is already out, or will be in for a few more years. Your support of another person in prison who has met all criteria but a support person will allow the many who wait with little hope of ever getting out a second chance at a good life. The CSOR Re-Entry Team is able to handle a number of folks at a time, and besides phone support, helps them get housing, jobs, furniture, kitchen supplies, a phone and more. It would be great if more of you would join the Circles Program, and/or support an individual or two waiting to get out. I am enjoying doing both! If anyone is interested, please contact me, as I have hundreds of letters/requests from guys desperately searching for support.

We look forward to meeting the person who will succeed Laura, and believe that CDOC will give her/him the tools, time and support needed to make the Risk/Need/Responsivity (RNR) Model work even better! Deputy Executive Director Wasko states: "Myself and the CDOC are eager to evolve our program alongside the SOMB to ensure that we are developing a cutting edge program that assists offenders in being successful."

First Thessalonians 1:2-3 "We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers, remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."

Your financial support is appreciated! Give through PayPal at [www.csor-home.org](http://www.csor-home.org) or at CSOR\P.O. Box 27051 Denver, CO 80227

**SEE YOU IN DECEMBER**