

An All-Male Rape Prevention Peer Education Program: Decreasing Fraternity Men's Behavioral Intent to Rape

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Participants were 155 fraternity men (88% White, mean age of 19.9, mostly sophomores and juniors) who were in either a pretested and posttested rape prevention program group, a posttested rape prevention program group, or an untreated control group. Significant declines in rape myth acceptance and behavioral intent to rape were shown among program participants regardless of whether they were pretested.

Research conducted during the 1980s showed that 15% of college women in a nationwide sample from 32 colleges and universities reported at least one experience since their 14th birthday that met the legal definition of rape (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). An additional 12% had experienced attempted rape without penetration. A more recent replication study using a survey of more than 4,600 college students at 136 institutions found that 20% of college women reported being forced to have sexual intercourse at some point in their lifetimes (Douglas et al., 1997).

The United States Department of Justice National Crime Victimization Survey (Maguire & Pastore, 1995) reported that in the last 6 months of 1995, 432,700 women nationwide survived rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault; a figure that computes to 99 women every hour. If the 6-month figure is extended to a full year, as many as 865,400 women survived sexual assault. Yet, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Reports, only 102,216 sexual assault cases (including rape, attempted rape, and less invasive forms of sexual assault) were reported to police agencies that year (FBI, 1995). A comparison of these numbers reveals that roughly 1 in 8 sexual assaults (12%) was reported to the police. Other re-

searchers have found reporting rates to the police as low as 4% (Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988).

Two studies have demonstrated that more than 1 out of 5 college men reported at least one instance of becoming so sexually aroused that they could not stop themselves from having sex, even though the woman did not consent (Koss & Oros, 1982; Peterson & Franzese, 1987). Additional research has shown that between 25% and 50% of men report committing some type of sexually aggressive behavior after entering college (Garrett-Gooding & Senter, 1987; Koss et al., 1987).

Given the pervasiveness of rape, effective methods for decreasing its frequency are urgently needed. Although many studies have been conducted to assess the impact of rape prevention programs on men's attitudes (Lonsway, 1996), research on the impact of such programming on men's behavioral intent to rape is very limited (Schewe & O'Donohue, 1993). More research in this area is needed to identify a reliable method for decreasing the pervasiveness of rape.

One population that has received attention in the research literature on sexual violence is college fraternity men. Qualitative assessments of fraternities suggest that some fraternity members reinforce attitudes among themselves that help perpetuate sexual coercion against women (Martin & Hummer, 1989). Quantitative assessments support this suggestion. For example, O'Sullivan (1991) found that fraternity members committed 55% of the gang rapes reported between 1980 and 1990 on college campuses. Fraternity members have also been shown to have more traditional attitudes toward women and to believe more strongly in rape myths when compared to men who live in co-educational housing (Schaeffer & Nelson, 1993).

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Others have shown that men who are in fraternities are more sexually coercive than other men (Garrett-Gooding & Senter, 1987). Garrett-Gooding and Senter suggest that a combination of more traditional sex roles and the fraternal socialization process contribute to this higher level of rape myth belief.

So how can men be effectively persuaded to change their attitudes toward rape? In a comprehensive review of rape prevention programs published during the past 20 years, Lonsway (1996) noted the recent rise in popularity of programs targeting all-male audiences. She cited the success of these programs, yet Lonsway cautioned that success was most often restricted to measurement of attitude change. She added that "because all-male programs offer the greatest promise in truly reaching the potential of rape prevention, such programs offer particular interest for future intervention and evaluation" (p. 242). She also noted that the effects of same gender programming and peer facilitation have not been fully determined. This recommendation that sexual assault programs for men be restricted to all-male audiences is widely supported in the literature. Several authors suggest that lower levels of defensiveness are elicited by all-male programs and that stronger programmatic impacts are found in all-male as opposed to coeducational programs (Berkowitz, 1994; Foubert & Marriott, 1996; 1997; Hamilton & Yee, 1990; Lenihan & Rawlins, 1994; Schewe & O'Donohue, 1993).

Not only have all-male approaches been encouraged in the research literature, research also supports an approach where peers educate their fellow students. Earle (1996) compared a small-group discussion program in a coeducational audience led by administrators, a coeducational program presented by administrators to a large group in a lecture format, and an all-male peer education program. He found that the all-male peer education program was the only condition that significantly improved participants' attitudes toward rape relative to a control group and that significant improvement emerged on both attitudes toward women and attitudes toward rape.

Foubert and Marriott (1996) described another all-male peer education approach, shown later to lead to a significant decline sustained over 2 months, in rape myth acceptance among men in fraternity pledge classes (Foubert & Marriott, 1997). They

found that immediately after participating in a how to help a sexual assault survivor program, participants experienced a 55% drop in rape myth acceptance as measured by the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980). Two months later, although rape myth acceptance rose significantly from the postprogram level, a significant 32% decline remained relative to the pretest. Unexpectedly, an untreated control group in this study also experienced a significant decline in rape myth acceptance, raising questions about whether the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale induced pretest effects. Fonow, Richardson, and Wemmerus (1992) also demonstrated a decline in rape myth acceptance using this measure with pretested control groups.

THE ELABORATION LIKELIHOOD MODEL

Recently, when searching for a theoretical model upon which to base rape prevention programs, several authors (Gilbert, Heesacker, & Gannon, 1991; Heppner, Humphrey, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & DeBord, 1995) have chosen the elaboration likelihood model (ELM). Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) original conceptualization of the ELM suggested that when participants are motivated and able to process information and perceive the information being presented as personally relevant, an enhanced likelihood that they would process the information using central route processing existed. Petty and Cacioppo defined such central route processing as a type of thinking characterized by the thoughtful evaluation of the material being presented. In the many studies they describe in this book about the ELM, central route processing tended to produce greater attitude change, predicted later behavior more strongly, and led to more resistance toward counter-arguments in subsequent presentations. Thus, Petty and Cacioppo contended that interventions designed to change attitudes and behavior were more apt to be successful when they elicited this central route processing.

For example, Gilbert et al. (1991) found that in a workshop where a male and a female administrator made a presentation to an all-male student audience, participants who were more motivated to listen, were more able to understand

the material, and reported evaluating the logic and accuracy of information in the speech (all of which are “state” measures of central route processing) were also more likely to have improved attitudes toward rape after seeing the program presented. Later, Heppner et al. (1995) also applied the ELM to rape prevention. In their study, male and female students attended either a coeducational program that included the discussion of a video by male and female doctoral students, a coeducational program where skits were presented by male and female doctoral students to help foster male-female communication, or a stress management workshop used as a control group. Each rape prevention program led to a significant decline in men’s rape myth acceptance on the postprogram test; however, on follow-up posttests 1 and 5 months after the program, men’s rape myth acceptance was statistically equivalent to pretest levels.

Interestingly, Heppner et al. (1995) reported that on a questionnaire they designed to be a state measure of central route processing, men who processed the information centrally reported greater change 5 months after the program in their knowledge about rape and in a behavioral intent measure of willingness to help with a rape prevention project. The finding that central route processing of a rape prevention program is associated with willingness to help with a rape prevention project was particularly important for the current study. This finding suggested that the next logical step was to determine whether a program can influence behavioral intent of actual sexually coercive behavior. Prior to the current study, only Schewe and O’Donohue (1993) had assessed the impact of an intervention on behavioral intent to rape. Furthermore, all-male sexual assault peer education programs, shown in the research literature to be most effective (Earle, 1996; Foubert & Marriott, 1997), had not been assessed in terms of behavioral intent to rape and had not been studied in light of the ELM and its main influential factor; central route processing.

In their approach to rape prevention programming used in this study, the investigators attempted to address the challenge that Lonsway (1996) identified: convincing men of the relevance of the material being presented by designing the intervention as a workshop on helping women recover

from rape experiences. In this unique approach, defensiveness toward rape prevention programs is avoided because men are treated as potential helpers rather than potential rapists; as found in so many programs that focus solely on improving communication, defining consent, or explaining myths versus facts.

The current study assessed the impact of an all-male rape prevention peer education program on rape myth acceptance and behavioral intent to rape in groups of pretested and unpretested fraternity men, relative to an untreated control group. Five hypotheses were tested:

1. Program participants would experience a significant decline in rape myth acceptance and would have significantly lower rape myth acceptance after the program than the untreated control group.
2. Program participants would experience a significant decline in behavioral intent to rape as measured by a behavioral intent to rape instrument administered after the program and would have less behavioral intent to rape than the untreated control group.
3. A state measure of central route processing would correlate negatively with rape myth acceptance after participation in a program, indicating lower levels of rape myth acceptance among those participants that processed information more centrally.
4. A state measure of central route processing would correlate negatively with behavioral intent to rape, indicating lower levels of behavioral intent to rape after participation in the program among those participants that processed information more centrally.
5. Program participants who were pretested prior to the program would report a postprogram level of rape myth acceptance lower than program participants who were not pretested.

METHOD

Participants

Members of six fraternities at a large mid-Atlantic public university participated in the current study ($N = 155$), constituting 75% of the total active

membership from these fraternity chapters. The principal researcher and a member of the peer education group that implemented the intervention (himself a fraternity president) requested the volunteer participation of fraternities during a February 1997, interfraternity council meeting. In April 1997, fraternities who had volunteered were randomly divided among the conditions. Preparations were made for presenting the program during the Fall 1997 semester. Two fraternities were randomly assigned to the pretested experimental group ($n = 59$), two were assigned to the unpretested experimental group ($n = 50$), and two were assigned to the control group ($n = 46$). In the only group measured twice, a pretested and posttested group, 97% of pretested participants completed the posttest ($n = 59$). Participants in each of the three groups in this study had statistically equivalent ages and academic standings (freshmen, sophomores, etc.). Participants were predominantly White (88%) with a limited representation of other races (African American, 1%; Asian American, 5%; Hispanic/Latino, 5%; other, 1%). Participants had a mean age of 19.9 ($SD = 1.3$) and were distributed among the four classes as follows: freshmen 12%, sophomores 42%, juniors 25%, and seniors 21%.

Measures

The Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Belief in rape myths was assessed using the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980). This 19-item scale measures the extent to which respondents endorse belief in items such as "A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex" (p. 223), rated on a 7-point Likert-type scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The possible range of scores on this scale is 19 (strong disagreement with all rape myths) to 133 (strong agreement with all rape myths measured). In an extensive literature review on rape myths, Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) found that this is the most commonly used scale of rape myth acceptance.

Burt (1980) reported that the internal consistency of her scale as shown by Cronbach's alpha was .88. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale in the current study was .84. Unfortunately, test-retest reliability studies on this measure are absent from the literature. This is of concern, given that a

weakness of the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale is that pretest effects have been shown in the direction of lower posttest scores. For example Fonow et al. (1992) found that pretested participants believed fewer rape myths than unpretested participants, regardless of treatment group or control. The current study helped answer the question of whether program participants were influenced by pretest effects by pretesting only half of the program participants. The Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale's validity is supported by research showing that high scores correlate significantly with sexual conservatism ($r = .39$), adversarial sexual beliefs ($r = .40$), and acceptance of interpersonal violence ($r = .50$) (Burt, 1980), and that men who report a higher likelihood of raping endorse more rape myths ($r = .59$) (Hamilton & Yee, 1990).

A State Measure of Central Route Processing. Seven questions were used as a state measure of central route processing. This measure, used earlier by Gilbert et al. (1991), asked participants to rate items on a 7-point scale assessing how motivated they were to hear the message, whether they were able to understand the material, and how favorable their thoughts were toward the message. Gilbert et al. noted that similar items have been commonly used in other research with the ELM (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) with meaningful results. The Cronbach's alpha for this measure in the current study was .69.

Behavioral Intent to Rape. In a series of six studies, Malamuth (1981) asked men "If you could be assured of not being caught or punished, how likely would you be to rape?" Participants answered this question on a 1 (*not at all likely*) to 5 (*very likely*) scale. He consistently found approximately one third of men reporting some degree (between 2 and 5 on the 1 to 5 scale) of behavioral intent to rape. To support the construct validity of this measure, Malamuth compared three groups: convicted rapists, men from the general population, and men divided according to their behavioral intent to rape on measures of rape myths and sexual arousal to rape situations. In these studies, Malamuth found that men who indicated a higher likelihood of raping were more similar to the group of convicted rapists than to the group who reported low likelihood of raping in terms of rape myth belief

and sexual arousal to rape depictions. Furthermore, he found that higher likelihood of raping was associated with anger, aggression, and a desire to hurt women.

Demographic Questionnaire. In addition to the aforementioned measures, questions were asked requesting that participants report their race, year in school and age.

Design and Procedures

Participants in the pretested experimental group and the unpretested experimental group saw a one-time, 1-hour program during the beginning of the Fall semester in their fraternity houses. The program format was primarily lecture oriented, with the major focus being viewing and processing a video describing a male-on-male rape situation. Four male peer educators presented the program from a prepared script to each of the all-male audiences, after which they opened the floor for questions. The program itself was titled, "How to Help a Sexual Assault Survivor: What Men Can Do." The program opened by setting a non-confrontational tone, indicating that participants would be taken through a workshop designed to help them help women recover from rape. After a disclaimer, an overview, and a basic review of rape definitions, presenters told the audience they would be viewing a videotape that described a rape situation. This tape, produced by the Seattle Police Department, describes a male police officer being raped by two men. At the conclusion of the video, peer educators indicated that the video depicted an act of violence (not sex) and that the next part of the program would draw parallels from the male police officer's experiences of female rape survivors. After this segment concluded, the men were taught some basic skills on how to help a woman recover from rape. Next, men were encouraged to communicate openly in their sexual encounters and to help change societal norms that condone rape. After questions from the audience were taken, the presenters noted that if the 1 hour in which the program took place was an average hour in the United States, then 99 women would have experienced rape, attempted rape, or sexual assault. This program is described in further detail by Foubert and Marriott (1996). Further information about this program can also be obtained from

the first author.

The principal investigator began the study by asking participants to complete consent forms. In the pretested experimental group, participants next completed the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980), a question measuring behavioral intent to rape (Malamuth, 1981), and the demographic questionnaire. One experimental group was not pretested to allow an analysis of whether pretesting influenced program participants' final scores on the dependent measures. For the experimental groups, peer educators then presented the program immediately after the pretest measures were administered.

Immediately following the program, participants in both the pretested and unpretested experimental groups completed the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980), a question measuring behavioral intent to rape (Malamuth, 1981), and a state measure of central route processing (Gilbert et al., 1991). During a fraternity meeting, the principal investigator asked a control group to complete a consent form and then a survey containing the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980), and a question measuring behavioral intent to rape (Malamuth, 1981).

A one-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was computed to determine whether pretesting participants influenced posttested behavioral intent to rape and rape myth acceptance scores. In addition, a repeated-measures MANOVA was computed to determine whether the program impacted men's rape myth acceptance and behavioral intent to rape. Furthermore, one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were computed to determine whether program participants' posttest scores of rape myth acceptance and behavioral intent to rape differed from control group scores.

Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine the relationships between central route processing and postprogram rape myth belief and between central route processing and post-program behavioral intent to rape. In each case, one-tailed hypotheses were used.

RESULTS

A MANOVA revealed that program participants

significantly declined on the dependent measures as a result of seeing the program, $F(1, 57) = 57.50, p < .001$. Follow-up univariate ANOVAs were then used to determine whether Hypotheses 1 and 2 were confirmed.

Hypothesis 1 was confirmed. As shown in Table 1, rape myth acceptance scores declined when program participants' pretest scores ($M = 47, SD = 15$) were compared to their postprogram scores ($M = 37, SD = 15$). This decline, in the direction of less belief in rape myths, was significant, $F(1, 57) = 62.86, p < .001$. The effect size of this decline in rape myth acceptance was large, as indicated by an eta squared of .901. In addition, this postprogram mean was significantly lower— $F(1, 103) = 5.10, p < .05$ —than the control group mean— $M = 44, SD = 16$.

Hypothesis 2 was partially confirmed. Behavioral intent to rape scores declined when pretest scores ($M = 1.5, SD = 1$) were compared to postprogram scores ($M = 1.2, SD = .6$). This decline, in the direction of lower behavioral intent to rape among program participants, was significant, $F(1, 57) = 7.74, p < .01$. The effect size of this decline in behavioral intent to rape was medium, as indicated by an eta squared of .52. However, this postprogram behavioral intent to rape mean did not significantly differ from the untreated

control group ($M = 1.3; SD = .8$), which began with a slightly lower, though not significantly lower, behavioral intent to rape than the experimental group.

Hypothesis 3 was confirmed. The composite score for state central route processing was negatively correlated with postprogram rape myth acceptance scores, $r = -.29, p < .01$. Thus, lower rape myth belief after the program was correlated with higher scores on the state measure of central route processing. Hypothesis 4 was also confirmed. The composite scores for state central route processing were negatively correlated with postprogram behavioral intent to rape, $r = -.35, p = .001$. Thus, lower behavioral intent to rape was correlated with higher scores on the state measure of central route processing.

A MANOVA was computed to determine whether pretesting participants influenced their posttest scores on the dependent measures, behavioral intent to rape and rape myth acceptance. Results revealed no differences between pretested and unpretested program participants on these measures, $F(2, 106) = .72, p = .47$. Thus, Hypothesis 5 was not confirmed. Postprogram rape myth acceptance was statistically equivalent, $F(1, 107) = .07, p = .81$, for pretested ($M = 37, SD = 15$) and unpretested participants ($M = 36, SD = 12$). This

TABLE 1.
Means and Standard Deviations of Rape Myth Acceptance and Behavioral Intent to Rape as a Function of Experimental Condition

| Dependent Measures | Experimental Condition | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| | Pretested Experimental Group | Unpretested Experimental Group | Control Group |
| Rape Myth Acceptance | | | |
| Pretest | 47 (15.0) | | 44 (16.0) |
| Posttest | 37 (15.0) | 36 (12.0) | |
| Behavioral Intent | | | |
| Pretest | 1.5 (1.0) | | 1.3 (0.8) |
| Posttest | 1.2 (0.6) | 1.3 (0.5) | |

indicated a lack of pretest effects for the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980). Similar analyses for the behavioral intent to rape measure revealed similar results. Postprogram scores on the behavioral intent to rape measure were statistically equivalent, $F(1, 107) = 1.09, p = .30$, for pretested ($M = 1.2, SD = .6$) and unpretested participants ($M = 1.3, SD = .5$).

DISCUSSION

The results of the current study lend further support to the recommendations of Berkowitz (1994), Earle (1996), Foubert and Marriott (1997) and Lonsway (1996) that rape prevention programming for men should be done in an all-male peer education format. In particular, the programmatic approach used in this current study (Foubert & Marriott, 1996) has been shown to be effective for both decreasing men's rape myth acceptance and for decreasing program participants' reported behavioral intent to rape a woman.

Like Foubert and Marriott (1997), in the current study the researchers found a significant decrease in rape myth acceptance following the "How to Help a Sexual Assault Survivor: What Men Can Do" program. The current findings show that program participants also reported significantly less intent to rape a woman after seeing the program. However, an untreated control group with a lower average behavioral intent to rape than the experimental group, did not differ significantly from the posttested experimental group. Thus, the assertion that the program led to lower behavioral intent to rape among program participants is supported; however, whether this decrease differs from untreated participants awaits further research with groups equivalent on pretested behavioral intent to rape.

When studying the impact of this program, Foubert and Marriott (1997) suggested that given the decline in rape myth acceptance of a pretested untreated control group, the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale might induce pretest effects among program participants. This same pretest effect was shown in a study by Fonow et al. (1992). In the current study, the researchers sought to shed light on this mystery by pretesting half of the program group and leaving the remaining half

unpretested. Contrary to what was expected, regardless of whether participants were pretested, statistically equivalent levels of rape myth acceptance were reported after the program. This lends support to the notion that whether or not the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale is administered, the program used in the current study impacts men equally with respect to rape myth acceptance. This study was able to support the conclusion that using this scale as a pretest does not influence program participants. However, its impact on untreated participants over the long term awaits further research.

In the current study, the investigators extended earlier research (Gilbert et al., 1991; Heppner et al., 1995), by applying the ELM to the all-male peer education type of programming found to be most effective for educating men about rape (Earle, 1996). The findings did indeed indicate that the postulates of the ELM held true for all-male rape prevention peer education programming. Specifically, the more motivated program participants were to see the program, the more able they were to understand the material; the more relevant the program seemed to them, the less they believed rape myths and the less likely they reported intent to rape after seeing the program.

First and foremost among several implications of these findings is that a "How to Help a Sexual Assault Survivor: What Men Can Do" program (Foubert & Marriott, 1996) is an effective means for changing men's attitudes and their behavioral intent to rape. Given that rape prevention programs rarely significantly impact men's behavioral intent to rape (Lonsway, 1996), further study and use of this program is warranted. Second, these findings indicate that programs to educate men about rape should increase the audiences' motivation to listen, should be presented in ways that are easy to understand and follow, and should be intentionally designed so that audiences will perceive them as relevant.

Several limitations of this study must be acknowledged. First, these findings can be generalized only to fraternity men, given that they were the population studied. In addition, only 12% of the participants were African American, Latino, or Asian American, with the remaining 88% being White. Thus, these results should only be general-

ized to White students. Second, this study is limited to the immediate impact on men's attitudes and behavioral intent. Particularly given that an immediate posttest was administered, a social desirability effect could have influenced the findings. The fact that no test-retest reliability data are available on the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980) is also of concern. Although pretested and unpretested groups in the current study had statistically equivalent postprogram rape myth acceptance, this lack of data on the Burt measure remains a concern. Finally, this study is limited by the fact that each of the six fraternities was randomly assigned as a group into three pairs for the control, pretested experimental, and unpretested experimental groups. Thus, true random assignment of individuals did not occur. Unknown differences between these groups prior to the study could have influenced the findings.

Future research should seek to determine whether men's behavioral intent to rape not only decreases following the program used in this study, but whether it remains significantly lower than pretest levels over time. In addition, future research is needed to clarify whether administering the Burt Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980) to an untreated control group elicits a decline in rape myth

acceptance on a follow-up measure. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the research literature awaits a study that assesses the impact of a rape prevention program on men's actual sexually coercive behavior over time. Although the program used in the current study has been shown to impact men's attitudes toward rape over a 2-month period (Foubert & Marriott, 1997) and their behavioral intent to rape immediately after the program as shown in this study, no study in the published research literature has reported less sexually coercive behavior among participants in a rape prevention program when compared to a control group. As Lonsway (1996) suggested, such would be the ultimate goal of rape prevention programming; changing men's behavior. Given the results of the current study, student affairs professionals who seek to decrease men's behavioral intent to rape should seriously consider focusing on educating men as potential helpers as they work toward creating campus communities where no more rape occurs.

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