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Reactions of First-Year Men to a Rape Prevention Program: Attitude and Predicted Behavior Changes

John D. Foubert
Jerry L. Tatum
Greg A. Donahue

First-year men (261) saw a rape prevention program and were asked to give their reactions to what they saw by answering four open-ended questions, requesting information about whether participants experience either attitude or behavior change resulting from the program, particularly in relation to situations involving alcohol and sexually intimate encounters. Some participants reported no effects on their attitudes or behavior. However, substantial numbers of participants reported an increased willingness to intervene as bystanders if they see a situation that might turn into a rape. Others reported that they would be

John D. Foubert is an assistant professor in the School of Education at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Jerry L. Tatum and Greg A. Donahue are both graduate students at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

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more careful in their own intimate encounters. The potential for later behavior change was indicated by at least 60% of program participants.

Between 3–5% of college women survive rape or attempted rape every year (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004). According to the U.S. Department of Justice, 24% of college women have experienced either rape or attempted rape; 4% of college men have as well (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). Perpetrators of rape are almost always (99%) men (Rennison, 2002), with 9% of college men admitting to acts that meet the legal definition of either rape or attempted rape (Ouitmette & Riggs, 1998).

To combat this daunting problem, an all-male peer education, multimedia presentation called *The Men's Program* (Foubert, 2005) has been used on over 100 college campuses. In this 1-hour program, peer educators teach men how it might feel to be raped, discuss how to help a survivor recover from a rape experience, explain how to define "consent," and teach participants how to intervene as a bystander in alcohol-related situations in which a rape might occur.

This emphasis on alcohol-related situations is particularly important given that most rape committed by college students involves alcohol. In 75–80% of cases in which a male rapes a female college student, the female is intoxicated (Lisak & Miller, 2002; Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004). Frequent, heavy episodic drinking increases college women's chances of experiencing rape by eight-fold (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Among male offenders who rape women, 64% were using alcohol or drugs prior to the attack (Brecklin & Ullman, 2002). In addition, men who are more sexually coercive also drink higher amounts of alcohol than noncoercive men, particularly during sexual encounters (Abbey, Clinton-Sherrod, McAuslan, Zawacki, & Buck, 2003; Abbey, McAuslan, Zawacki, Clinton, & Buck, 2001; Carr & VanDeusen, 2004).

The more alcohol that men consume, the more aggressive they are in situations in which a sexual assault takes place. The link between alcohol and sexual assault is further compounded by findings that when men are intoxicated, they perceive rape survivors as being less dis-

tressed and less disgusted by their attackers than do sober men (Norris, George, Davis, Martel, & Leonesio, 1999). Interestingly, the men who report more serious kinds of sexual violence in their past behavior also tend to believe that the women they are intimate with are less honest about not wanting to have sex on a particular occasion. This is especially evident when alcohol has been consumed by both parties.

Studies examining sexually aggressive men have shown that they are less inhibited about being coercive with women who have consumed alcohol. Although the amount of alcohol a woman consumes has no effect on nonaggressive men's perceptions of how far to push their sexual advances, sexually aggressive men are much more likely to be coercive when a woman has consumed alcohol (Bernat, Calhoun, & Stolp, 1998).

A review of evaluated rape prevention programs found that *The Men's Program* (Foubert, 2005) is the only program evaluated in the research literature to report clear, long-term change in men (Schewe, 2002). *The Men's Program* has been presented to tens of thousands of men in colleges, universities, high schools, military bases, halfway houses, rape crisis centers, and other community organizations throughout North America. College audiences have included men in fraternities, sports teams, residence halls, student organizations, classes, faculty and staff. However, most of the studies evaluating this program have been done on fraternity men and, to a lesser extent, student athletes (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & Lavoy, 2000; Foubert & Newberry, 2006). Likewise, most other program evaluations have been done on specific campus populations such as fraternity men and student athletes (Boeringer, 1999; Choate, 2003). The present study begins to rectify this gap in the literature by studying first-year men.

The Men's Program is based on two prominent theories of attitude and behavior change (belief system theory and the elaboration likelihood model [ELM]) and was guided in its development by research on effective rape prevention program elements. In studies of fraternity men, the vast majority of whom were Caucasian, it has been associated with significant decreases in rape myth acceptance and likelihood of raping and significant increases in men's empathy toward rape survivors that

remain improved for up to 7 months (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Newberry, 2006).

Belief system theory suggests that to produce lasting attitude change, interventions must be designed to maintain people's existing self-conceptions (Grube, Mayton, & Ball-Rokeach, 1994). Yet, nearly all rape prevention interventions reported in the literature assume male program participants to be potential rapists. Research has shown that men, regardless of whether they have committed sexual assault, do not perceive themselves to be potential rapists (Scheel, Johnson, Schneider, & Smith, 2001). Thus, programs that overtly assume men to be potential rapists are unlikely to achieve desired outcomes, according to belief system theory. On the other hand, *The Men's Program* (Foubert, 2005) attempts to influence men by appealing to beliefs they are shown to have about being potential helpers (Scheel et al., 2001). Thus, presenters approach men as people who can provide thoughtful support to female survivors who seek their assistance after surviving rape. Appealing to this persona has shown substantial long-term success (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Lavoy, 2000; Foubert & Perry, in press).

In addition to belief system theory, the ELM has been helpful to rape prevention programmers. This model suggests that lasting attitude and behavior change occurs when participants are motivated to hear a message, are able to understand it, and perceive the message as relevant to them (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Such conditions lead to a type of thinking called central route processing, whereby listeners actively process program content and are far more likely to have long-term attitude and behavior change. Applying the ELM to rape prevention has shown signs of success (Heppner, Humphrey, Hillenbrand-Gunn, & Debord, 1995; Foubert, 2000).

The Men's Program is an all-male workshop informed by the findings of a meta analysis of available research showing that programs presented to all-male audiences are much more likely to change men's attitudes and behavioral intent to rape than those presented to coeducational audiences (Brecklin & Forde, 2001). Research has also shown that as men increase their empathy with survivors, understand rape trauma, and have more aversion to rape, they report less likelihood of raping (Schewe, 2002). According to Schewe's review, ten studies have

been published that assess the effects of an empathy-based intervention on men's attitudes toward rape or their behavioral intent to rape. Seven of these studies have assessed the impact of depicting a man as a survivor; three studies depicted a woman as a survivor. *All* of the studies depicting a man as a survivor significantly improved men's attitudes toward rape or lowered their behavioral intent to rape. In stark contrast, *all* of the studies evaluating the impact of a program whose primary intervention method was to depict a female survivor *increased* men's rape myth acceptance; one such program even increased men's reported likelihood of sexual aggression.

Therefore, presenters of *The Men's Program* show a video (National Organization of Men's Outreach for Rape Education [NO MORE], 2000) describing a male-on-male rape experience to teach men how a rape experience might feel. Afterward, presenters note that the described perpetrators were presumably heterosexual and known to the survivor, as with many male-on-male rapes. This point is made clear to the audience in an effort to meet one of the program's goals: to confront any preexisting homophobic assumptions held by audience members that male-on-male rapes are commonly perpetrated by gay men. Instead, presenters of *The Men's Program* note that they are describing the more common occurrence of heterosexual perpetrators who use rape and battery to exert power and control over another male. Next, presenters make connections between a male-on-male and a male-on-female rape experience to facilitate audience members' empathy toward rape survivors. Later, men are taught how to support a rape survivor. Next, men are taught some of the basics of defining consent and hear strategies about how to confront a peer who either jokes about rape, acts in a way that demeans women, or brags about abusing women. Following that, men are taken through a guided imagery of a woman close to them who is raped while a bystander watches and does nothing. Men then brainstorm ways that they could intervene in situations where a rape is or might occur. The program itself lasts about 1 hour and is usually presented by four undergraduate male peer educators, often part of peer education groups named "One in Four." Given the potential for a strong emotional impact on audience members, particularly survivors of sexual assault, several disclaimers are given to participants and appropriate resources are offered. Over time, the program has been modified in accordance with

feedback obtained through quantitative and qualitative evaluation studies.

For example, a focus group study with a follow-up survey of fraternity men and student athletes has shown evidence of lasting attitude and behavior change resulting from this program (Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & Perry, in press). Participants who gave feedback in these focus groups and on a follow-up survey attributed their changed attitudes and changed bystander behavior to their program participation. Fully 100% of focus group participants reported either lasting attitude or behavior change 5 months after seeing *The Men's Program.* Most reported both attitude and behavior change. Focus group participants also suggested that adding material to the current program to address the impact of alcohol on intimate situations would be beneficial. They further suggested that this discussion of alcohol should either focus on defining consent or on giving advice on how to intervene as a bystander when the potential for a sexual assault is present (Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert, Garner, & Thaxter, 2006).

Qualitative responses to open-ended questions and in focus groups have clarified how men make meaning of their experience with this program. Foubert and Lavoy (2000) found that 7 months after program participation, a majority of fraternity members reported lasting attitude changes of increased awareness or sensitivity toward rape. The program component mentioned most frequently as responsible was a videotape in which a male police officer describes the rape of another male officer by two male perpetrators.

More recently, Foubert and Cowell (2004) conducted focus groups with fraternity members and male student athletes immediately after they first saw *The Men's Program.* They found that participants reported substantially increased empathy toward rape survivors, which participants overwhelmingly attributed to seeing the aforementioned videotape. Participants also reported being more able to help survivors, better understanding consent, being less likely to tell and more likely to confront rape jokes, and being more likely to believe rape survivors' stories.

Despite the impact demonstrated in several studies done on this program, little is known regarding its effects on men who are not in fra-

ternities or on athletic teams. Given the lack of information about how the program impacts a broader population of men and our desire to let such men speak for themselves and not be constrained by quantitative measures of impact, we selected qualitative methodology for our study. To begin this exploration, we focused our inquiry on two research questions.

1. Do first-year male college students experience any attitude change, particularly regarding alcohol-related sexual assault, as a result of seeing *The Men's Program?*

2. After seeing *The Men's Program,* do first-year men believe that they will behave any differently as a result of program participation, particularly in situations in which they or others might engage in sexually intimate activity under the influence of alcohol?

Method

Participants

Participants for this study were traditional age undergraduate male students enrolled at a public, southeastern university with an enrollment of approximately 5,000 undergraduate students. All first-year men at the institution were required to see *The Men's Program* in either September or April of their first year, depending upon their assigned condition in a larger evaluation study. Participants for the present study were the 261 first-year men who participated in this program during September 2005. This constituted approximately 86% of the first-year men eligible for participation at that time. All were full-time students who lived on campus, as required.

Materials

After seeing *The Men's Program* participants wrote answers to the following four open-ended questions.

1. Compared to *before* you participated in today's program, are any of your *attitudes* different today as a result of seeing the program? If so, what attitudes?

2. More specifically, are any of your attitudes toward intimate sexual activity under the influence of alcohol different as a result of seeing today's program? If so, what attitudes?

3. Compared to *before* you participated in this program, do you think you will *behave* any differently in any situation as a result of seeing the program? If so, in what way will *you* behave differently?

4. More specifically, do you think you will behave any differently in situations where *you or others* you are with might engage in intimate sexual activity under the influence of alcohol? If so, how will *you* behave differently?

Procedure

The university where the study took place required all first-year men to participate in the program being evaluated as part of new student orientation. Participation in the study by completing surveys afterward was voluntary. In return for survey completion and the agreement to complete another survey later in the year, participants were offered a $10 gift card to a local convenience store.

Participants saw a presentation of *The Men's Program* by four experienced peer educators, each of whom had at least 20 hours of peer education training. Presenters began by setting a nonconfrontational tone, where participants heard that they would not be blamed for rape, nor would it be assumed that they wanted to rape a woman. Participants were told, instead, they would learn how they can assist women who come to them for help after being sexually assaulted. This approach was taken to be consistent with belief system theory. Instead of approaching men as potential rapists, something even convicted rapists reject as a self-descriptor (Warshaw, 1994), they were approached as potential helpers of women recovering from rape, a descriptor men were likely to have (Scheel et al., 2001).

In addition, men were told about the likelihood that they knew a survivor given the prevalence of rape on college campuses and that it was likely that they would be in a position at some point to offer support to survivors. These emphases were in accordance with the ELM to motivate participants to listen to a message they will deem as person-

ally relevant (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). After disclaimers, an overview, and a basic review of rape definitions, presenters told the audience that they would view a videotape that described a rape situation. This tape described a male police officer being raped by two men who were depicted as violent, known previously to the officer, and heterosexual.

At the conclusion of the video, presenters noted that as with most male-on-male rape, the video they just watched depicted two presumably heterosexual men using rape and battery to exert power and control over the survivor. This portion was important because it confronted the homophobic misunderstanding some men may have that male-on-male rape is primarily perpetrated by homosexual men. Presenters then drew parallels from the male police officer's experiences to common experiences of female rape survivors. Participants were then taught basic skills on how to help a woman recover from rape. Next, presenters discussed how to define consent in intimate encounters and how to intervene as a bystander to help change social norms that condone rape. Presenters then led participants through a guided imagery of a woman close to them being sexually assaulted while another man, a bystander, did nothing to stop it. Next, participants were asked to consider what they would do in hypothetical situations in which they had the opportunity to confront another man who may be either abusing or preparing to be intimate with a woman who cannot give consent due to intoxication. Finally, participants considered what they would do in a potentially sexually intimate situation involving alcohol. After answering questions, participants were reminded of the prevalence of rape and of the necessity for everyone to end men's violence against women.

Surveys with open-ended questions were completed immediately after program participation. The open-ended questions were analyzed using a multistage inductive analysis (Patton, 1990). This process begins with identifying key phrases or terms used by program participants in their responses: in this case, responses to open-ended questions. Second, researchers identify themes that help organize participants' responses to the program in a careful approach to identify what is truly meaningful. Next, consideration of "causes, consequences, and relationships" (Patton, 1990, p. 422) occurs, whereby researchers attach meaning to findings and draw any appropriate conclusions to help illuminate, understand, and extrapolate the data.

The three authors followed the process suggested by Patton (1990) for the four open-ended questions. In order to help guard against bias during these analyses, each researcher initially followed the process separately. Afterward, researchers discussed their coding schemes and came to consensus decisions on a common framework.

Results and Discussion

General Attitudes

The first question posed to participants was "Compared to before you participated in this program, are any of your attitudes different today as a result of seeing the program? If so, what attitudes?" The most common response to this question, given by 47% of respondents, was either "no" or "no" with an indication that their attitudes did not change given prior agreement with the message of the program. Participants who qualified their "no" added things such as "No, I feel that my ideas were already consistent with the things taught in this program" and "No, I still think rapists should get the death penalty."

Aside from a few responses that were not able to be categorized, the remaining 51% of participants reported responses that clustered around three main themes. About one in five participants (21%) reported that as a result of seeing the program they "now realize how bad rape actually is." Participants whose responses fell into this theme stressed how they went into the program thinking rape was generally a bad thing and that the program took them to a much deeper level of realizing "how intense the situation could be." For example, one respondent noted "Yes, before I was against rape, but now I am completely against rape and all for helping those faced with it." Another stated "Yes, rape jokes used to be funny, but now I realize the feelings it can evoke. Rape seemed to be a pretty bad thing, but the police video showed me how terrible it really is."

Another 16% reported their general sense of "heightened awareness" that resulted from program participation. These participants noted changes in their knowledge of circumstances surrounding rape and their changed perceptions of rape itself. One participant simply put it, "Yes, my awareness and perceptions have been altered. I feel my sense

of morality is stronger." Another commented that "The statistic on falsely reported rapes changed my mind from the attitude I'd heard from friends—it doesn't happen as often as I had thought before." A participant who also used the term "aware" noted that "Before the program, I was less aware of how easily rape could happen. I see that it is really easy for a potential victim to get into a bad situation."

Finally, 14% of participants reported changed attitudes specifically toward rape survivors and how to help those individuals recover. For example, one stated "I think that I better understand the position of rape survivors as a result of the video." Another added "Yes, realize how hard it is to protest while being raped, realize how psychologically traumatizing it can be." Noting his changed attitudes about how best to help a survivor recover, one participant reported "I think that I would react differently; before, I would just want to cause intense physical harm to the attacker, but apparently that's not going to make the woman's situation any better."

Causes, Consequences, and Relationships

The lack of attitude change reported by a significant minority of participants begs the question whether they were in agreement with the message being given, or whether the message did not reach these men. For the majority of participants who did report attitude change, it is noteworthy that in response to a general question, those who changed their attitudes either reported a greater awareness of rape, increased knowledge of how to help survivors, or a deeper understanding of how rape might feel. Thus, on the surface, it appears that the strongest impact the program had on men's attitudes was in the area of general awareness about rape and its impact.

Attitudes Toward Alcohol and Intimacy

To follow up on the question regarding any attitude change, a more specific question was put to participants to determine whether any of their attitudes changed in relation to alcohol and sexual assault. Participants were asked "More specifically, are any of your attitudes toward intimate sexual activity under the influence of alcohol different as a result of seeing today's program? If so, what attitudes?"

Over a third (39%) simply responded "no." Another 20% of respondents said "no" and qualified their responses by stating that their attitudes were already in line with what the program advocates. For example, one stated "No. In principle, I always thought sexual activity under influence of alcohol was wrong." Another said "No, I firmly believe consent can only be given when sober." A third said "I would *never* take advantage of someone under the influence of alcohol, but I felt this way before the program."

Most of the remaining participants (31%) reported internalizing the messages of the program regarding the importance of avoiding intimate sexual activity when they or a partner has been consuming alcohol. Noting that alcohol and sex don't mix well, 15% made comments about their attitude changes noting this such as "I think sexual activity under the influence is more risky than I thought it was before." Another said "Alcohol means that sex is not a good idea; best to wait, at the very least be extremely careful." Another put it simply, "Yes, no sexual activity when she's drunk."

An additional 9% reported a better understanding of consent, with comments such as "I learned that cooperation is not consent especially if the woman is mentally or physically incapacitated and cannot say no." Another said "Yes. I am much more inclined to ask questions verifying their willingness to go on." Still another added "I think I understand 'mental incapacitation' more now than I did before." Another 7% of participants' comments fell into a theme where they noted that they would be more careful or aware of their own behavior by making such comments like "Yes, now I will not drink and engage in intercourse;" "I definitely would look out more for my friends and myself when it comes to hooking up while drunk;" and "Yes, I have hooked up drunk before and now I see it in a completely different light."

Finally, a small group of participants (4%) noted that they either saw more value in being protective of their female friends, or that they saw greater value than before in the practice of intervening if they believed a rape was about to occur.

Causes, Consequences, and Relationships

The fact that approximately 39% of participants reported no change in the area of their attitudes toward alcohol and intimate encounters,

with 20% more saying the program reinforced their attitudes, could be looked at in a number of ways. On the one hand, it could be taken as evidence that there was not a powerful enough programmatic effect to get through to most men on the issue of alcohol and intimate encounters. On the other hand, one might note that the 20% of participants who said the program reinforced their attitudes in this area and the additional 40% who noted attitude change show a sign of great success of the program in leading many to have desirable attitudes toward alcohol and intimacy. Given the frequency with which alcohol is involved in sexual assaults on college campuses, and the dearth of methods that have been found to successfully educate men about this subject matter, the present results can be viewed as highly encouraging. That nearly one third of participants reported a change in their attitudes toward using greater caution when alcohol and intimacy were involved suggests that there were a substantial portion of men who prior to the program were not exercising such caution. Their comments that they will now be more cautious in such situations offers evidence that these men may commit fewer alcohol-related rapes in the future.

General Behavior

The third question posed to participants changed the focus from attitude to behavior change. For this initial behavior change question, the focus was kept broad. Participants were asked "Compared to before you participated in this program, do you think you will behave any differently in any situation as a result of seeing the program? If so, in what way will you behave differently?"

Negative responses were reported by 31% of respondents, who either said "no," or "no" with a notation that the program reinforced their current beliefs such as "No, I knew what was right and wrong prior, but it was still statistically informative." The next most common theme came from participants who "won't hesitate to intervene" to prevent rape from occurring. This group, constituting 21% of respondents, made comments such as "Yes, I will be able to prevent rape from happening if I suspect it in certain social situations. I can confront my roommate or keep an eye on someone suspicious;" "I hope that I will have the courage to stand up and protect a girl from being raped even if it means that I will embarrass myself or seem like a jerk;" and "I'll

definitely be more involved in stopping it and preventing it before it may occur."

A similar group, constituting 10%, reported that they would use more caution in their own intimate situations. Characteristic responses in this theme included "I am definitely going to be careful about understanding what the woman I am with actually wants and whether she feels like I do;" "Yes, I'll practice more self-restraint and act less impulsively;" and "I will be much more careful about how much I drink and how I act around women who have been drinking." Another similar group, constituting 10% of participants, reported a greater awareness of "sketchy" situations where rape might occur. For example, these men stated things like "Yes, I will look out for situations where my friends try to take advantage of intoxicated women;" "Yes. I will pay more attention to my surroundings, and be aware whether I can intervene on a bad situation;" and "I will be more aware of how drunk girls are and more aware if the are in danger."

A group quite different from the ones previously mentioned, constituting 19% of respondents, stated ways in which their behavior would change to be more helpful to rape survivors. For example, participants stated "My initial reaction would have probably been to kick the guy's ass, but I think I'll hold off now because I wouldn't want to make things worse." Another stated "Yes, if my female friend tells me she is raped, I will react more compassionately and I'll be more understanding." Yet another said "Yes, reactions to a friend who has been raped will be different. Ask before embracing. Do NOT beat up the accused." Finally, 3% noted that they would no longer tell jokes about rape, and 4% made comments demonstrating intended behavior change that did not fit any given category.

Causes, Consequences, and Relationships

Given that it is more difficult to change people's behavior than it is to change their attitudes (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), we anticipated that fewer respondents would report behavior change than reported attitude change. Interestingly, there were more participants who reported that they would change their behavior than those who would change their attitudes. What this apparently shows is that those who had desirable attitudes coming into the program (and reported that the program reinforced but did not change those attitudes) reported no

attitude change but some behavior change. Further, the behavior change reported suggests that there were many participants who were either acting coercively or not intervening as bystanders during situations that could turn into rape, who will now say they will act in accordance with the program's messages. The fact that over one in five participants now says he will intervene if he sees others who might be engaging in activity that may turn into rape is particularly encouraging. Even if only half of these men follow through on those intentions, a substantial number of sexual assault incidents have the potential to be averted.

Perhaps even more encouraging were the comments from one out of ten men who reported that personal intent to act in a less sexually coercive manner. In addition, nearly one fifth of participants reported that they would use more effective strategies to help women recover from sexual assault—something that would enhance the quality of their community regardless of whether or not fewer sexual assaults occur.

Intimate Behavior in Situations Where Alcohol is Present

The final question put to participants sought to determine whether their behavior would be different under the circumstances where both alcohol and the potential for sexual intimacy existed. In this last question, participants were asked "More specifically, do you think you will behave any differently in situations where you or others you are with might engage in intimate sexual activity under the influence of alcohol? If so, how will you behave differently?"

Negative responses were given by a minority of respondents, such that 24% said "no" or comments like "No, because if I do have sex, it will be sober;" and 10% stated that they would act the same as they would have before seeing the program. These individuals said things such as "I'd still base my actions in the same beliefs. I'd act the same" and "I would never take advantage of someone under the influence of alcohol." An additional 6% reported that their behavior would not change because they abstain from alcohol and "would not even get myself in that situation." Another stated "I avoid alcohol anyway—this is just another reason"

Over one in four (28%) of respondents said that their behavior would change in such situations in that they would intervene to help prevent a rape from occurring. One stated "I'll stop people who are drunk from having sex—I would want somebody to stop a guy who was trying to get with my girlfriend." One respondent noted that he "will be more vigilant and pay more attention especially to people who are drunk. I will try my best and intervene if I know rape may occur." Using common vernacular, a respondent stated "I'm more likely to cock block when I see a guy taking advantage of a girl." Another added "I will certainly have fewer hesitations in taking action against someone if I see them taking advantage of someone else. The program clarified my belief that there is no intended harm or shame in interfering if you see someone in a compromising situation. One's health and life are much more important than risking losing a friend when confronting them."

Over one in five (22%) noted that they would be more cautious with their own intimate activity when alcohol is involved. For example, one said he would "hopefully stay around friends while I am intoxicated. Maybe get help for my alcohol problems." Another said he "would tell my friends not to let me do it." Another added "I will not have sex under the influence or with someone who is." Reflecting how he will change his own behavior and watch out for others, another participant noted "Yes, I will be more careful and also make sure friends are not doing anything stupid that may lead further." Another characteristic response was made by a man who noted "I will make sure consent is firmly established and be open to stopping all activity." A remaining 7% made responses that were either vague or did not fit into the established categories.

Causes, Consequences, and Relationships

The fact that one third of participants reported that their behavior in situations involving alcohol and intimate activity would not change seems mostly reflective of their prior desirable attitudes toward the subject. That 50% reported that they would either intervene in situations that might turn into rape, or would work to change their own behavior under such circumstances, was an encouraging result. It is noteworthy to point out that these individuals were reporting a *change* from their prior behavior, suggesting that before they would not have intervened or had been engaging in activity that could meet the legal definition of rape. Their reports of change in this area offer evidence

that program participants were reporting that they would alter their activity away from sexual assault and toward consent during their intimate encounters—a result long sought after in the rape prevention field. Such a result, however, must be tempered by the caution that respondents were reporting their intent to behave in a certain manner, not their behavior itself. Thus, these results cannot be taken to demonstrate behavior change, but only the potential that change may occur.

Prior studies of the effects of most rape prevention programs have been on university populations such as fraternities, sports teams, or other select groups (Boeringer, 1999; Choate, 2003; Foubert & Newberry, 2006). The present study improved upon prior research by studying one half of the first-year men on a campus. By doing so, a broad cross-section of students was included in this analysis. A benefit of the inductive analysis of responses from these students is that we were able to uncover unanticipated outcomes that were free from the limitations of preconceived notions. Thus, participants were able to articulate the impact of the program in their own words, rather than responding to prompts from the experimenter.

This qualitative approach has its strengths in understanding the nature of the individual human experience and extrapolating that experience to other similar people. However, these strengths are limited in that qualitative methods are not intended to produce causal explanations or generalizations (Patton 1990). Rather, the results gathered offer detailed and specific descriptions of participant reactions.

The finding that so many men reported that they will change their behavior—either in their own intimate situations or by intervening when they see others who may be in a situation that could lead to rape—is a powerful one. Prior research on earlier versions of the program evaluated in the present study (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cowell, 2004, Foubert & Newberry, 2006) did not find evidence as strong for predicting future behavior change. It could be that the additions to the program intervention used, which included information on intervening as a bystander during alcohol-related intimate encounters, was effective in eliciting a greater degree of intent to change behavior among participants. It could also be that the general rape prevention message of the program was more effective for first-year

students than for the fraternity men and athletes surveyed in prior studies of this program (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & Newberry, 2006). Further research on the effects of this revised version of *The Men's Program* on fraternity men would help clarify this result.

Although the present study uncovered attitude and behavioral intent change among a majority of participants, the findings are limited by the fact that a sizeable minority reported no changes. Some of these participants reported no change due to the fact that their attitudes were already in line with the program material. Other participants who simply answered "no" to whether they changed attitudes or behavior remain a mystery. It could be that these men were apathetic toward the study or the program. It could be that these are men who for whatever reason were not reached by the program material. Further research to determine who these men are and what their attitudes and behaviors consist of with regard to sexual coercion would be helpful to clarify this issue. An even more substantial issue that awaits further research is whether or not the men in this study who said they would act differently will actually do so. Future research should measure such men using a longitudinal design so that behavior change can be monitored.

While often criticized for a lack of external validity, one way to strengthen a qualitative research design is to have a sample that is representative of the population from which it was drawn. In the present study, participants were first-year men attending a program at a time required by their institution. As such, almost all first-year men eligible for this study actually participated. This greatly increases the confidence one can have in the findings reported herein.

The reader is cautioned to resist the temptation to generalize these qualitative findings, as that was not the purpose of the study. However, collectively, these findings shed light on how college men may be impacted by rape prevention programs, in this case, a program commonly used on our nation's college campuses (Foubert, 2005). Participants' comments suggest that the program was indeed effective in eliciting desired attitudinal and, in particular, predicted behavior change among participants. A major question remains as to whether participants who said they would intervene to prevent a rape or who

said that they would be more cautious in their intimate encounters would actually follow through on those intentions. That question awaits further research as a programmatic approach that is effective in ending rape is sought.

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