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Designing, Implementing, and Evaluating a Media Campaign Illustrating the Bystander Role

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SUMMARY. Recent research found that training men and women to understand the role of bystanders in situations where violence against women (VAW) is occurring may reduce the incidence of VAW (Moynihan & Banyard, 2004). Therefore a public awareness campaign to increase understanding of the prosocial role of bystanders in reducing VAW was developed and implemented. The current article discusses the role of media campaigns in addressing public health issues and describes the initial development, implementation, and evaluation of a media campaign focused on the bystander role in reducing the incidence of VAW. Conclusions and future directions of this exploratory project are discussed.

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Research indicates that violence against women (VAW) and sexual assault in particular is a pervasive problem on college campuses with college-age students as a particularly at risk population (e.g., Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). Estimates of the problem from previous research using samples of college age students indicate lifetime incidence rates for college women of 50% or more and academic year prevalence rates of 20% (e.g., Banyard, Plante, Cohn, Moorhead, Ward, & Walsh, 2005; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Himelein, 1995; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). Women on American campuses ages 18 to 24 are at greater risk for becoming victims of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking than women in the general population of comparable age with first-year women at particular risk (e.g., Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Fouts & Knapp, 2001). Additionally, sexual assault is the most common violent crime committed on college campuses today (Fisher, Sloan, & Cullen, 1995). A great deal of research demonstrates that exposure to sexual violence is associated with a multiplicity of negative outcomes including increased substance use, depressive symptoms, health risk behaviors, and symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder among various samples of survivors (e.g., Acierno, Brady, Gray, Kilpatrick, Resnick, & Best, 2002; Arata & Burkhart, 1996; Banyard, Williams, & Siegel, 2001; Brener, McMahon, Warren, & Douglas, 1999; Campbell & Soeken, 1999; Larimer, Lydum, Anderson, & Turner, 1999) making it a key public health issue.

Given such findings, colleges and universities are encouraged to adopt policies, procedures, protocols, and prevention efforts to end VAW on campus (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005). Research suggests that few have done so, at least in a comprehensive fashion (Karjane et al., 2005). For that reason, we designed a media campaign that was part of a larger initiative to reduce violence on campus using a community approach. The design and implementation of the project was grounded from the beginning in collaboration with the campus community.

The current article describes the efforts of a Multidisciplinary Media Campaign Workgroup (MMCW) to design, implement, and evaluate a bystander-oriented media campaign aimed at first-year male and female college students in an effort to educate them on the role of bystanders in reducing the incidence of VAW. The media

campaign does not specifically address perpetrators or victims; rather the campaign uses a community-oriented approach that reminds all members of the community that everyone has an important role in ending VAW. This public health approach to the prevention of violence against women has been recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2004).

THE ROLE OF MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Media campaigns are routinely used as a primary prevention tool to educate targeted public audiences on a myriad of health issues including HIV/AIDs prevention (Dawson & Hartfield, 1996), high risk drinking behaviors (Thombs & Hamilton, 2002; Glider, Midyett, Mills-Novoa, Johannessen, & Collins, 2001; Haines & Spear, 1997), emergency contraception (Trussel, Koenig, Vaughan, & Stewart, 2001), seat belt use (Clark et al., 1999), and health promotion (Wallack, 1990).Media campaigns are regarded as a key tool in more community-wide prevention efforts because of their ability to reach large numbers of people and a more general prevention audience (Wandersman & Florin, 2003; Nation et al., 2003).

Indeed, media campaigns have been described as mechanisms for information control in society (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004; Viswanath, Finnegan, Hannan, & Luepker, 1991). Media campaign designers have two major goals, first to increase the amount of public knowledge on a given topic and second to use this increase in information to give the public directions for potential ways of changing their current behaviors (Randolph & Viswanath, 2004). In other words the underlying goal of media campaigns seeks to change individual behavior by stressing fundamental problems associated with the individual's present behavior. Media campaigns often illustrate the potential drama associated with failing to change one's behavior (e.g. death or illness) or the horror of the social problem itself such as a vivid picture illustrating the devastation of gun violence (DeJong & Winsten, 1998).

In recent years media campaigns have begun to address issues of VAW (Kitzinger & Hunt, 1993; Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach, & Stark, 2003). Some of the campaigns specifically target men asking them to look at their behaviors (e.g., Donovan, Francas, Paterson, & Zappelli, 2000); other campaigns have taken

a social norms intervention approach to address VAW on college campuses (e.g., Fabiano, et al., 2003). Only a small percentage of these campaigns have been formally evaluated.

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING THE MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Based on what was learned from these other media campaigns, in the summer of 2004, faculty, staff, and students at a medium-sized public university in the northeast were invited to join a multidisciplinary media campaign work group (MMCW) to help design a pilot media campaign focusing on first-year students. Members represented various departments and constituency groups within the target community and were selected for their key knowledge of the community. The majority of members were actively involved in providing VAW prevention education and support services. However, several members were invited to participate because of their interest and experience in graphic design and general education of students regarding social issues. This provided a unique mix of members some of whom were informed on VAW issues and others who sometimes expressed rape myths and stereotypes about women.

This mix of knowledge and experience led to longer than expected discussions on basic underlying issues relating to VAW as a first step in the design process. Although this slowed our decision-making process, it also provided an opportunity for the committee itself to examine more carefully the stereotypical attitudes that might be elicited by the campaign and how to most effectively convey attitude changing messages. In our opinion this range of committee members' knowledge and experience and the time spent processing different views on the issues strengthened the campaign's design and ultimately made it more marketable to a wider student audience than those that would typically be drawn to such a media campaign.

In the next step of the process the MMCW reviewed fifteen media campaigns aimed at reducing and preventing sexual violence that were either currently in use or had been used in the past five years. Of the fifteen reviewed, only five were evaluated for effectiveness. Two of these campaigns, the Colorado Coalition Against Violence Against Women campaign, titled "Stimulate Conversation," (2002) and the University of California at Davis campaign, "Voices Not

Victims," specifically targeted college students. The Campus Violence Prevention Program at the University of California at Davis designed a four-poster media campaign to educate, raise awareness and prevent sexual assault (Chrismer, 2001). The remaining two campaigns were specifically targeted at high school students: the media campaign sponsored by the Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault program, "Real Men Respect," and the *Men Can Stop Rape* (2005) campaign begun in Washington, DC public high schools and surrounding neighborhoods that is now being used in high schools around the country. The latter's campaign goal was to increase men's awareness of their role in preventing VAW. A multimedia campaign designed and sponsored by the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault in 2003 titled "Speak Up. Speak Out" was marketed to the whole community and included television, radio, and print public service advertisements featuring a sexual assault survivor describing her personal story.

The MMCW drew a number of conclusions from this review. Most importantly, while media campaigns are important vectors for conveying information, it is imperative that the take-away message of the campaign is understood. Yet research indicates that although many anti-violence campaigns are dramatic and clearly illustrate the problem and ugliness of violence, the campaigns do not provide their target audience with the tools to reduce violence in their lives including skill development in the areas of "active listening...expressing feelings, perspective-taking, cooperation and negotiation" (DeJong & Winsten, 1998, p. 10). The MMCW found that only a few campaigns explored the role of the bystander, individuals in the target audience who could be prompted to use violence prevention tools to reduce the problem in their own lives and in their communities (e.g., The Colorado Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CCASA): Stimulate Conversation (Bickman, 1975)). Several members of the MMCW were familiar with innovations in in-person rape prevention programming that focused on training prosocial bystanders to change community norms around violence and actively intervene in risky situations to prevention violence or support survivors (e.g., Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; 2005).

Most sexual violence prevention programs have been criticized for their narrow focus on individuals (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; Swift & Ryan-Finn, 1995) rather than focusing on social change in the larger community. Thus, a number of researchers have discussed the value of prevention focused on helping community

members identify and understand how the role of bystanders as inter-
veners may reduce the incidence of sexual violence including "inter-
rupting situations that could lead to assault before it happens or
during an incident, speaking out against social norms that support
violence against women, and having skills to be an effective and sup-
portive ally to survivors." (Banyard et al., 2004, p. 70, for a review).
Research on the efficacy of such in-person training workshops is
promising (e.g., Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007) such programs
require active student participation in workshops and facilitator time
and may thus be unable to reach large numbers of community mem-
bers.

After finding no other media campaigns solely focused on the role
of the bystander in reducing and preventing VAW, the MMCW
decided to create an innovative campaign to educate college students
about the role of the bystander in reducing and preventing VAW. The
bystander-oriented media campaign developed by the MMCW
described in this article thus heeds the advice of DeJong and Winsten
(1998) and others by not only raising awareness about the problem
but also providing target audiences with behaviors that they could
model in similar situations. It focused on translating messages and
skills about prosocial bystanders preventing VAW from an edu-
cational workshop format into media campaign images widely avail-
able to the community. The bystander-oriented media campaign is
not meant to serve as a substitute for in-person prevention work-
shops/programs. Rather, it is intended to complement the inter-
vention program and serve as a less expensive and time consuming
mechanism for educating college students on the role of the bystander
in reducing VAW on campus. As Wandersman and Florin (2003)
assert, it is one important way to make sure prevention messages
occur at a wider community level.

THE POSTER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND RESULTING CAMPAIGN

Following Banyard et al., the underlying message of the bystander-
oriented media campaign was that everyone has a role to play in
ending VAW. Therefore the goal of the MMCW was to design a
media campaign around four posters that would model bystander
intervention behaviors or behaviors that students could use when

they are in a situation where a peer was at risk for VAW. The MMCW determined that each poster should have a "catchy" slogan encouraging bystander intervention behaviors by reinforcing the power of bystanders to make a difference in a situation to prevent and reduce VAW. After many hours of discussion the MMCW decided on a tag line for the media campaign: "Know your power. Step in. Speak up. You can make a difference." The members of the MMCW agreed that the tag line captured the importance of the bystander role that raised awareness of the role and modeled prosocial ways of doing so.

After the MMCW members identified the key issues and the target audience (first-year college students), they utilized their collective expertise to create four scenarios that could be used to model prosocial bystander intervention behaviors on four different posters (two related to sexual assault, one related to sexual harassment, and one to physical intimate partner abuse). The specific content of the four scenarios were designed through many discussions among the group members. Personal experiences of some of the group members and their friends and acquaintances helped provide context for the scenarios. MMCW student members played key roles in informing the design and feel of the campaign as these students would have reactions and perspective similar to our target audience. Storyboards were drawn by the workgroup using stick figures to illustrate bystander behaviors in each of the scenarios. Then a local graphic arts company that specialized in youth culture was identified to assist with transforming the stick figure storyboards to posters featuring college student who volunteered to pose in the scenarios. The MMCW gave feedback on the "mock ups" developed by the graphic arts company before presenting the media campaign to focus groups of first-year college students.

The resulting bystander-oriented media campaign included four posters each portraying a "typical" college scene and explicitly modeling prosocial and safe bystander behavior in the prevention of VAW. The first poster depicts a house party where a young man is leading an incapacitated young woman to an upstairs room. The forefront of the party scene depicts two women friends discussing the condition of the woman on the stairs and planning to make sure that the man does not follow through on his intentions to get her upstairs. Another poster shows a young man forcing his partner up against the desk in her dorm room while she protests that he is

hurting her. Outside the dorm room two other dorm residents discuss potential strategies for intervening in the depicted intimate partner violence scene. A third poster features three friends listening and caring for friends who have experienced sexual violence. Finally, the last poster takes place in the college town where young men in a car are shown yelling sexist remarks to an attractive female college student walking down the street. The bystander in this situation coolly admonishes the young men for their behavior. In addition to the campaign tagline cited earlier—"Know your power ...," an additional, specific educational statement about what to do in a situation similar to the one depicted in the scene appears on each poster. The revised media campaign was than piloted with students in two first-year dorms in order to determine and evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign message.

INITIAL FOCUS GROUP REVIEW AND MEDIA CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

After drafting prototypes of the media campaign, the research team held focus groups to assess student reaction to the media campaign. Prior to participating in the focus groups students were asked to fill out an anonymous survey assessing their knowledge regarding VAW on campus. Focus group participants were then shown the media campaign prototypes and asked for their feedback. Students were told that their feedback would be used to construct the final campaign materials. The participants were asked a number of questions about each poster and about the campaign in general. For instance, they were asked if they thought that the materials made effective points? Did they think the scenes depicted on each of the posters were realistic? The focus group time was used to assess the impact of the campaign and to determine the language that college students use among themselves when discussing issues related to VAW. Findings from previous research stress the importance of using language in a media campaign that "resonates with the target audience" (Lederman, Stewart, Goodhart, & Laitman, 2003). In addition to making changes in the language used in the posters, the MMCW collected qualitative data during these focus groups that led to changes in the appearances of the models, the background scenery,

and the graphics on media campaign posters. The focus groups gave the MMCW an opportunity to understand how students were interpreting the messages in the media campaign to insure that there were not unintended messages (especially any that might glamorize or condone VAW), an integral component of the campaign design process (Donovan et al., 2000).

Finally, determining whether the media campaign is conveying the creators' message in an effective manner is an important component of media campaign evaluation (Wallack, 1990). Thus, the MMCW viewed broader evaluation as an essential component of the campaign design, however infrequently it might be done. What follows are the findings of a more systematic, quasi-experimental evaluation of the campaign in part of one campus community using pretests and posttests, which has been shown to be an effective evaluation strategy for media campaigns (e.g., Trussell et al., 2001; Mieneke, Weenig, & Midden, 1997). We hypothesized that the posters would be positively received and that participants who viewed the posters would have increased knowledge of bystander roles related to VAW and be more likely to take on that role themselves than participants who did not view the posters.

METHODS

Procedure

Two first-year residence hall directors opened their dorms to give the research team sites to evaluate their residents' knowledge on the role of the bystander in reducing or preventing VAW. One dorm was randomly selected as the experimental dorm and the other as the control dorm. Residents in four randomly selected floors of each residence hall gathered in their respective floor lounges to eat pizza, drink soft drinks, and complete a pretest survey about their knowledge of the role of bystanders in reducing VAW.

The posters from the media campaign were then hung in different places on four randomly selected floors in the experimental dorm participating in the research. The four posters were placed together in different locations (e.g., elevator lobbies, restrooms, hallways, and bulletin boards). Posters from the campaign were

not placed in the residence hall designated as the control dorm. Every day for two weeks, a member of the research team went to the experimental residence hall to replace posters that might have come down the previous night. Additionally, residence hall directors and assistants in both the experimental and control dorms agreed to refrain from posting materials that addressed VAW during the two weeks that the bystander-oriented media campaign was being piloted.

At the end of the two-week period students who had filled out the pretests in the control and experimental dorms were offered the opportunity to eat pizza and participate in follow-up research focusing on ways to reduce VAW. The posttest instrument mirrored the pretest with the exception of some additional questions for the experimental group that focused on the media campaign itself. We hypothesized that students in the experimental dorm would be able to list a greater number of helpful bystander behaviors at the end of the end of the 2-week period compared to the students in the control dorm.

Participants

One hundred and forty-five first-year students from two residence halls designated for first-year-students participated in the pilot study. Forty-nine percent (71) of the pilot study participants were male and 51% (74) were female and 12% (17) had participated in a program aimed at reducing VAW. The mean age of the 145 pilot study participants was 18.6 years.

Fifty-six percent (81) of the students resided in the experimental dorm while 44% (64) resided in the control dorm. We found no statistically significant demographic differences between members of the control and experimental groups. For example, 48% (39) of the experimental group participants and 55% (35) of the control group participants were female. Finally, 10% (8) of the experimental group and 14% (9) of the control group had previously participated in a program aimed at reducing VAW.

In addition to the basic demographic questions described earlier, the pretest and posttest instruments included items regarding the participants' knowledge of the role of bystanders and scenarios where bystanders could intervene in prosocial ways.

MEASURES

Outcome Measures

Knowledge of Interventions

(Banyard et al., 2005). Participants were asked to list "helpful bystander behaviors that could be used in the case of VAW." Participants scored one point for every prosocial behavior they listed. The responses were coded into the following ten categories: (1) step in; (2) call the resident hall assistant; (3) call police/call 911; (4) tell someone; (5) take friend home; (6) be a friend/listen; (7) yell for help; (8) call the campus crisis center; (9) ask the victim if they are okay; and (10) other answers that indicated prosocial behaviors.

Post-Program Evaluation Questions

(Banyard et al., 2005). Five questions appeared at the end of the posttest as part of the program evaluation: (1) What specific information did you receive that was new or surprising; (2) As a result of this program, I will...; (3) Would you recommend this program to others on campus including your friends? Why or why not; (4) Please list three things you *liked best* about the program; and (5) Please list three things you *would change* about the program (alternatively, participants could check "I wouldn't change anything").

RESULTS

An independent samples test enabled us to determine that there were no significant differences between the control and experimental groups regarding their knowledge of prosocial bystander behaviors at the time of the pretest. That is, students in the experimental dorm ($n = 68$) identified an average of 1.13 ($SD = 1.15$) prosocial behaviors that they could use if they witnessed VAW against women, and participants in the control group dorm ($n = 63$) indicated that they were aware of a mean number 1.06 ($SD = 1.23$) prosocial behaviors. At the end of two-week research period the experimental group's mean number of known prosocial behaviors was 1.38 ($SD = 1.18$) while the control group's mean number of listed prosocial behaviors was .97 ($SD = 1.23$). A paired samples *t*-test

was calculated for both the experimental and control group. The difference in the mean knowledge of prosocial bystander behaviors from time 1 (pretest) to time 2 (posttest) was significant at the .02 level ($t = 1.95$, one-tailed) for the experimental group. The results indicate that there was a significant increase in the experimental groups' knowledge of prosocial behaviors. However, the difference in the knowledge of prosocial behaviors exhibited in the pretests and posttests was not found to be significant at the .05 level ($t = 0.73$) for the control group. Students in the experimental group, those students exposed to the media campaign, were able to list significantly more behaviors that could be used in cases of VAW than students in the control group. Therefore, preliminary pilot study results indicate that the media campaign provided the targeted audience with behaviors that they could model in a similar situation.

Students who lived in the "experimental" dorm were also asked for general responses regarding their reactions to the media campaign. After quantifying the answers to the open-ended questions on the posttest we found that 72% of the students responded positively to the media campaign. Thirty-six percent of the students described additions that they would like to see made to the posters, 21% of the students provided "other" advice, and 24% of the students spontaneously wrote "good job" at the bottom of their surveys. We incorporated the suggestions and critiques that the students offered into a third focus group that was run three weeks following the end of the research period with the "experimental" dorm.

In this final focus group we gave students copies of the four posters with the dialogue boxes left blank. Students were asked to fill in the dialogue, with words or phrases that they thought their peers would most likely use in the scenarios depicted in each poster. Students were also invited to make other suggestions to make the posters seem more realistic. When the students finished making comments on the posters, we facilitated a discussion that focused on their specific feedback on the dialogue for each poster. We analyzed the data from both students' written comments and focus group conversation. Although a number of the suggestions reflect prosocial bystander behaviors that are consistent with the messages in the media campaign, the students felt that it was important that the text shown on the posters utilize the specific language and colloquialisms of the college students. The students recommended that if wording on the posters sounded like language they would regularly use it would be easier for them to

model the behaviors illustrated on the posters. Based on this data, we have identified common themes in suggested dialogue changes and are currently working to edit the posters. Based on the positive reception of the campaign by students in the community, we are currently designing next steps including several semesters of community-wide distribution of the campaign on campus.

DISCUSSION

The overall conclusion of this exploratory project and study is that media campaigns focused on preventing VAW in communities are possible and can be effective. A number of lessons learned from the current project may be helpful to other communities considering a similar approach to primary prevention. These include the need to involve key informants from the community and target audience in all facets of campaign design and implementation. One of the primary strengths of this bystander-oriented media campaign is that members from the target audience provided important input on the campaign's content at each phase of campaign development. College students provided valuable feedback throughout the design and editing phases of this project. In our opinion this input helped to increase the likelihood that the target audience received the intended message that everyone has a role to play in ending VAW.

Also important, given the scarcity of evaluation data on media campaigns, is that preliminary pilot study results indicate that a passive intervention can increase students' knowledge on the role of a bystander in cases of VAW. But future studies are needed on the long-term retention of this knowledge and the adaptability of this particular media campaign on other college campuses.

Future directions for the media campaign include the development of an educational website that will serve as a companion to the media campaign and provide information for students, faculty, staff, community members, and families and friends on what to do if they witness incidence(s) of VAW. This will include appropriate and safe ways to intervene in potential and actual cases of VAW. The site will also include information on victims' rights, resources for support both on and off campus, what to do if you have been victimized, warning signs of an abusive relationship and perpetrator characteristics. The website will also feature an evaluation component for the

poster campaign. In addition to advertising the Web address on the posters, project staff members will work with faculty members in the community to incorporate the website as a component of the curricula of courses, particularly those that enroll large numbers of first-year students. Such ideas show the potential of media campaigns to reach wider community audiences with messages aimed at reducing the incidence of VAW on campuses and increasing support for survivors. This pilot project, though limited in scope, illustrates the powerful potential of media campaigns for prevention and community change.

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