

The Bystander Approach: Strengths-Based Sexual Assault Prevention With At-Risk Groups

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Bystander intervention is described as a promising approach for social workers engaged with groups labeled "at risk" for perpetrating sexual violence. An exploratory study was conducted with one at-risk group, student-athletes, to determine their willingness to intervene as bystanders in situations involving sexual violence. A survey was administered to 205 participants, focus groups held with nine teams, and individual interviews conducted with 22 student-athletes. Results indicate that the closeness of the team bond is the most significant predictor for willingness to intervene. Many student-athletes reported a willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual violence but need further skill development to do so effectively. Implications for social workers implementing the bystander approach with at-risk groups are discussed, such as skill development and utilization of the strengths perspective.

KEYWORDS *Sexual assault, athletes, bystander intervention*

Rape is a major social problem, as 1.5 million women experience a completed or attempted rape each year in the United States alone (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Given that rape represents one of the most underreported crimes, the actual prevalence is likely much higher (Koss & Harvey, 1991). The prevalence of victims suggests that social workers in all settings will likely encounter the issue of sexual violence as it is interconnected with other

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social welfare concerns that are central to the profession. For social workers in counseling centers on college campuses, it is almost inevitable that the issue of rape will emerge. Research suggests that 25% of women in college have been the victim of rape or attempted rape since the age of 14, and one-fifth to one-fourth of all women experience a completed or attempted rape during their 4- to 5-year college careers (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). Social work's commitment to ameliorating social problems requires that we not only provide effective services for victims but discover innovative approaches for prevention.

There is a particular need to develop effective community-level prevention strategies for groups or subcultures labeled as "at-risk" for perpetuating sexual violence. Feminist researchers argue that we are living in a "rape culture" wherein our fundamental attitudes and values are supportive of gender stereotypes and violence against women (Buchwald, Fletcher, & Roth, 1993). In addition to citing our general culture as rape supportive, some researchers have identified certain "subcultures" or groups wherein specific cultural norms legitimize violence against women. For example, feminist scholars have conducted extensive research on fraternities on college campuses and found some of them to be "rape-prone cultures" wherein group activities, language, rituals, and practices contribute to the creation of an atmosphere that tolerates or even promotes violence against women (Martin & Hummer, 1989; Sanday, 1990). Other rape-prone subcultures may include male athletic teams, the military (O'Toole, 1994), or other groups consisting of male peers (Schwartz & DeKeserdy, 1997). Several researchers have indicated that male student-athletes are more likely to be sexually aggressive and commit sexual assault than other students (Crossett, Benedict, & McDonald, 1995; Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald, & Benedict, 1996; Frintner & Rubinson, 1993; Koss & Gaines, 1993; Murnen & Kohlman, 2007), although there is the suggestion that not all student-athlete teams or communities are equally at risk for committing sexual assault (Humphrey & Kahn, 2000). Some research suggests that certain types of sport teams are more likely to be sexually aggressive, such as contact sports that involve more physical aggression, including football and basketball (Forbes, Adams-Curtis, Pakalka, & White, 2006).

Better understanding of those factors contributing to the problem of sexual violence in at risk subcultures such as college athletics is also important to recognize what aspects of these communities may contribute to a solution and, ultimately, prevention. Researchers have not adequately assessed the resources available within various subcultures, such as the student-athlete community, that can be utilized to expand efforts to address the problem of sexual violence. Social workers who are responsible for implementing comprehensive prevention programs must not only identify and address the problem of sexual violence in subcultures such as student-athlete communities but must recognize and build upon its strengths and

resources. Though this study focuses on social workers and college student-athletes, the framework can inform the development of prevention efforts in other social work settings.

BYSTANDER INTERVENTION

Within the field of sexual violence prevention in general, increasing attention is being given to the often untapped resource of "bystander intervention," largely owing to the conceptual and empirical work of Vicki Banyard and her colleagues at the University of New Hampshire. The idea suggests that individuals in a community can intervene when faced with situations involving sexual violence (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). This strategy views sexual violence as a community problem and one that all members have a responsibility to help resolve (Banyard et al., 2004). According to this approach, bystanders can intervene with a host of "sexually assaultive" behaviors that fall on a continuum, ranging from before an assault occurs (such as refusing to use sexist language), during high-risk situations (such as challenging a friend who is giving a potential victim alcohol at a party), and after an assault occurs (such as providing support to a victim; Banyard, Moynihan & Plante, 2007; Banyard et al., 2004). In this way, bystander intervention presents an opportunity for individuals to engage in all levels of sexual violence prevention, including primary, secondary, and tertiary.

The bystander approach is highly compatible with the underlying values of the social work profession. Framing sexual violence as a community issue wherein individuals have agency to create change is in line with social work's "person-in-environment" lens. Its emphasis on the resources and capacities within communities to address issues of sexual violence is a natural fit with social work's strengths perspective. The values of empowerment and self-determination, which are central to the profession of social work, are embedded in the bystander approach, which views individuals as having the ability to take positive action to work on the issue of sexual violence within their own communities.

In particular, the bystander approach offers promise for social workers who are working with groups labeled at-risk of perpetuating sexual violence. Oftentimes, members of at-risk groups are approached as potential perpetrators, which automatically positions them on the defensive. The bystander approach provides a unique perspective, challenging members of communities to take responsibility for the issue of sexual violence and to recognize their ability to intervene and create community standards wherein sexual violence is not tolerated. The bystander approach can also be tailored to build upon the strengths and resources that are unique to the community. Though bystander intervention presents itself as a promising strategy for working with at-risk groups, further research is needed to understand what

factors are associated with sexual violence involving sexual violence.

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of social workers in the development of a rape-prevention program in a college community. This information is a part of a larger study of quantitative research on social work practice in the field of sexual violence prevention. The study is a part of a larger study of quantitative research on social work practice in the field of sexual violence prevention.

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The purpose of the study is to gather information from members of an at-risk subculture to better understand the potential for bystander interventions. This information can then be used as a foundation upon which to build rape-prevention efforts. The at-risk group that served as the focus of this study is a sample of student-athletes at one university. Using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, this exploratory study relied on a social work strengths perspective by focusing on what potential solutions exist within the student-athlete community to address sexual violence.

THE BYSTANDER INTERVENTION APPROACH

The idea of bystander intervention was originated after the landmark case involving the murder of a woman named Kitty Genovese in New York in 1964. The assault occurred in public, and numerous witnesses did not intervene. That incident motivated the work Latane and Darley to study how bystanders react to emergencies and why they do not intervene (Darley & Latane, 1968; Latane & Darley, 1970). The idea of bystander behavior is well established in the field of social psychology and is utilized internationally, largely to explore individual's reactions to witnessing crimes and emergencies (Banyard et al., 2004; Fischer, Greitemeyer, Pollozek & Frey, 2006; Levine, 1999).

More recently, the bystander approach has been extended to the field of sexual violence education, with the idea that training individuals to effectively intervene in situations involving sexual violence is critical for prevention. Banyard and her colleagues have provided a model for understanding the role of bystander education as a part of sexual violence prevention (Banyard et al., 2007; Banyard, 2008; Banyard et al., 2004). In viewing sexual violence as a community issue, bystanders play an important role in prevention, including "interrupting situations that could lead to assault before it happens or during an incident, speaking out against social norms that support sexual violence, and having skills to be an effective and supportive ally to survivors" (Banyard et al., 2007, p. 464). Several sexual violence prevention programs on college campuses now include a piece on educating bystanders on how to effectively intervene (Banyard et al., 2007; Banyard et al., 2004; Berkowitz, 1992; Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & Perry, 2007; Katz, 1995).

Most of the research on bystander intervention has looked at the general college population and their willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual violence, without looking specifically at at-risk subcultures, such as student-athletes. One exception is the evaluation of The Men's Program, an empathy-based rape prevention program, and its impact on student athletes and fraternity members. Foubert & Cowell (2004) interviewed 26 undergrad-

uate men (including 14 student-athletes) about the impact of the program on their ability to intervene by providing support to a survivor and also changing their own behavior. Though the authors didn't use the "bystander" label, they looked at bystander intentions and found positive changes in the men's attitudes, including a greater willingness to believe victims, offer support to victims, and curtail sexist comments (Foubert & Cowell, 2004). The program was evaluated qualitatively again with 24 students (including 12 student-athletes) to see whether the effects were long-lasting, which they were (Foubert & Perry, 2007). Among other findings, participants reported a greater understanding of how to support survivors and a willingness to challenge sexist language and behavior. Though these findings are promising, the findings were not always clearly delineated among fraternity members and athletes. These two groups are often viewed together as at risk communities without distinguishing the unique differences, which are significant and have implications for how sexual violence programming is developed and delivered. Clearly, further research is needed to better understand the specific role of student-athletes as potentially active bystanders in situations of sexual assault. To date, there is no appearance of research specifically focused on athletes as bystanders in the literature.

Given the suggestion in the literature that student-athletes are considered an at risk group for perpetrating sexual violence (Jackson & Davis, 2000), seeking effective avenues for change is imperative, and the bystander approach is promising. The present study builds upon the foundation of Banyard's work on bystander intervention and conceptualizes sexual violence as a community issue. Rather than focusing generally on the college campus community, as previous studies have done, this study looks specifically at the community of student-athletes to understand what strengths are unique to this "at risk" group. The current study used a mixed methods approach, which allowed student-athletes not only to indicate their willingness to intervene but to provide a richer description of why they might or might not be willing to intervene. This information can be used as a resource by social workers for developing effective sexual violence prevention programs that target the student-athlete community.

In exploring the potential of the bystander approach in the student-athlete community, the guiding research question for this study was, "How willing are student-athletes to confront sexually abusive behavior, both before and after an assault occurs?" Research on student-athletes and violence has been criticized for treating athletes as a homogenous group without accounting for differences among teams (Crossett, 2000; Koss & Cleveland, 1996). Within the student-athlete culture, there may be variability in how team cultures respond to the issue of sexual violence. Understanding the differences that exist among at-risk subcultures is important for developing relevant prevention programs. Rather than assuming that all student-athletes would be willing to serve as bystanders in the same way, this study looked

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at different types of athletes. The second research question was, "Are certain types of athletes more willing to intervene in situations involving sexual violence?" Research suggests that women in general are more likely to engage in bystander behaviors (Banyard, 2008), so it was hypothesized that women athletes would be more willing to intervene. In addition to exploring the differences by gender, teams were also designated as either contact or non-contact sports (meaning physical contact is either a part of the sport or is not). Research on athletes has suggested that those involved with contact sports tend to be more aggressive and violent (Koss & Gaines, 1993), so it was hypothesized that their team culture may be less encouraging of confronting a sexually aggressive teammate and more likely to support sexually assaultive behavior. Last, in continuing to build on the strengths perspective, it is important to recognize the ways in which members of communities labeled at risk may already be trying to work on the problem of sexual violence. A third research question for this study was, "In what ways are student-athletes willing to confront sexually assaultive behavior and in what ways are they already doing this?"

METHODS

Sample Selection

This research was part of a larger, IRB-approved study in which information was collected about sexual violence and student-athlete culture from male and female sophomore and junior Division I student-athletes at a large, public university in the Northeast. To explore the bystander approach, this article focuses on the social change piece of the study. This aspect of the study involved three stages: the administration of a survey to 205 sophomore and junior student-athletes that asked about their willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual violence; a series of nine focus groups facilitated with various teams that explored their willingness to confront situations involving sexual violence; and in-depth interviews held with a cross-section of 22 athletes who followed up on the responses given in the focus groups.

Mixed Method Data Collection

A mixed methods approach was used to collect data to triangulate and strengthen validity, as monomethod bias has been identified as a threat to construct validity (Rubin & Babbie, 1993; Tashakkori & Teddie, 1998). The research process used a sequential mixed method design, with the intention that each stage would be conducted separately and would influence the next (Tashakkori & Teddie). The quantitative survey was used to gather baseline information about student athletes' willingness to intervene and was used to

answer the first two research questions: How willing are student athletes to intervene and are certain athletes more likely? The focus groups and interviews added depth to the study of the phenomena. Using a qualitative method for this question allowed student-athletes to share their stories and experiences, which could not be captured by the survey.

As part of the introduction to each stage of the study, the researchers acknowledged that men and women are both perpetrators and victims of sexual violence and that it occurs in same-sex relationships. For the purposes of this study, however, questions were specific to male perpetrators and female victims as research indicates that this is how it occurs the majority of the time (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998).

Survey

Junior and sophomore student-athletes completed the survey before they viewed a mandatory program on sexual violence. In return for participation, students were able to select a candy bar. Two-hundred and thirty students attended the four sessions, and 205 surveys were returned, representing a response rate of 88%. Demographic information collected was gender, race, team, and whether the person knew someone who had been sexually assaulted. The choice to limit demographic information was intentional to increase participant's sense of anonymity and reduce possible social desirability bias.

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

The instrument used to measure student-athletes' willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual assault was the SCREAM Confront Scale (SCS; Duggan, 1998). It was designed to measure participants' willingness to intervene in sexually abusive situations. The scale measures whether individuals believe that they could confront a friend who is planning to sexually assault a female, immediately before a sexual assault occurs or after a sexual assault occurs (Duggan). The SCS includes 12 statements about sexually assaultive situations wherein individuals could potentially intervene. A modified version of the SCS was used for this study, which included the 10 statements that were written as Likert scale items, such as, "I believe that I could confront my friend if he was planning to have intercourse with an unwilling female" (see Appendix A for survey). The last three items are negatively worded and were reverse-coded for analysis. The theoretical range of summed scores for the SCS is 0 to 50, with higher scores indicating a lesser likelihood of confronting sexually assaultive behavior and a greater willingness to participate in behaviors supportive of sexual assault (such as helping a friend get a female drunk to have sex with her). Duggan's survey of 329 students yielded a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86 for the SCS.

INDEPENDENT

The independent variable was sport classification (intercollegiate vs. intramural) and whether the athlete was sexually assaulted.

Gender

Gender was a dichotomous variable (male vs. female). Females were more likely to be sexually assaulted.

Contact

Contact was a dichotomous variable (meaning the athlete was sexually assaulted and violent, or not sexually assaulted and violent). Athletes who were sexually assaulted and violent were more willing to intervene than those who were not sexually assaulted and violent. Athletes who were sexually assaulted and not violent were more willing to intervene than those who were not sexually assaulted and not violent.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault was a dichotomous variable (yes vs. no). Athletes who were sexually assaulted were more willing to intervene than those who were not sexually assaulted.

Focus Groups

To follow up on the survey results, focus groups were conducted with 10 student-athletes. The focus groups were held to explore the athlete's subjective experience of the survey questions and to explore the athlete's willingness to intervene in sexually abusive situations. The focus groups were held with athletes from different teams and revenue sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, wrestling, gymnastics, women's basketball, and women's volleyball). The focus groups ranged in length from 15 to 30 minutes.

Interviews

In-depth interviews were conducted with 10 student-athletes to explore the athlete's subjective experience of the survey questions and to explore the athlete's willingness to intervene in sexually abusive situations.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The independent variables in this study included gender, contact/non-contact sport classification, and whether the person knew someone who was sexually assaulted. Each of these variables was dichotomously scored.

Gender. Research suggests that women in general are more likely to engage in bystander behaviors (Banyard, 2008), so gender was included as one variable to test the differences between male and female student-athletes. Females were coded "1" and males were coded "0."

Contact sports. As research suggests that the culture of contact sports (meaning those that involve physical contact) tends to be more aggressive and violent, this study tested whether the type of sport had any bearing on willingness to intervene. All 23 teams were labeled either "contact" or "non-contact" teams and reviewed by members of the athletic department for confirmation. Contact sports were coded "1" for those students who participated in a contact sport and "0" for those who did not.

Sexual assault exposure. Last, previous research suggests that if an individual knows someone who was sexually assaulted, it decreases their belief in rape myths (citations), and it was hypothesized that they may be more willing to intervene on the basis of having this previous association. Those who know someone who experienced a sexual assault were coded "1"; those who did not were coded "0."

Focus Groups

To follow up on the survey results and gather more in-depth information, a qualitative portion of the study was employed on the basis of a phenomenological approach (Mertens, 1998), with the purpose to understand participant's subjective experiences of being student-athletes and their willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual violence. A purposive sampling strategy was used to select teams for the focus groups. To determine whether the willingness to intervene varied on the basis of different teams, a variety of team types were desired, including men and women's sports; high-profile and revenue-producing sports such as football and less recognized sports like women's crew; and contact and non-contact sports. Ten teams were invited, and nine accepted the invitation to participate in this study: football, wrestling, men's lacrosse, men's track, men's soccer, women's soccer, gymnastics, women's volleyball, and women's crew. A total of 48 student-athletes participated in the groups, including 25 men and 23 women. The size of the groups ranged from three to eight participants (Table 1).

Interviews

In-depth interviews with student-athletes were conducted to follow up on the themes that emerged from the focus groups. A convenience sample

TABLE 1 Number of Focus Group and Individual Interview Participants From Each Team

	Number of focus group participants	Number of individual interview participants
Football	8	3
Crew (women)	6	4
Gymnastics	6	1
Lacrosse (men)	6	1
Soccer (men)	5	0
Soccer (women)	6	5
Volleyball	5	2
Track (men)	3	3
Wrestling	3	3
Total	48	22

was utilized, as students from the focus groups were invited to participate in an individual interview. The final sample included 22 student athletes (12 women, 10 men) who represented eight various teams (see Table 1).

Both the focus groups and individual interviews were conducted as semi-structured on the basis of interview guides. The focus group guide was designed to follow up on the survey results. Though the survey indicated whether individuals were or were not willing to intervene in situations involving sexual assault, the focus groups and individual interviews were designed to "dig deeper" and explore more of the "why" and "how" questions related to engaging in bystander behavior. To gather feedback and improve reliability, focus group questions were chosen by the researcher in conjunction with a group of student-athletes and staff from the university's department that serves victims of sexual violence. The final instrument included questions about various topics, including student-athletes' willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual violence, both before and after an assault occurs. To build rapport between the interviewer and participants, the interviewer started by gathering more information about the team and their sense of unity and then proceeded to ask about sexual violence and their teams' reactions. The questions were slightly different for the men's teams and women's teams, based on the idea that men are more likely to be perpetrators and women to be victims. Examples of questions for the men included "What would you do if you saw a teammate acting inappropriately toward a girl at a party?" and "How would you react if you found out someone on your team forced a girl to have sex?" Examples of the questions for the women's teams included "How would you react if someone on your team was a victim of sexual violence?" and "How would your team react if someone was said to be a perpetrator of sexual violence?" All groups were tape-recorded and lasted about 1.5 hours each.

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The interview guide was created by the researcher after reviewing the focus group results to determine which areas needed more in-depth exploration. The final guide contained the same areas as the focus group guide, but certain questions were changed to elicit more in-depth information and to clarify information gleaned from the focus groups. For example, during the discussion in the focus groups about reacting to a teammate accused of sexual violence, some people mentioned talking to the coach whereas others did not. During the individual interviews, a question was added to ask specifically whether individuals would tell a coach. Individual interviews lasted approximately 1 hour and were audio-taped.

The focus groups and individual interviews were facilitated by a male interviewer for the men's groups and a female for the women's groups. Matching the gender of the interviewers was deliberate in an attempt to build rapport and gain entrée into groups that are often regarded as tight and closed. The interviewers were each trained by the researcher on how to conduct the focus groups and interviews to ensure consistency in how the informed consent was presented, how questions were asked, how to use probes and follow-up questions, and how to respond to participants and maintain control over the time (Patton, 1990).

The issue of compensation was carefully reviewed with the associate athletic director who oversees all NCAA compliance guidelines to adhere to all regulations. All students who signed up to participate in the focus groups and individual interviews were told that they would need to have approval from the associate athletic director to participate and receive monetary compensation so as not to violate any regulations. All but two students were allowed to receive the \$20.00 compensation, which was determined acceptable by the associate athletic director. The two students who were not able to receive the monetary compensation owing to scholarships still decided to participate in both the focus groups and interviews. Demographic information collected included gender and team membership only, to protect confidentiality and decrease the potential impact of social desirability bias.

Analysis Strategies

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were tabulated to determine the mean scores on the SCS. Analysis of the distribution of participant's responses to the 10 items on the survey were carried out to determine extent to which participants were willing to intervene with a situation involving sexual assault. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine potential differences in the participants' willingness to intervene by knowing someone sexually assaulted, contact-team membership, gender, and race.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

The tapes from the focus groups and individual interviews were transcribed and reviewed by the researcher along with the facilitators' notes. Inductive analysis was used to determine the patterns and themes that emerged from the focus group and individual interview data (Patton, 1990). Cross-case content analysis was used, and the research questions served as sensitizing concepts and to search for and categorize themes (Patton). A classification system was developed, and data were coded to note both the sensitizing concepts and other themes that emerged (Patton). To increase dependability and credibility, the interviewers also reviewed the notes, and the researcher engaged in peer debriefing with two experts in the field to gather feedback on interpretation of the data and the analysis process (Mertens, 1998).

RESULTS

Owing to missing data, the analytical sample was 197. The sample for the survey included student-athletes from 23 of 26 teams (53.7% male, 78.5% Caucasian/White) and consisted of 48.3% of participants who reported knowing someone who was sexually assaulted. The Cronbach's alpha for the SCS for the sample in this study was 0.71. It was stronger for males (0.71) than for females (0.63).

The overall mean score on the SCS was 22.83 (standard deviation [SD] = 5.23). The scores ranged between 10 and 38. Approximately 68.5% of the participants had a score of 25 or less, suggesting that many athletes were willing to intervene. When looking at particular items, the survey results were skewed in favor of athletes, indicating a willingness to intervene in situations before an assault occurs. More than 50% of respondents responded "definitely" to the statement, "I believe I could confront my friend if he were planning to have intercourse with an unwilling female." An additional 29% of respondents said "probably" to the statement. A total of 21% of respondents responded "definitely" to the statement "I believe that if I confronted my friend before he had intercourse with an unwilling female, I could stop him from following through," and another 37% said "probably." The survey results indicated that teammates were less confident about their ability to prevent future assaults by confronting a teammate who already committed a sexual assault. Only 16% responded "definitely" to the statement, "I believe that if I confronted my friend after he had intercourse with an unwilling female that it would stop him from doing it again in the future," and 22% said "probably."

Descriptive statistics were run, and Cohen-d's were calculated for the various groupings of participants (Table 2). Males had an average higher score ($M = 23.28$; $SD = 6.001$) than females ($M = 22.34$; $SD = 4.217$).

TABLE 2 SCREA

Overall
Gender
Male
Female
Know someone
Yes
No
Sport
Contact
Non-contact

The Cohen-d = .170) in on the SCS rior by those SD = 5.43) sexually assa the differenc larger than f the comparis sexually assa (M = 23.96; in contact sp the differenc -.060).

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TABLE 2 SCREAM Confront Scale Descriptive Statistic

	N	Mean	SD	Cohen-d
Overall				
Gender	197	22.83	5.226	—
Male				
Female	102	23.28	6.001	
Know someone sexually assaulted	95	22.34	4.217	0.170
Yes				
No	97	22.18	4.95	
Sport	100	23.46	5.43	-0.246
Contact				
Non-contact	83	22.64	5.600	
	114	23.96	4.956	-0.060

The Cohen-d associated with the difference between the means (Cohen-d = .170) indicated a small effect. A review of the comparison of means on the SCS revealed less willingness to confront sexually assaultive behavior by those who did not know someone sexually assaulted ($M = 23.46$; $SD = 5.43$) when compared to those who knew someone who had been sexually assaulted ($M = 22.18$; $SD = 4.95$). The Cohen-d associated with the difference between the means (Cohen-d = -0.246) indicated an effect larger than found for gender but still within the small range. A review of the comparison of means on the SCS revealed less willingness to confront sexually assaultive behavior by those who participated in contact sports ($M = 23.96$; $SD = 4.956$) when compared to those who knew participated in contact sports ($M = 22.64$; $SD = 5.60$). The effect size associated with the differences between those two means was the smallest (Cohen-d = -0.060).

ANOVA analysis was performed to determine significant differences in the SCS scores by groups, including gender, knowing someone sexually assaulted, and contact/non-contact sport. The results for the ANOVA analysis can be found in Table 3. None of the variables or interactions proved significant for predicting variability in the SCS. The variable of knowing someone who was sexually assaulted was run as the sole variable but still did not yield significant results. In sum, the results from the survey failed to show any significant predictors of student-athletes' willingness to intervene.

Rather than gender, the type of sport (contact vs. non) or knowing someone sexually assaulted emerging as significant predictors of participants' willingness to intervene. As originally hypothesized, the qualitative results suggested that the tight team bond articulated by many respondents appeared to be one of the factors underlying their willingness to intervene. This manifested differently by gender, as male athletes talked about how they would intervene with fellow teammates as perpetrators and women athletes discussed intervening with fellow female teammates as victims.

TABLE 3 Analysis of Variance for the SCREAM Confront Scale

Source	df	SS	MS	F
Corrected model	7	237.185	33.887	1.252
Intercept	1	86898.289	86898.289	3210.938*
Gender (female)	1	8.435	8.435	.312
Know someone sexually assaulted (Know)	1	41.937	41.937	1.551
Sport (contact)	1	.732	.732	.027
Female × know	1	.215	.215	.008
Female × contact	1	51.641	51.641	1.908
Know × contact	1	34.355	34.355	1.269
Female × know × contact	1	7.103	7.103	.262
Within-group	189	5114.947	27.063	—
Total	197	108007.00	—	—
Corrected total	196	5352.132	—	—

Note. N = 197.

*p < .01.

Team Bonding and Male Athletes' Willingness to Intervene

In the focus groups, four of the five men's teams reported that they often socialize together and that they would likely intervene if they saw a teammate making a poor decision. Members of these four sports—all contact sports—described their teammates as “family,” “tight,” and “close” and reported a strong bond on the team that existed both within the sport and outside. All four teams talked about “looking out” for one another in all situations and preventing teammates from getting into trouble. For example, during the focus group, members of a men's sport commented that there is always another teammate at parties and that they all look out for each other and “have each other's backs.” One player explained, “Everyone on the team has someone's number. There's always someone you can call.” Another man echoed similar sentiments in their focus group, as one man said, “Like people look out for each other. Like if you go out and someone gets out of hand, I think people are pretty quick to try and help him out.” His teammates all agreed. Later in the interview, another team member talked about how close the team was and that it is easy to influence one another's behavior. He said, “If there's someone you don't like [on the team], it's just so obvious and then that person changes and then everyone likes him again. It's that easy to do it.”

The power of the team's influence on individual behavior was believed to carry over to issues of violence against women. When talking during the focus group about the possibility of a teammate committing sexual assault, a male respondent from a contact sport said, “No one would let it get to that point. If any of us were around, no one would let it happen.

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Like everyone would step in," and a teammate commented, "You wouldn't do it [rape] because you would know that no one would stand for it." Members of another men's contact sport made similar comments in the focus group, such as "If you see it [abusive behavior] and you're with your friends, you're just not gonna let it happen even if they want to hit you in the face."

Members of a men's non-contact sports team reported during the focus group that they do not consider themselves especially close-knit or tight as compared to other sports teams, as they do not necessarily socialize together. However, they still felt that "while it might be a little awkward," they would confront a teammate about his behavior if they felt that someone was going to get hurt. During the focus group, one member said, "We all look out for each other. So like if one person sees another person do something, we don't want to mess up their game or whatever, but we also, I wouldn't want to see the girl get hurt." The other teammates agreed.

In the focus groups and individual interviews, male athletes were vocal in expressing that they would not accept sexually aggressive behavior from teammates. In the focus groups, all five men's teams expressed the belief that if someone on their team committed sexual assault or any other type of violence against women, they would be given the message that their behavior was completely unacceptable by the team. During the focus group with a contact sports team, one man said,

If you raped a girl and you were on this team, and we found out about it, and you didn't get arrested, didn't go to jail, you would definitely quit the team and leave school because you would be shunned. It would not be accepted.

Another teammate agreed and commented:

... if it ever got back to my team, there's 35 people directly who would know about this ... if one person knows, 25 know, and I think there's no way you could face them. I don't know if rapists, if that would ever go through their mind about consequences, but there is an automatic one—that you're going to have to face 35 people about it.

During the focus group with another men's contact sport team, members felt that it would be shocking if a teammate committed sexual assault or any kind of violence against women. They said that they knew that it is unacceptable behavior by their teammates. One player said, "I think rape's too serious an issue to have that diverse of an opinion over, especially on our team because we know what their response would be." Members of the team also believed that if they knew someone who was raped that they would actively take a stand on the issue.

Team Bonding and Female Athletes' Willingness to Intervene

Women athletes also explained their willingness to intervene in situations involving sexual assault as a function of close team bonds. Three of the female teams expressed the belief during the focus groups that if a female athlete was sexually assaulted, the perpetrator would be held accountable by her teammates and other athletes. During a group with a non-contact team, one woman said, "Like, if any of my teammates were raped, there would be a big group of people going after this dude—like 'yo, what the hell did you do.' Guys and girls." Her teammates agreed, and another woman expressed similar sentiments and said that if a teammate were assaulted by another athlete, "I think hell would break loose . . . We're very close. It's ridiculous how close we are. Like these girls are my sisters. I love them so much and if any of them ever got hurt, like ugh, that guy would be dead."

A theme that consistently emerged for the women's teams in both the focus groups and individual interviews was the unconditional support that would be available for a teammate should she be sexually assaulted. All of the female teams felt that there would be a distinctive level of support for the victim that non-athletes would not have. During the focus group with a woman's non-contact sport team, a women's player discussed the difference, and all her teammates agreed:

... if a person does get raped, athlete versus non athlete, it might be more common for an athlete to come out and say something because they know they have that trust, that respect, and that support from their team, whereas a non-athlete might not feel they have that with a person or a group of people; it might come out easier in that kind of supportive community.

During the focus group with a women's contact sport team, respondents described the closeness of their team, and one woman said, "No matter what happens, if somebody's standing there and you need to talk to someone, someone's always there. Always." This unconditional support for each other was echoed by all of the other female teams as well. Members of another non-contact women's team said in their focus group said that if they were sexually assaulted, they would even go to another player on the team before going to their parents: "I wouldn't go to my parents—I would definitely seek out a teammate. They're right here, you know, I live with them."

A similar reaction was expressed by the women in the individual interviews. The 10 women who responded to this issue were passionate in expressing their willingness to be there for a teammate who experiences any hardship, including a sexual assault. Reactions given for this hypothetical situation included being shocked, supportive, and helpful. Members of two teams stated that they had experienced something like this already on their

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team and that everyone had been extremely supportive of the victim. Three women said that they would want to be supportive but really would not be sure what to say or how to treat the victim.

Student-Athletes Already Engaging in Bystander Behavior and Ideas for How to Create Change

In addition to looking at student-athletes' willingness to intervene, the qualitative portion of the study allowed exploration of how athletes would intervene, whether student-athletes were *already* engaging in bystander behavior, and what ideas they had for creating social change.

In the individual interviews, all 22 interviewees—men and women—were asked what they would do if they heard that a teammate or close athlete friend had committed a sexual assault, and a few consistent responses emerged. Four of the men and two of the women said they would be upset with the teammate and would approach him to find out more and confront him about it. Five respondents (two men and three women) said that the perpetrator would probably be physically harmed, either by members of his team or of the victim's team. Five participants (four women and one man) said they would report him either to a coach or the police. Three male respondents said they would consider telling a coach, but five (four men, one woman) said that they would probably not tell anyone in authority, including a coach. Three of these five who said they would not tell the coach said they would try to work it out as a team.

Interestingly, the issue of false accusations emerged unsolicited during this question. Men from two different teams responded to this question by saying they thought it was likely that their teammates would support an accused teammate unless they knew he was lying and that they would respect him for having to go through that ordeal if it were a false accusation. Both respondents provided this answer and implied that it would be a false accusation. One man said:

If it's undoubted, if there's evidence beyond a reasonable doubt that he's definitely the rapist and you exposed it, it wouldn't be a problem. If it was a little sticky situation, you don't really know what went on, the girl might have been drunk and gave consent, then it'd be a lot tougher to actually tell.

A female athlete also raised this issue, saying that if she heard of someone committing an assault, she would be uncomfortable and probably would "stay far away from it" and not do anything about it or report it because she would not want to falsely accuse someone and ruin his reputation. Interestingly, however, she said that if it was one of her teammates who accused someone, it would be different and the team would "take the

toughest act ever—call the police, call our coach. And don't let us see him because we will ruin his reputation."

During the individual interviews, some participants reported already having engaged in confrontation—both men and women from all types of sports. A member of a women's non-contact sport talked about how she already does confront men about their behavior and how important it is. She shared the following example:

I have walked down steps, stairs at the party, and I've heard someone go, "OK, that's mine tonight," and then [I said] "Excuse me! There's a female right here!" And then they say, "Sorry, [name], sorry, sorry, sorry." Because they know better than to talk like that around me.

A few male athletes ($n = 5$) talked about how they had intervened before. For example, one man from a contact sport described a situation where he intervened and said he would do it again:

I don't know, nothing has ever felt like that before. Something was triggered in me like I had never felt before ... in all my years of [sport] of getting pushed down and hit, I've never really blown up but seeing this girl get hit was horrible ... I really flipped. I got in a lot of trouble, but it was something I just had to do.

Interview participants were asked if they had any ideas about how student-athletes could be involved in working to end violence against women. Student-athletes consistently reported that they are largely viewed on campus as leaders, that their status as athletes gives them automatic respect, and that this could be used to make a difference on the issue of sexual violence. During the focus groups, one male from a contact sport commented, "People do look up to us because we are, you know, everyone here participates in a Division I sport. We get looked up to as leaders because people respect that." A female from a non-contact sport commented that, as an athlete, "you're kind of put on a pedestal, and people respect you a lot more," and her teammates agreed. One male athlete from a contact sport said,

Talking about it [rape], and stuff like that, believe it or not, we're like a step below professional athletics and kids really look up to us. I think if we go into high schools or even middle schools, that we could get the point across. And it'll, at least if it'll stop one rape, that, that'll be good.

Five respondents also suggested that their personal actions will make a difference by setting an example for others. One way they felt this could happen is by confronting people on their inappropriate behaviors. One woman from a contact sport explained that she thinks that social change will happen when people are willing to take a stand in their everyday lives:

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... if you see something happening, you know, to stick up for someone whether it be you see a fight going on between a guy and girl or whatever. And not to laugh when jokes are made about, "Oh, he slept with her." Not to go along with them.

The captain of a men's non-contact sport team also suggested using leadership to influence other members of the team. He said he would use his status as a leader to let the rest of the team know he does not approve of certain behaviors:

... it's one of my roles as one of the leaders on my team that if I feel something is wrong and it's bothering the rest of the team, I'm gonna tell the coach. Regardless of if it's my best friend or whatever ... if it's gonna affect anyone else on my team, I'm gonna let it be known that I don't like what's going on. to intervene in situations involving sexual assault.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that the bystander approach may provide a promising strategy for working on issues of sexual violence with at-risk groups, like student-athletes. Through the survey, focus group, and individual interview responses, it is clear that many student-athletes in this sample are willing to serve as active bystanders and to intervene in situations involving sexual violence. The qualitative results in particular emphasize that many student-athletes are already engaging in active bystander behavior and others are willing to. This study found that student-athletes provide positive intentions to intervene in sexual violence. This willingness to intervene is a resource within the student-athlete community that can be used by social workers as a positive approach to engage student-athletes in challenging the occurrence of sexual violence. Acknowledgement of their positive intentions and actions can provide an important beginning to successfully engaging student-athletes rather than approaching them as potential perpetrators or a problematic population, which is often how at-risk groups are addressed and portrayed.

Participants described many unique resources within the student-athlete community that provide a natural foundation for fostering active bystanders, including teams' close-knit nature and their ability to influence one another, both before and after a sexual assault occurs. Social workers and those developing sexual violence prevention programs can capitalize on these close team bonds by encouraging student-athletes to regard sexual violence as a community and a team issue and to adopt an active bystander approach. Additionally, the potentially strong ability of team captains to influence their teammates presents another opportunity for sexual violence education, as

team captains can be trained on the issues and taught about how to effectively respond both before and after a sexual assault occurs. Social workers engaged with other at-risk groups may find it useful to explore the particular strengths and resources already apparent with the community that can be used as a foundation upon which to develop bystander intervention.

One issue that emerged from this study is that some student-athletes are willing to intervene but do not know how. Similar to findings by other researchers on bystander behavior (Banyard et al., 2004), this suggests that good intentions or a willingness to intervene is a foundation upon which concrete skills and techniques must be offered. Social workers who want to implement the bystander approach with at-risk groups will likely need to provide training for individuals to develop skills. For example, in this study, it is clear that encouraging student-athletes to be active bystanders is not enough but that skill development needs to be provided on how to effectively and safely intervene. It appears that gender will likely impact the type of the intervention, as many women talked about how to intervene with victims and men with perpetrators, although this is variable. Topics that might be addressed would be how to safely confront a teammate before and after an assault occurs and how to provide a safe and empowering response to victims, including specific language and resources to use. Barriers to intervening should also be explored, especially within the student-athlete context. For example, how might someone deal with confronting a teammate if she or he is the star of the team or "needed" for a successful athletic season? What are the perceived implications of talking to a coach—both positive and negative? Opening dialogue on these issues is critical.

As social workers seek to create bystander skill development training, models for this type of program are available (e.g., Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2005; Foubert & Cowell, 2004, and Katz, 1995). For example, for athletes, The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program is one model that is especially relevant, as it is an education program for student-athletes and student leaders that works to encourage leadership on issues of violence against women. The program specifically uses a "bystander approach" to working with students, as its program aims to engage students "as empowered bystanders who can confront abusive peers" (Mentors in Violence Prevention Homepage, n.d.). Evaluation of the MVP program has indicated that students feel more able to intervene, such as telling a friend to stop calling his girlfriend names (Ward, 2001).

Another issue raised in this study is a need to understand individuals' definitions and perceptions of what constitutes rape before introducing the bystander approach. In this study, though many student-athletes expressed a willingness to confront their teammates, ambiguity existed surrounding their definitions of what constitutes rape. This is a critical area needing further investigation, as student athletes' willingness to intervene may be directly related to their definition of what constitutes rape. As some participants

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explained, if the rape were "clearly" the fault of a teammate, they would be willing to intervene, but if it were perceived as more ambiguous, such as having alcohol involved, they would side with their teammates. This finding is consistent with that found by Foubert & Cowell's (2004) qualitative study with male athletes and fraternity members, as they too discovered that if a friend were the alleged perpetrator and the victim were someone not known, the men would tend to side with the perpetrator and if the accused rape fell into a "gray area" (Foubert & Cowell, p. 11). This distinction suggests that some rapes are regarded as "real" or more "legitimate," which is obviously problematic. Given the tight-knit nature of some of the men's teams in particular, further research on these subtleties is needed. It is likely that the perception of a "gray area" and viewing some rapes as "real" and others not is a problem beyond just that of the student-athlete community. As social workers seek to work with members of other subcultures and at-risk populations, this is an issue that needs further exploration and clarification. In terms of education, it is clear that in addition to providing information on how to intervene both before and after an assault may occur, it is necessary to provide a consistent explanation of what constitutes rape, and related issues such as consent, alcohol, and victim blaming.

Ambiguity also surrounds the general concept of bystander intervention. It appears to be a complex issue, as it involves a continuum of possible actions and may occur either before or after an assault is committed. It is unclear whether student-athletes understand the continuum of behaviors and, in particular, whether they associate some of the primary prevention ones—such as sexist language—as connected with sexual assault. It seems that discussion of this continuum should be a component of prevention education programs as well.

The hypotheses that certain types of athletes would be more likely to engage in active bystander behavior was not supported by this study. The results from the survey showed differences were insignificant and, in the focus groups and individual interviews, there was no distinguishing pattern regarding the type of sport. The categorization of sport that did seem to matter was the closeness of the team and how comfortable they felt with one another. Those teams that described themselves as "tight" were more likely to talk about confronting one another or providing support to a victim. Further research could investigate whether the level of closeness experienced by a team influences their willingness to intervene.

Several limitations are apparent with this study. The ability to generalize findings beyond this sample is not possible, although it may suggest directions in which further investigation is warranted. Post hoc power analyses indicate that power associated with each of the main effects and interactions in the ANOVA were all below .53. The failure to detect differences between the groups may be more reflective of the study's limited power than to lack of differences among the groups. Replicating this study with a larger sample

is needed to confirm results. Additionally, the lack of a comparison group prevented conclusions about what aspects of willingness to intervene are unique to student-athletes versus the general college population. Further research could include comparison groups to explore differences.

The race of participants was poorly distributed for the survey and not collected for the focus groups and individual interviews. This is an important variable to consider when exploring bystander behavior, as the race of the bystander and of the victim or perpetrator may have an impact on an individual's willingness to intervene. Further research must include this variable while still protecting the identities of research participants. Additionally, further research could include other potentially mediating variables, such as whether participants have received any sexual violence prevention education. Variables specific to the type of sport may be important to explore as well, such as whether the tightness of the team or the degree to which the coach influences team members impacts their willingness to intervene.

A third issue is the strength of the quantitative tool—the SCS—for this sample. The reliability was somewhat low, especially for females, and did not yield much useful or definitive information. With the issue of bystander behavior being newly introduced into the field of sexual violence, further instrument development is needed. Along with this issue is a concern about the problematic definitions involved with bystander behavior as previously mentioned. The theoretical work on bystander behavior as applied to sexual violence is minimal, and further exploration of this concept is needed to develop appropriate measuring tools and educational strategies.

Despite these limitations, this preliminary information suggests that the bystander approach may be an excellent fit for educating student-athlete communities about sexual violence. The results from this study indicate that student-athletes were often willing to intervene in situations involving sexual violence but that many of them need further skill development. Many unique aspects of the student-athlete community provide a strong foundation for the bystander approach, such as the tight bonds among team members. Using a bystander approach would allow educators to engage student-athletes as potential leaders on issues of sexual violence rather than as potential perpetrators. The development and evaluation of programs emphasizing the role of student-athletes as bystanders provides an important next step.

Though this study was conducted on student-athletes, the framework can be applied to other at risk groups with whom social workers interact. Using a strengths perspective, social workers can talk with members of these communities about their strengths, willingness to intervene, barriers to intervention, and resources. This information can be used to develop appropriate bystander prevention programs that build upon the communities' abilities and capacities.

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9. Not rea
friend t
10. Not rea
about w
night.

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APPENDIX A

Scream Confront Scale (Duggan, 1998)

For each of the following statements, please check the response that best reflects your answer

___ Definitely ___ Probably ___ Maybe ___ Not likely ___ Definitely not

1. I would notice comments and behaviors that would indicate that my friend was intent on having intercourse with a female even if she were unwilling.
2. I would notice whether my friend was getting ready to have intercourse with a female who was so drunk she might not be able to indicate whether she was willing or was not.
3. I would know whether my friend had already forced sex upon a female after the situation occurred.
4. I believe that I could confront my friend if he were planning to have intercourse with an unwilling female.
5. I believe that I could confront my friend if he already had forced intercourse upon an unwilling female.
6. I believe that if I confronted my friend before he had intercourse with an unwilling female, I could stop him from following through with it.
7. I believe that if I confronted my friend after he had intercourse with an unwilling female, it would stop him from doing it again.
8. Not realizing what this might lead to, I may help my friend get a female drunk at a party to make it easier for him to get sex from her later.
9. Not realizing what this might lead to, I may encourage or pressure my friend to get sex as often or from as many women as he can.
10. Not realizing what this might lead to, I may make a bet with my friend about whether or not he can "score" with a particular female on a given night.