

Chapter 2

The Promise of a Bystander Approach to Violence Prevention

Some of my friends in the dorm were like 'why would you-why would you even get involved like it's none of your business it's better for you to just stay uninvolved' And I think that's just weird because that's just not the type of person I am.

—College student discussing being a bystander

Abstract Bystander intervention has provided a new way to approach sexual and relationship violence prevention. It gives everyone a role to play in prevention that is appealing and that potentially reduces defensiveness to prevention messages. This chapter provides an introduction to bystander focused prevention for sexual and relationship violence. Definitions of key terms including bystanders, prevention, and violence concepts are provided. Support for the importance of bystanders to the topic of sexual and relationship abuse comes from a variety of theories about the causes of sexual and relationship violence and research on risk and protective factors. Theories and research across all levels of the social ecological model are briefly reviewed to make the case for the utility of using a bystander approach to violence prevention.

Keywords Sexual assault • Relationship violence • Bystanders • Theory

Sexual and relationship violence prevention efforts have been around for many years. Yet programs often show limited success. Even if, for example, individuals profess to endorse fewer rape myths immediately after sitting through a rape prevention workshop, these shifts often disappear weeks and months later. Few programs examine their effect on rates of sexual or relationship violence. Researchers and practitioners have critiqued early prevention approaches for talking to women mainly as potential victims and to men as potential perpetrators. Not surprisingly, such frameworks produced resistance to messages and engagement (Lonsway 1996; Lonsway et al. 2009). Other programs focused less on prevention for women and more on risk reduction training (Gidycz and Dardis 2014). Bystander intervention gives *everyone* a positive role to play in violence prevention.

Further, prevention work often consists of presentations focused on building knowledge and awareness among those individuals most at risk (for example, college students) (Anderson and Whiston 2005; DeGue et al. 2014). In order for prevention to be effective, approaches that get people more personally connected to the material and approaches that find ways to engage many components of community (for example, parents as well as students), and that have concrete skill building to offer will be more effective at helping people do something different to end sexual and relationship violence (Finkehor et al. 2014; DeGue et al. 2012). Bystander intervention is more appealing and potentially reduces defensiveness to prevention messages. While it may be hard for a high school student to see herself as a potential victim of relationship abuse and a staff member at a youth based organization to see himself as a potential perpetrator of sexual violence, both of them are likely eager to have the skills to help a friend or family member who is dealing with abuse or to know how to safely de-escalate a risky situation where someone is in danger of being hurt. Further, changing community norms, implementing better policies, and resourcing comprehensive prevention efforts that will work, relies on communities of leaders and citizens who are aware of the problems of SV and IPV, feel responsible for doing something about it, and take action. As a potential added benefit, as bystanders learn how to help others they may also adopt new ways of thinking and acting that may reduce their own victimization or perpetration risk. Thus the prevention field has turned to trying to motivate and create better bystanders.

2.1 Defining Bystanders

Bystanders have been defined in many different ways in both research and practice. Most definitions describe bystanders as witnesses to negative behavior (an emergency, a crime, rule violating behavior) who by their presence have the opportunity to step into provide help, contribute to the negative behavior or encourage it in some way, or stand by and do nothing but observe. Bystanders who do take action have been referred to in the literature as “upstanders” (Ferrans et al. 2012; Twemlow and Sacco 2013), “defenders” (Pozzoli et al. 2012), active or empowered bystanders or pro-social bystanders (Banyard 2011) to help distinguish them from people who “stand-by” and do nothing in these situations or those who may escalate the problem.

Historically some of the earliest research on bystanders examined their apathy, or lack of action. Darley and Latané (1968) used the term “diffusion of responsibility” to describe why bystanders in large groups in particular, are less likely to help in part because they assume others will take care of the situation. In Richmond California in October of 2009 (CNN, 28 October, 2009) and again in Steubenville, Ohio in 2012 young women were incapacitated by alcohol and gang raped while school peers watched, texted their friends, and videotaped events (Dahl 2013). No one stepped into help either young woman. In a high school in Massachusetts in 2013 a young man was sexually assaulted as part of a hazing

incident while others looked on (Adams 2013). On one college campus, a victim of stalking came forward to both campus authorities and law enforcement. Friends of the perpetrator then flooded Facebook with negative and harassing comments about her. In this case the bystanders mobilized to make the situation worse by blaming the victim and disparaging her for coming forward. The recent trial of two students at Vanderbilt University described a sexual assault where a number of people witnessed the victimization and did nothing including friends of the perpetrators who received videos and texts about the assault (Burke 2015). In New Jersey, several college students were recently arrested for their roles as bystanders who assisted several accused perpetrators in a sexual assault (Cohen 2014).

On the other hand, social psychological work on altruism and helping as well as more contemporary work on bystanders has examined when people step into assist others (Penner et al. 2005). At the University of Massachusetts several students came to the aid of a young woman during an assault and assisted the campus with identifying the perpetrator (Winerip 2014). In Steubenville, Ohio, an online blogger refused to be silent about what she read and heard online about the sexual assault of a high school student (Preston 2013). At Stanford University two students riding their bikes intervened to stop a man who was having sex with a young woman who appeared unconscious (Lee 2015). At Vanderbilt University officials were looking at surveillance cameras related to a different situation and noticed a young woman being taken unconscious by the accused men to their room. Heightened sensitivity to the context of sexual assault risk and what it looks like helped these more formally trained bystanders attend to this section of footage and they initiated an investigation that resulted in two men being convicted of sexual assault related crimes (Gonzalez 2015). In this book, I mainly focus on this latter group, individuals who choose to take action in situations across the spectrum of sexual and relationship violence.

Research using national crime data found that a third party was present in one third of sexual assaults and one third of instances of intimate partner violence, according to victim reports (Planty 2002). Victims most often said that third parties made the situation better (Planty 2002). Bystanders are also present across a variety of interpersonal violence situations (including peer bullying, child maltreatment, intimate partner violence, and sexual assault) (Hamby et al. 2015). Bystanders were least likely to be present for sexual assaults, but when bystanders were present they were often helpful, though they also were at risk of being hurt. Many incoming college students performed a prosocial bystander action related to sexual assault in the past year (McMahon et al. 2015). High numbers of students reported that they had opportunity to do these behaviors and that when presented with the opportunity most did something to try to help. These data suggest that informal helpers are often present and can offer help. Bystanders are, however, frequently unsure of themselves as responders. They are unclear about whether intervention is needed or welcomed or what they should do to help (Break the Cycle, 2006; Knowledge Networks 2011).

2.2 Defining Prevention

Prevention of violence can take place at each of three levels of prevention (Centers for Disease Control Prevention 2004; O'Connell et al. 2009): primary, secondary, or tertiary. Primary prevention involves efforts aimed universally at an entire population and usually aim to keep the problem from developing in the first place. Secondary prevention involves more targeted efforts. An at-risk group is identified and efforts are put in place to reduce those risk factors to keep the problem from developing further. Tertiary prevention can also be seen as intervention in that it takes place after violence has taken place. The goal is to work with victims to reduce the negative consequences and decrease experiencing future victimization or to work with perpetrators to rehabilitate and reduce recidivism. Bystanders can play a role in each of these types of prevention.

2.3 Defining Sexual and Relationship Violence

Bystanders have the opportunity to respond to a wide array of situations related to sexual (SV) and intimate partner or relationship violence (IPV). For the purposes of the current discussion and consistent with the field I use a variety of terms when referring to SV (sexual assault, sexual violence) and IPV (dating violence, relationship abuse) and include a range of behaviors in each category. For example, bystanders can take action across a range of behaviors that can indicate risk for sexual violence including sexist comments and verbal harassment (e.g. catcalls); comments that minimize rape (e.g. "that test raped me"); unwanted touching and groping; engaging in sexual behavior with someone who is too incapacitated to give consent; sexual assault using force or threats of force (McMahon and Banyard 2012). A similar continuum can be described for relationship abuse with behaviors ranging from inappropriate comments that depict physical abuse in relationships humorously, comments that suggest support for coercion in relationships, warning signs of abuse including jealous and controlling behavior, insulting or demeaning one's partner, stalking, and acts of physical abuse or threats of physical abuse. A continuum approach is similar to the "Broken Windows" or social disorganization theory of crime (Perkins et al. 1992; Pinchevesky and Wright 2012; Wilson and Kelling 1982). The idea is that small acts of social disorganization such as broken windows on a building or sexist or misogynist comments suggest social and community norms in favor of negative behaviors, and these small actions and attitudes breed the norms that condone larger and larger problems. Appreciating the spectrum of these behaviors is an important context for understanding the variety of unique opportunities and challenges for bystanders to sexual and relationship violence, the main subject of this book.

In this book I take an interconnected view of violence given the high rates of co-occurrence of different forms of violence (Hamby and Grych 2013). Meaningful prevention efforts across the lifespan should consider more than one

type of violence as a focus for any given effort especially since while distinct types of violence have some specific risk and protective factors, they also have many in common (Hamby and Grych 2013). Risk factors such as bystander apathy and lack of collective efficacy, community and peer norms that support the use of violence and coercion, are related to many forms of violence and could be a common focus for prevention work. We know from research that individuals have difficulties identifying escalating risk for both SV and IPV and that privacy norms support seeing both forms of interpersonal violence as a personal and private matter. We know both forms of violence occur on a continuum ranging from comments, jokes, harassment and emotional abuse to problematic physical contact and both often occur behind closed doors. Further, while most research has focused on bystanders in relation to only one form of interpersonal violence per study, making direct comparisons difficult, factors related to bystander action often appear similar. Thus in the current book I often describe a bystander approach to interpersonal violence more generally.

However, when possible I also explore how bystander intervention may be somewhat different depending on whether it is in relation to sexual violence or relationship abuse, or other forms of interpersonal violence. For example, one study found that bystanders were less likely to be present for sexual assaults and when they were, bystanders were more likely to have been reported as harmed than for other forms of victimization (Hamby et al. 2015). Sexual assaults also frequently occur when victims have been given alcohol or substances that incapacitate them and make it difficult for them to provide cues that help is needed or that they would be receptive to bystander intervention (I should note that it is not the responsibility of victims to indicate their need for help—the responsibility for sexual assault rests with perpetrators—but absent verbal or non-verbal communication with victims, bystanders who are feeling unsure about taking action may be more likely to walk away from the situation). Norms about how sexual interactions happen also work against bystanders identifying instances of risk for sexual assault. Sexual scripts that encourage men to be persistent in pursuing sexual contact or that support ideas that “no means yes,” that encourage gender segregated socializing, and that pair aggression with sexuality pervade media images and may desensitize or confuse bystanders about cues that risk for SV may be escalating (Abbey et al. 2001; McCauley et al. 2012; Menning 2009), though some studies find high levels of intervention by bystanders in sexual assault situations (Harari et al. 1985).

IPV also has unique aspects for bystanders (Frye et al. 2012). Threatening physical postures and emotionally abusive name calling and insults may in some instances be more recognizable as a problem in the eyes of a bystander and studies find reports of high levels of responding to IPV with responses like providing advice or support or admonishing the perpetrator, especially compared to reporting to police (Gracia et al. 2009). Yet norms of privacy may hinder taking action. In the case of IPV, bystanders may be concerned for their own safety more than with other forms of interpersonal violence, if they step in when someone is being physically violent. More lab based studies showed that gender of the perpetrator

was key, with earlier work suggesting people were less likely to intervene if they thought the people involved were a couple (Shotland and Straw 1976), and more recent work suggests that people are more likely to take action in an IPV situation if the perpetrator is male (Chabot et al. 2009). A more community-based study found that individuals thought the most feasible forms of bystander action related to IPV were trying to help a victim (Frye et al. 2012). By contrast, college students were most likely to report having intervened as bystanders to sexual violence in escalating risk situations by trying to reduce or diffuse the risk (McMahon et al. 2015).

To date, few studies have sought to examine differences in bystander action for SV and IPV by comparing them directly. Some research that has, for example, compared correlates of helping for general violence compared to IPV found some different correlates (taking action against general violence was more likely among those with strong social support ties to neighbors while action for IPV was related to less personal tolerance of IPV) but also similarities (self-efficacy was significantly related to informal social control of both) (Frye 2007). As a result, in this book I attempt to create a broad model that is applicable to mobilizing bystanders for SV and IPV but also note the need for future research to examine more unique aspects of SV and IPV for bystanders that should be further developed.

2.4 Why Is a Bystander Approach Important?

Support for the importance of bystanders to the topic of sexual and relationship abuse comes from a variety of theories about the causes of sexual and relationship violence and research on risk and protective factors. Variables focus on aspects of individuals, relationship contexts, and communities (Tharp et al. 2012; Vagi and Rothman 2013). Indeed, it is possible to find an important role for bystanders in many of the most supported theories of sexual violence and relationship abuse. A brief review of this work sets an important context for understanding the potential of bystanders for prevention across levels of the social ecological model (Tharp et al. 2012; Vagi and Rothman 2013). Bystanders have the greatest potential for changing the environment and relationships that surround potential perpetrators.

2.4.1 *Bystanders in Primary and Secondary Prevention: The Power of Peer Contexts*

The most well studied and supported risk factors for perpetration of SV and IPV are found at the intra-individual level of the social ecology (Tharp et al. 2012; Vagi and Rothman 2013 for reviews). Risk factors such as patterns of thinking including belief in rape myths, victim blaming attitudes, as well as a history of victimization or witnessing violence, and patterns of sexual behavior including

impersonal sex and sexual arousal to aggressive stimuli (Capaldi et al. 2012; Tharp et al. 2012). There may be little influence that bystander intervention can have on internal patterns of thought, sexual arousal, and motivation to use coercion and aggression in relationships in the moment someone is making the choice to hurt another. However, we know that intra-individual factors do not operate in isolation. For example, several theories of perpetration highlight how individual risk factors are combined with contextual factors to produce perpetration behaviors (Tharp et al. 2012). Bystanders play a role in increasing or decreasing these additional contextual factors. For example, qualitative interviews with men who self reported behaviors that would meet legal definitions of rape and yet did not see what they had done as wrong or criminal found in the men's description of the rapes many bystanders who helped, knowingly or not, create the context that made it easy for these men to perpetrate their crimes (Lisak and Miller 2001). Bystanders were the friends and acquaintances who helped set up the party, made alcohol available, set up rooms where one could isolate a victim, and looked the other way when risk began to escalate. Indeed, on college campuses researchers observed different social interaction patterns in fraternities students described as high risk compared to those perceived as lower risk for sexual assault. High risk fraternity parties showed greater gender segregation at social events, use of aggression more generally in social interactions, and conversations between men and women characterized by more straight flirting rather than friendly general conversations (Boswell and Spade 1996; Humphrey and Kahn 2000; Menning 2009).

With regard to IPV, bystanders are the neighbors in communities beyond college campuses who by not seeing IPV as a problem may look the other way and thus allow abuse in relationships to take place (Frye 2007; Rothman et al. 2011a, b). Routine activities theory (Schwartz et al. 2001) specifies that three key variables are necessary for a crime to occur: The presence of a motivated perpetrator, a vulnerable potential victim, and the absence of "effective guardians" who could take action. These guardians are bystanders and have the potential to interrupt and prevent crime an individual chooses to commit. For example, research on bullying is clear that bystanders who step up and defend bullied children reduce rates of bullying in schools while bullies who are rewarded or reinforced for their behaviors escalate the problem (Salmivalli et al. 2011). Bystanders, then, can work against a perpetrator's choice to use violence in a relationship. Bystanders in these models are key factors in primary and universal prevention efforts in that they may keep violence from happening in the first place.

Beyond simply interrupting behaviors, bystanders are also part of the immediate context of SV and IPV as part of the peer norms that can support or work against SV and IPV, the relationship level of the social ecological model. Again, research on perpetration of both SV and IPV shows that peer pressure for sexual activity, peer support for forced sex, membership in hypermasculine peer groups are risk factors for perpetration (Tharp et al. 2012). Social norms theory describes how problematic behaviors are encouraged because of misperceptions of how much peers engage or support those behaviors (Paul and Gray 2011). So, while men may not hold rape myths themselves, they may overestimate how much their peers endorse

rape myths and over time bring their own behavior in line with perceived peer expectations (Fabiano et al. 2003). Further, men who do not seek and receive consent before sexual behavior may think their behavior is normative. The solution to these misperceptions is to provide corrective norm information. This can come in part from prevention messages (Fabiano et al. 2003) but also needs to come from peer bystanders who challenge these misperceptions in conversation and in modeling different behaviors. Among high school students, more gender equitable attitudes were associated with lower risk for perpetrating dating violence. Witnessing peers perpetrate abuse increased risk for perpetration among research participants (McCauley et al. 2013). Bystanders are part of these peer groups and may work to support or challenge these norms as well as model positive or negative behavior that can be part of cultural tipping points for encouraging violence or preventing it. In this way they are also a key component of secondary prevention as they counteract the problematic views that make some individuals more likely to perpetrate.

2.4.2 Beyond Immediate Relationships: The Role of Bystanders in Community Theories of Violence

Social disorganization theory (Lipsey and DeGue 2014; Pinchevsky and Wright 2012) is also relevant to understanding the potential role of bystanders. This theory describes how neighborhood factors, including economic resources, neighborhood disorganization, as well as relationships between members of the community impact the occurrence of crime (Edwards et al. 2014; Frye et al. 2012; Malik et al. 1997; Rothman et al. 2011a, b; Snyder et al. 2012; Weiss 2011). The idea of this is that things like high rates of poverty and the stress and disadvantage that can accompany it leave people in communities with few resources to form ties and little power to work together on common goals. There is then a dearth of cooperation to reduce crime and individuals may be less willing to use their own influence to keep risky situations from escalating (termed informal social control (Chaurand and Brauer 2008; Chekroun and Brauer 2002)). In situations of high social capital and collective efficacy, people use the relationships they have with one another to exert control over the behavior of others but also to create norms and rules that can promote collaborative action and achieving common goals. There is evidence that third parties are less likely to be involved in crimes in urban areas, where perhaps due to social disorganization there is less community cohesion, compared to rural or suburban towns (Planty 2002).

Indeed, researchers have found that measures of collective efficacy were correlated with violence. That is, communities high in collective efficacy had members who looked out for one another and were able to work together on crime prevention efforts, neighborhood youth monitoring, and promoting prosocial community norms. They had social bonds and ties that enabled neighbors or groups of people to work collaboratively together, to form shared goals and then help achieve them. Young adults who felt they were part of rural communities with

greater collective efficacy also reported that they took more bystander action, while neighborhoods seen by citizens as unorganized and lacking cohesion had high rates of relationship violence (Edwards et al. 2014; Rothman et al. 2011a, b), though work in urban studies has not found a significant link between collective efficacy and IPV intervention or rates of femicide (Frye et al. 2007, 2008). Women who felt more positively about their communities also reported social norms that were more supportive of helping women in abusive relationships (McDonnell et al. 2011). Social capital has been used as a resource to reduce adolescent crime (Weiss 2011).

Building relationships within communities are then a key part of building protective factors against violence. Bystanders are the broad base of human and social capital needed to bring about change. In this way they serve the efforts of secondary prevention, by being more present at “hot spots” where SV and IPV are more likely to occur (Taylor et al. 2013), or by intervening as part of collective groups as violence escalates to promote nonviolent outcomes (Levine et al. 2011).

Bystanders are also potential community change agents in more direct ways than through their role in helping to create community norms, capital and collective efficacy. “Diffusion of Innovation theory” describes the process through which new ideas and actions (for example, new ideas about relationships, violence, or prevention) spread among people so that they take root in a community (Rogers 2002). The process of diffusion enlists small groups of “innovators” and “early adopters” who are often people others look up to as opinion leaders in a group or community (Rogers 2002). When they see the relative advantage of the new idea or action they can encourage others so that the new norms or actions become more widespread. Bystanders have a role as these potential innovators or early adopters of violence prevention messages and behavior choices. However, bystanders act in such roles (by, for example, seeking out information about SV or IPV and educating others) infrequently (McMahon et al. 2015).

Frye et al. (2012) found that neighborhood residents generated a number of ways that community engagement could be used to address IPV, by getting leaders to speak out against IPV and working to create safe community spaces. Citizens also thought these sorts of strategies were somewhat to very effective, though lower rated than directly trying to help a victim or contacting a formal helping system. Bystanders can be gatekeepers of community-level change. Policy contexts also impact SV and IPV (Lippy and DeGue 2014; Taylor et al. 2013). Community leaders and people in power are the gatekeepers of policy changes. They have authority to resource supports for victims, provide training for better response to perpetrators, and policies that indicate zero tolerance for coercion. For example, researchers have discussed “decision and deterrence theories” (Paul and Gray 2011, p. 105) which highlight the need for real negative consequences for negative behaviors like IPV or SV as perceived consequences can make a difference in whether a perpetrator chooses to act (Strang and Peterson 2013). Bystanders can lobby for creation of and enforcement of consequences for problems like SV and IPV. This can be seen, for example, in the recent work of student activists who have pressured college campus leaders to make changes in how instances of sexual assault are handled on campus.

2.4.3 Bystanders Are also Part of Tertiary Prevention to Improve Response to Victims and Hold Perpetrators Accountable

The importance of focusing on bystanders is also supported by research on what happens to victims after they experience a sexual assault or relationship abuse. At that point in time bystanders are the friends, family members, and first responders who hear victims talk about their experiences and can offer support and referral to resources or provide negative responses that silence victims and compound their distress. For example, we know from studies that victims often receive both helpful and unhelpful reactions from others when they talk about their victimization (West and Wandrei 2002; Ullman 2010). Supportive reactions from others predicted recovery from sexual assault and relationship abuse while negative reactions were associated with psychological distress (Ullman 2010). Victim blaming attitudes from professional helpers can also be damaging (Campbell 1998, 2001). Furthermore, from a victims' perspective, bystanders are associated with more positive victim mental health and fewer negative effects following the victimization, though it is not just the presence of bystanders, the bystanders have to be perceived as helpful and victims need to perceive that bystanders are safe and not harmed in the situation (Hamby et al. 2015). Bystanders, then, also play an important role in tertiary prevention, in reducing further effects of violence by being a key part of safety nets for victims in the aftermath of sexual violence or relationship abuse.

It is also the case that bystanders can become witnesses not only by alerting law enforcement when a crime has occurred but by providing evidence for investigations and testimony in legal cases or campus judicial board hearings. One study found arrest rates were significantly increased for IPV in a community when bystanders gave sworn testimony or became complainants themselves (Buzawa and Austin 1993; Shernock 2005).

2.5 An Introduction to Bystander-Focused Prevention

From these theories and frustration at the lack of effectiveness of prior prevention efforts, prevention educators developed programs aimed at changing the attitudes and building the capacity of potential bystanders. A central theme in bystander focused prevention is that everyone has a role to play in ending sexual and relationship violence. In their role as friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, or strangers in a bar or on the street, they may notice situations of escalating risk for violence or become aware of the abuse of power in relationships. They have the opportunity before, during, and also after an incident to find ways to help. Harnessing this potential is the focus of many prevention programs. These programs provide more evidence for the importance of attending to bystanders as

several studies suggest that these prevention programs may help prevent violence (Coker et al. 2014; Salazar et al. 2014).

Katz's Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) (Katz 1995) and Berkowitz's (Gidycz et al. 2011) Men's Project are two of the founding programs on bystander intervention for sexual and relationship violence. They focus on small group, single gender workshops that raise awareness about the problem but also use active learning exercises such as reviewing and role playing scenarios and challenging social norms through discussion to increase helpful bystander behaviors. Since their early work many other programs have appeared using similar educational workshop formats (Bringing in the Bystander™ (Banyard et al. 2007), Men of Strength Clubs (Men Can Stop Rape), GreenDot and SEEDS (Coker et al. 2011, 2014; Cook-Craig 2014), One in Four Men's and Women's Program (Foubert and Newberry 2006). A bystander framework has also been used to develop other types of prevention tools including social marketing campaigns (Know Your Power™, Red Flag Campaign), interactive theatre (iSCREAM, interACT) and online curricula (PETSA at the University of Montana, RealConsent at Emory, and Agent of Change We End Violence, Take Care) and some of these have been evaluated with promising results (Ahrens et al. 2011; Kleinsasser et al. 2015 ; McMahon et al. 2014; Potter 2012; Salazar et al. 2014). Katz and Moore's (2013) recent meta-analysis shows the promise of this approach.

In this book I take a closer look at this new tool in our prevention toolkit—mobilizing potential bystanders to play a role in ending violence. A bystander framework is one facet of interpersonal violence prevention. Empirical research supports attention to risk reduction, for example (Gidycz and Dardis 2014), parent education (i.e., dyadic intervention for parents of entering college students related to alcohol use and sexual assault (Testa et al. 2010), and alcohol policies (Lippy and DeGue 2014). My focus in this book on bystander behavior is not meant to suggest that these other components of prevention are not important. Indeed, sexual and relationship violence is a complex problem that will require multi-faceted responses (Banyard 2013, 2014).

This book draws from literature across forms of helping, types of interpersonal violence, and studies of attitude and behavior change. I try to highlight different points in the lifespan where training bystanders can be encouraged. We need prevention approaches that highlight the interconnections between forms of interpersonal violence (Banyard 2014; Hamby and Grych 2013). Too often our work focuses only on one. To date most bystander work, whether research on what promotes it or on prevention programs, use college student samples. Indeed, with the exception of Cook-Craig et al. (2014), Katz et al. (2011), Miller et al. (2013), and Potter and Moynihan (2011) most evaluations of bystander programs have been on university campuses. Currently, organizations, that focus on preventing child sexual abuse, such as Stop It Now!, are further adapting a bystander approach to teach adults how to be active bystanders to prevent child sexual abuse. The potential of a bystander approach is far reaching but has to date been hindered by an overly narrow focus on thin slices of an overall model of bystander action presented here.

2.6 Summary

- Bystanders are individuals who are present in situations in communities where there is risk for sexual assault or relationship abuse and by their presence have the potential to alter the outcome of the situation. They are individuals who are carriers of community norms related to SV and IPV and gatekeepers of resources and policies that effect response to SV and IPV. They are friends, family, co-workers of victims who are recipients of victims' disclosures.
- Bystanders can play a role at all levels of prevention: primary, secondary, and tertiary.
- Bystanders have powerful potential as prevention agents to address SV and IPV.

2.7 Implications for Practice

While the ultimate responsibility for sexual and relationship abuse rests with perpetrators of these acts, theories about the causes of sexual and relationship violence also point to the importance of witnesses or bystanders who are in positions to come to the aid of victims or interrupt risky situations. A number of promising prevention programs that train bystanders exist. They use formats that include in person educational workshops, social marketing campaigns, and online trainings. Empirical analyses of these programs show promising results for their effectiveness at changing attitude and increasing bystander action (Katz and Moore 2013). Much of the research on which our understanding of bystanders and the role, including what influences them to take action comes from looking at other behaviors—informal social control of rule violations like littering, helping someone who has dropped their books or who has a medical emergency. As described above, sexual and relationship abuse comprise a variety of behaviors (McMahon and Banyard 2011) some of which may involve low-cost helping behaviors but others of which may require moral courage—acts that have little apparent benefit to the bystander and may in fact carry negative consequences for him or her (Greitemeyer et al. 2006; Osswald et al. 2010). Educating community members to take action as responsive bystanders, then, requires motivating people to notice an array of situations and have ready a broad variety of actions they might take. We need to next examine research on bystanders and what factors influence behavior to see if the model for bystander focused prevention we are using is adequate. And if not, we need to revise these models and perhaps think differently about how best to promote safe bystander action so that we can be more effective in our prevention efforts.

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2015, XI, 118 p. 1 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-319-23170-9