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Conceptualizing the Engaging Bystander Approach to Sexual Violence Prevention on College Campuses

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Bystander intervention offers promise as a sexual violence prevention tool for student affairs administrators on college campuses, but the conceptualization and definition of the approach is in its infancy and needs further development. In an effort to emphasize the potential role of bystanders in the primary prevention of sexual violence, we put forth the “engaging bystander approach” (EBA). We discuss how EBA can be used to address primary prevention and present updated versions of Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan’s (2005) Bystander Attitude Scale and Bystander Behavior Scale. We then present the results from a quantitative study with 951 undergraduate students that used the updated scales to assess the willingness of incoming college students to engage in primary prevention bystander behaviors. We conclude with implications for future studies and for sexual violence prevention programs on college campuses.

Rape is a major problem on college campuses. Research suggests that 3% of college women are raped during a 9-month period and one-fifth to one-fourth of all women experience a completed or attempted rape during their 4-to 5-year college careers (Karjane, Fisher, & Cullen, 2005; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). In response, the federal government has mandated that all higher education institutions receiving federal funds must provide rape prevention programs (Neville & Heppner, 2002). Approximately one third of higher

education institutions include information on rape as part of safety programming or in general education for students (Karjane et al.).

The type of rape prevention programs offered on college campuses varies widely and include programs that are information focused (providing factual information about rape), empathy focused (for rape survivors), socialization focused (looking at gender role socialization), or risk reduction focused (strategies to avoid rape; Anderson & Whiston, 2005). The target audience of rape prevention program ranges from all students at orientation programs to those groups identified as “high risk” such as fraternities and athletes (Anderson & Whiston).

Unfortunately, the interpretation of “prevention” is ambiguous with programs that are loosely connected with the different levels of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. *Primary prevention* occurs before the onset of the problem, with the goal to reduce the actual incidence of the problem and to promote general well being targeted to a generic audience (Weissberg & Bell, 1997). Examples of primary rape prevention programs on college campuses include peer theater presentations at orientation for incoming students that challenge rape myths (e.g., Black, Weisz, Coats, & Patterson, 2000), bystander skill development sessions (e.g., Banyard et al., 2005), or academic courses for students to become peer educators (e.g., Klaw et al., 2005).

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Primary prevention efforts include education to alter the negative underlying attitudes, behaviors, and practices that are believed to contribute to the incidence of rape as well as focusing on positive behaviors students can engage in to challenge rape-supportive beliefs (Borges, Banyard, & Moynihan, 2008). *Secondary prevention* focuses on a problem already in existence and aims to minimize the impact for those affected by targeting groups at greater risk of experiencing or perpetrating the problem. (Foubert & Marriott, 1997; Roark, 1987). Two groups commonly identified in the literature as “high risk” for committing rape on college campuses, and thus receiving separate prevention programming, are fraternities and male athletes. Research indicates that some members of these groups may be more sexually aggressive as well as collectively create all-male atmospheres that tolerate or even promote violence against women (e.g., Forbes, Adams-Curtis, Pakalka, & White, 2006; Humphrey & Kahn, 2000; Murnen & Kohlman, 2007; O’Toole, 1994). *Tertiary prevention* provides interventions for those who have already been impacted by the issue, such as the provision of counseling and crisis services to rape survivors on college campuses (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2004; Roark).

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2004) issued a call within the field of sexual violence to shift efforts to focus on primary prevention, with researchers and practitioners echoing that call (e.g., Borges et al., 2008; Karjane et al., 2005). For example, the American College Health Association (ACHA) recently issued a position statement calling for college health professionals to recognize the importance of the primary prevention of sexual violence, including rape, and to develop strategies to engage the campus community (ACHA, 2007).

One promising strategy for primary,

population based rape prevention is the concept of bystander intervention (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004). The idea suggests that all individuals have a responsibility to respond to rape before, during, or after an assault occurs (Banyard et al., 2004). We believe that the bystander approach holds particular promise for primary prevention and can be used to encourage students to create a culture on campus that does not tolerate rape or other forms of sexual violence. However, the conceptualization of bystander intervention as focused specifically on primary prevention needs further development. Hence, we put forth a promising approach in this paper, aptly named the “engaging bystander approach” (EBA). We added the adverb “engaging” because, alone, the term “bystander” may conjure a passive or even negative image of individuals who witness a problem and do not act on it (Baker, 2008).

In this article, we begin by providing an overview of recent literature on bystander approaches as well as discuss how the EBA can be conceptualized and used for the primary prevention of sexual violence. We then present the results from a study that assesses the willingness of incoming college students to engage in primary prevention bystander behaviors. We conclude with implications for future studies and for rape prevention programs on college campuses.

THE ENGAGING BYSTANDERS APPROACH IN THE LITERATURE

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; Latane & Darley, 1970; Levine, 1999). More recently, the bystander approach has been

extended to the field of rape education, with the idea that training individuals to effectively intervene in situations involving rape is critical for prevention. The incorporation of the bystander approach is increasing in popularity for college campus rape prevention education programs (e.g., Banyard et al., 2004; Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Berkowitz, 2002; Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & Perry, 2007; Ward, 2001). In fact, the ACHA (2007) explicitly urges college health professionals to develop programs on bystander intervention techniques as a primary prevention strategy.

The literature on utilizing a bystander approach to prevent rape is small but growing. In his discussion of involving men in the effort to prevent rape, Berkowitz (2002) outlined critical elements for programs and included emphasis on men's potential role as bystanders. Foubert (2000), has also focused on engaging men as "potential helpers" through his development of *The Men's Program*, based on belief system theory and the elaboration likelihood model. Multiple evaluations of the program have demonstrated long-term changes in men's attitudes and behavior, including decreases in rape myth acceptance and likelihood of raping, increases in empathy towards rape victims, increased willingness to curtail sexist comments, and a greater likeliness to offer support to rape victims (Foubert, 2000; Foubert & Cowell, 2004; Foubert & LaVoy, 2000; Foubert & Perry, 2007). The Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program is a nationally recognized education program for student-athletes and leaders to encourage leadership on issues of violence against women (Mentors in Violence Prevention, n.d.). Internal evaluation of the MVP program indicates that among other findings, students feel more able to intervene, such as telling a friend to stop calling his girlfriend names (Ward, 2001).

Perhaps the greatest contribution to the bystander literature as applied to sexual

violence including rape is by Vicki Banyard and her colleagues. They expanded previous conceptualizations of bystander intervention from an individual to a community-based model where individuals play an important role in "interrupting situations that could lead to assault before it happens or during an incident, speaking out against social norms that support rape, and having skills to be an effective and supportive ally to survivors" (Banyard et al., 2007, p. 464). Banyard's model covers a range of behaviors that fall on a continuum of violence with these behaviors defined by several tools that measure behavioral intentions, actual behavior, self-efficacy, and decision-making (Banyard et al., 2007). Her model has been developed rigorously over time and found to increase positive bystander attitudes and behaviors with both the general student population (Banyard et al., 2007) and "high risk" students such as athletes and members of sororities and fraternities (Moynihan & Banyard, 2008). More recently, Banyard (2008) applied the bystander model to intimate partner violence. As a part of this study, she discussed the reliability and validity of the various bystander measures she developed but also called for further investigation into the conceptualization and measurement of the bystander approach. One avenue for further modification is to shorten the measures and refine them to include a greater emphasis on primary prevention efforts and behaviors.

The literature on the bystander approach as applied to sexual violence prevention is in its infancy. One issue that is not clearly addressed in the literature is defining what behaviors are considered forms of bystander intervention. Additionally, because individuals can intervene as bystanders in a number of ways, further work is needed to distinguish how bystander intervention can be used for primary prevention (before an assault

occurs) as well as during or after an assault (secondary and tertiary prevention). Placing sexually violent behaviors on a continuum is a useful way to conceptualize the ways in which bystanders can intervene before an assault even occurs.

CONTINUUM OF VIOLENCE

One of the critical pieces for conceptualizing the various levels of rape prevention and the ways in which students can be engaged as bystanders is recognizing that sexual violence exists on a continuum, including a range of behaviors that escalate in severity and violence and that are linked to one another (Kelly, 1987, 1988; Leidig, 1992; Osborne, 1995; Stout, 1991). At one end of the continuum are those behaviors that are generally considered sexually violent in our society including rape, sexual assault, and criminal sexual contact. These acts are recognized as crimes in our culture with legal ramifications and punishment, are more overt, and are judged more harshly (Stout). At the other end of the continuum are behaviors that contribute to the existence of sexual violence that are more commonly accepted, including sexually degrading language, pornography, and harassment. The behaviors at this end of the continuum are often normalized as a part of our culture and therefore their connection to sexual violence is not widely recognized nor judged as harmful (Stout).

Most primary prevention programs on college campuses are “rape” prevention programs, with a focus on preventing the more overt and criminal side of the sexual violence continuum. Many programs focus on improving students’ knowledge of and attitudes about rape. For example, Morrison, Hardison, Mathew, and O’Neil (2004) conducted a systematic review of 67 articles on rape prevention programs and found that the most common curriculum topics to be rape myths, acquaintance rape

information, statistics on rape, and information about risk reduction (such as self-defense). Oftentimes, these programs neglect the less overt side of the continuum, such as the role of sexist language and its connection to creating a community that tolerates sexual violence. However, engaging bystanders as a primary prevention approach rests on the assumption that bystanders can intervene with the various behaviors that exist on the *entire* continuum. Additionally, this perspective supports the notion that there is a link among these various behaviors and therefore intervention at one end of the continuum can have an impact on other behaviors. Recently, there has been a call for rape prevention efforts to expand and broaden their focus to educate individuals on the ways they can participate in bystander education along the continuum, including issues such as sexist language (i.e., Banyard et al., 2004).

Although the continuum of violence is essential to facilitating the primary prevention of all forms of sexual violence, an understanding of what this actually means in the context of a college campus remains hazy. The EBA offers a means for translating the continuum of violence into prevention efforts, but further work is needed to clarify what behaviors actually occur on a college campus that can serve as points where students can intervene as engaged, active bystanders. It also remains unclear whether students are likely to act as engaged bystanders on those behaviors that are less overtly connected to sexual violence, such as using sexist language. This is important to discern, as it may illuminate areas that prevention programs should emphasize.

As such, the purpose of this study was to further our conceptualization of the EBA as a potential tool to measure sexual violence prevention efforts on college campuses. Building upon the foundation provided by Banyard’s research, two scales were refined and modified to reflect the experiences of

college students in this sample and to measure primary prevention and the less overt end of the continuum of sexual violence. Second, these behaviors were presented to incoming college students to determine their willingness to engage in various bystander behaviors across the continuum and to help illuminate areas needing further development for prevention programs using the EBA.

METHOD

Sample

This exploratory study was part of a larger study that was conducted with a convenience sample of approximately 1,000 undergraduate students attending new student orientation at a large, northeastern public university. A total of 951 students returned surveys.

All students who participated in the survey were first-year students residing on campus. A total of 55% of the sample were males, and 58% were White, 20% Asian, 4% Latino, and 4% Black. Thirty-seven percent of the sample received previous rape education, and 25% reported knowing someone who had been raped. Of the sample, 47% reported playing a varsity sport in high school, and 16% indicated the intention to pledge a fraternity or sorority (Table 1).

Data Collection

At the chosen university, all incoming students are required to attend a rape prevention program at orientation. Before the program began, the researchers explained the purpose of the study, any risks involved, the opportunity to be entered into a raffle for a gift certificate to the university bookstore, and an invitation to participate. The voluntary nature of the study was explained, and informed consent obtained. Paper surveys and pencils were then distributed and collected after completion, which lasted approximately 15 minutes.

TABLE 1.
Demographic Information for Sample
(N = 951)

Variable	n	%
Gender		
Male	525	55
Female	412	43
Missing	14	1
Ethnicity		
White	556	58
Asian	189	20
Latina/o	39	4
Black/African American	34	4
Multi-Ethnic	22	2
Middle Eastern	18	2
Other	22	2
Missing	71	7
Fraternity/Sorority		
Yes	153	16
No	768	81
Missing	30	3
Varsity HS Athlete		
Yes	452	47
No	464	49
Missing	35	4
College Athlete		
Yes	228	24
No	677	71
Missing	46	5
Previous Rape Education		
Yes	349	37
No	600	63
Missing	2	< 1
Know Someone Sexually Assaulted		
Yes	237	25
No	711	75
Missing	3	< 1

Instruments

Bystander Scales. This study used the Bystander Attitude Scale, Revised (BAS-R) and the Bystander Behavior Scale, Revised (BBS-R), which are modified versions of Banyard's scales (Banyard et al., 2005). To establish reliability and content validity of our instruments, we based all modifications on a review of the literature, anecdotal information gathered from our own interaction with students, consultation with experts in the field, and through a series of three focus groups with undergraduate students and professionals who work with rape survivors on campus. Focus group participants were asked about what behaviors students could realistically engage in to take a stand against sexual violence before an assault occurred and what language and settings were relevant and realistic for students. For example, students suggested that the use of sexist language is a common issue, so we added the item "Use the word 'ho,' 'bitch,' or 'slut' to describe girls." Based on the focus group responses, we amended and modified several of the items taken from Banyard's scales to more accurately tap into the current student culture on this campus and to include items on less overt sexually violent behaviors.

When discussing sexual violence, the language used by college students is ever changing, making it a challenge for insuring the reliability of measures. As noted by Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald (1999), rape measures "are necessarily time and culture bound. Several items use colloquial phrases that might be unclear to certain people or could quickly become outdated. This problem is not easily avoided, however, as sexual communication relies heavily on slang terminology" (Payne et al., p. 61). Additionally, sexual slang and colloquial phrases vary widely depending on variables such as geographic location and general student culture. Given

the sensitive nature of sexual violence and the subsequent high threat of social desirability when conducting evaluations, it is especially essential that measures are perceived as relevant to students.

For example, throughout the surveys, the word "women" or "woman" was replaced with "girls," as that is clearly the discourse used on this particular campus. Deciding to use this language was carefully weighed by the researchers, who believe that "women" is a more respectful term. However, the feedback from students strongly conveyed that the word "women" would immediately create a sense of disconnect for students as it is not relevant to their own language. Thus, the researchers concluded that using students' language was important for obtaining accurate and reliable data and that education about the impact of language would come at a later time. We also added contexts that were relevant to the student culture, such as "hooking up" at parties, which was identified by all focus group participants as the language used to talk about getting intimate with another person in social situations, including a range of physical activity but not necessarily sexual intercourse. Although these might seem like slight changes, they reflect the larger, critical issue of reliability by making items relevant to students.

The initial version of the BAS-R and BBS-R contained 51 items each and was continuously circulated for review and updates by over 100 undergraduate students from various courses, 40 graduate students, and a panel of experts, including professionals who work with students on campus. All were asked to take the survey and then discussed the process, including the relevancy of items, clarity of items, length, and format. The survey underwent several updates and modifications with careful attention to the wording. For example, students highlighted the limitations of only being able to respond "Yes" or "No" on

the BBS-R, as they raised the point that they might be willing to engage in the behavior but didn't have the opportunity. Therefore, the response "Wasn't in the situation" was added as a possible response in addition to "Yes" or "No" for the BBS-R. The consistent feedback was to shorten the survey due to students' lack of interest in participating in surveys, especially during New Student Orientation when they may be especially distracted. After 3 months of circulation and revisions, the final instruments each contained 16 items for a total of 32 items (see Appendix).

Demographic Items. Several demographic variables were collected to determine whether attitudes and behaviors about acting as an engaged bystander were consistent between groups. Gender was identified by Banyard (2008) as significant in determining bystander attitudes and behaviors and was included in this analysis. The literature has identified members of the Greek system and athletes as "high risk" groups (see O'Toole, 1994), so students were asked to identify whether they intended to pledge a fraternity or sorority, had been high school varsity athletes, and were college athletes. Additionally, the impact of knowing someone sexually assaulted has been found to have an impact on attitudes about rape (McMahon, 2005) and on bystander attitudes and behaviors (Banyard) so this was included as a variable. Lastly, participants were asked if they had received previous rape education to investigate whether this might impact their willingness to act as bystanders.

Data Analysis Strategies

We began data analysis by carefully reviewing and cleaning the data. Data were entered using SPSS 16.0 and were triple spot-checked for accuracy and consistency. To determine patterns of missing data, missing value analysis was conducted to determine if the missing data were random or associated with any particular

sensitive questions or demographics. The results of Little's MCAR test revealed no significant pattern to the missing data. A review of the frequencies of missing data revealed that with the progression of the survey the number of missing data increased; hence more missing data was apparent for the questions later in the survey. The number of missing cases for each item is reported in Table 2 and Table 4.

Two negatively stated items were reverse coded so that all the responses were in a consistent positive direction. For the BAS-R, a composite score was created by adding together all of the Likert-type scale items for a total score, with a higher score indicating a greater willingness to participate in positive bystander behaviors. For the BBS-R, a composite score was also created. The response "Yes" to engaging in the behavior was coded "1," the response "Wasn't in the situation" was coded "0," the response "No" was coded as "-1," and all the responses were added together for a total score. This coding scheme allowed for the distinction between those students who reported that they had not participated in bystander behaviors due to not being in the situation, versus those who simply said "No." The higher the score on the BBS-R scale, the more positive bystander behaviors the individual had engaged in. In order to further analyze the data, a variety of statistical tests were run including descriptive tests, *t* tests, and reliability analyses. The Cronbach's alpha was 0.86 for the BAS-R, and the reliability for the BBS-R was lower at 0.69.

RESULTS

Bystander Attitude Scale—Revised (BAS-R)

The mean of each BAS-R item is listed in Table 2. Please note that the Likert-type scale is 1 to 5 with one being less willing to intervene and 5 being most willing to intervene. Those

TABLE 2.
Bystander Attitude Scale–Revised Item, Means and Standard Deviations

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
1. Ask for verbal consent when I am intimate with my partner, even if we are in a long term relationship	3.65	1.31	897
2. Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused	4.05	1.21	894
3. Check in with my friend who looks drunk when s/he goes to a room with someone else at a party	3.86	1.19	897
4. Say something to my friend who is taking a drunk person back to his/her room at a party	3.72	1.19	886
5. Challenge a friend who made a sexist joke	2.99	1.30	899
6. Express my concern if a family member makes a sexist joke	2.99	1.34	886
7. Use the word “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” to describe girls when I was with my friends ^a	2.95	1.41	901
8. Challenge a friend who uses “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” to describe girls	2.71	1.24	904
9. Confront a friend who plans to give someone alcohol to get sex	3.63	1.29	854
10. Refuse to participate in activities where girls’ appearances are ranked/rated	2.99	1.30	836
11. Listen to music that includes “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” ^a	2.40	1.35	881
12. Confront a friend who is hooking up with someone who was passed out	3.80	1.28	850
13. Confront a friend if I hear rumors that s/he forced sex on someone	3.63	1.22	851
14. Report a friend that committed a rape	3.46	1.24	838
15. Stop having sex with a partner if s/he says to stop, even if it started consensually	4.05	1.25	854
16. Decide not to have sex with a partner if s/he is drunk	3.76	1.24	855

^a Reverse coded item.

items with the highest means, indicating a greater number of students willing to intervene, include “Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused” (4.05), “Stop having sex with a partner if s/he says to stop, even if it started consensually” (4.05), and “Check in with my friend who looks drunk when s/he goes to a room with someone else at a party” (3.86). Those items that received the lowest average means included “[Not] Listen to music that includes ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’

“(reverse coded, 2.40); “Challenge a friend who uses ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’ to describe girls” (2.71), and “[Not] Use the word ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’ to describe girls when I was with my friends” (reverse-coded, 2.95).

The theoretical range of summed scores for the BAS-R is 16 to 80, with higher scores indicating more likelihood to stop their own or someone else’s sexually violent behavior. Due to missing data, composite scores were compiled for 749 participants. The overall

average score on the BAS-R for this sample is 54.58. Those students who reported statistically significant higher scores in the *t*-test analysis, indicating a greater willingness to intervene, included females, those not intending to pledge a fraternity/sorority, and those who were not varsity high school athletes. Former rape education and knowing someone sexually assaulted were not significant according to *t*-test results (Table 3).

Bystander Behavior Scale–Revised (BBS-R)

Shifting from attitudes to behaviors, the BBS-R measured whether respondents actually engaged in the behaviors listed in the previous two months. The mean of each BBS-R item is

listed in Table 4. Please note that the choices for responding included “Yes” = 1, “Wasn’t in the situation” = 0, and “No” = -1. Hence, the closer the mean is to “1”, the more students participated in positive bystander behaviors, and the closer the mean is to “-1”, the more students indicated that they did not participate in the positive bystander behaviors, even with the opportunity to do so. The positive bystander behaviors that were most frequently reported, with the highest means, included “Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused” (0.24); “Check in with my friend who looks drunk when s/he goes to a room with someone else at a party” (0.19); and “Ask for verbal consent when I am intimate with my partner, even if we are

TABLE 3.

Bystander Attitude Scale–Revised Means, Standard Deviation, and *t*-Test Results

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Gender				-6.52*	737
Male	52.39	417	11.07		
Female	57.83	322	11.45		
Fraternity/Sorority				-3.01*	725
Yes	51.67	118	11.17		
No	55.19	609	11.69		
Varsity HS Athlete				-3.30*	719
Yes	53.04	349	11.59		
No	55.88	372	11.55		
College Athlete				-1.75	712
Yes	53.46	179	12.35		
No	55.19	535	11.18		
Previous Rape Education				1.13	746
Yes	55.17	277	11.57		
No	54.18	471	11.70		
Know Someone Who was Assaulted				1.10	745
Yes	55.35	190	11.91		
No	54.28	557	11.59		

* *p* < .01.

TABLE 4.
Bystander Behavior Scale–Revised, Item Means and Standard Deviations

Item	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
1. Ask for verbal consent when I am intimate with my partner, even if we are in a long term relationship	0.16	0.68	921
2. Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused	0.24	0.58	922
3. Check in with my friend who looks drunk when s/he goes to a room with someone else at a party	0.19	0.63	926
4. Say something to my friend who is taking a drunk person back to his/her room at a party	0.07	0.59	918
5. Challenge a friend who made a sexist joke	-0.05	0.82	923
6. Express my concern if a family member makes a sexist joke	-0.09	0.73	917
7. Use the word “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” to describe girls when I was with my friends ^a	-0.27	0.88	918
8. Challenge a friend who uses “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” to describe girls	-0.25	0.84	918
9. Confront a friend who plans to give someone alcohol to get sex	-0.05	0.50	911
10. Refuse to participate in activities where girls’ appearances are ranked/rated	-0.11	0.60	906
11. Listen to music that includes “ho,” “bitch,” or “slut” ^a	-0.57	0.77	908
12. Confront a friend who is hooking up with someone who was passed out	-0.04	0.45	902
13. Confront a friend if I hear rumors that s/he forced sex on someone	-0.03	0.43	902
14. Report a friend that committed a rape	-0.07	0.34	898
15. Stop having sex with a partner if s/he says to stop, even if it started consensually	0.05	0.44	902
16. Decide not to have sex with a partner if s/he is drunk	0.02	0.51	897

^a Reverse coded item.

in a long term relationship” (0.16). Those positive bystander behaviors that students did not choose to participate in when presented with the opportunity included: “[Not] Listen to music that includes ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’” (reverse coded, -0.57); “[Not] Use the word ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’ to describe girls when I was with my friends” (reverse coded, -0.27); and “Challenge a friend who uses ‘ho,’ ‘bitch,’ or ‘slut’ to describe girls” (-0.25).

The composite scores for the BBS-R theoretically range from -16 to +16, with

the higher numbers indicating more positive bystander behaviors in which participants engaged. Due to missing data, the number of composite scores analyzed was 843. The overall average for the BBS-R is -0.76. Table 5 displays the average scores based on demographic variables; *t*-test results reveal that those groups that engaged in significantly more positive bystander behaviors in the previous two months included females and those who knew someone who was sexually assaulted. Athlete status, intention to pledge a fraternity

and sorority, and previous rape education were not significant variables in the *t* tests.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to better conceptualize and measure the EBA as a method for primary sexual violence prevention on college campuses. This study provided an initial attempt at expanding the work of Banyard to include a greater focus on primary prevention and the less overt behaviors on the continuum of sexual violence. Through the process of revising Banyard et al.'s (2005) Bystander Attitude and Bystander Behavior scales, we were able to tap into current student culture and better define primary prevention behaviors in the context

of college campuses by capturing the language and settings that were relevant and plausible for students. The list of potential bystander behaviors derived in this study can be utilized in prevention programs as concrete examples of ways that students can be involved as engaged bystanders and demonstrate their social disapproval of all forms of sexual violence before an assault occurs. Banyard et al. (2004) found that a willingness to intervene is a foundation upon which concrete bystander skills and techniques must be offered. College administrators who want to implement the EBA will likely need to provide training for individuals to develop skills. Sexual violence prevention programs need to include a definition of what it means to be a bystander, what behaviors are relevant on that particular campus,

TABLE 5.
Bystander Behavior Scale—Revised Means, Standard Deviations,
and *t*-Test Results

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>
Gender				3.56*	831
Male	-1.22	466	4.40		
Female	-0.18	367	3.89		
Fraternity				-1.19	813
Yes	-1.16	134	4.59		
No	-0.69	681	4.09		
Varsity HS Athlete				-0.78	809
Yes	-0.88	394	4.42		
No	-0.65	417	4.02		
College Athlete				-1.38	799
Yes	-1.07	199	4.54		
No	-0.60	602	4.07		
Previous Rape Education				1.43	839
Yes	-0.49	321	4.28		
No	-0.92	520	4.18		
Know Someone Who was Assaulted				2.69*	837
Yes	-0.08	212	4.69		
No	-0.99	627	4.03		

* *p* < .01.

and how students can intervene in realistic, safe, and effective ways, including specific language and resources to use.

As the trend continues toward incorporating content on primary prevention into college sexual violence prevention programs, student affairs professionals will need methods of assessment. The tools we developed hold promise for those college prevention programs that want to assess their effectiveness in addressing the primary prevention of sexual violence. The BAS-R demonstrates adequate validity and reliability, although further research is needed to replicate our efforts. The short length makes it feasible to implement and leaves room for administering additional instruments if desired. Additionally, review of the missing value analysis suggests that students did not respond as consistently as the survey progressed. The order of questions and the length of the survey must receive careful attention. The lower reliability of the BBS-R indicates that more development is needed to capture students' actual behaviors and especially to be able to distinguish what bystander behaviors students deliberately decide not to engage in with those behaviors that they did not engage in merely because they did not have the opportunity. We believe that our instrument provides a starting point to further answer these questions.

Our study also has implications for developing the content of sexual violence prevention programs. The results of the study suggest that incoming college students are better able to conceptualize the EBA as related to the more overt forms of sexual violence. For example, students reported attitudes and behaviors that indicated that they were more likely to stop engaging in sexual activity if asked to stop than they were to refuse to participate in activities where women's appearances were ranked. Respondents indicated a greater willingness to confront a friend who was taking

a drunk person back to his/her room at a party then to confront a friend or family member who uses sexist language.

The results of the survey indicate students' unwillingness to engage in bystander behaviors on the opposite end of the continuum. The findings indicate that a high number of students admit to using sexist language, listening to sexist lyrics, and neglecting to challenge friends and family who use sexist language. The continuum of violence that underlies the premise of EBA may not be a concept that is understood by students by the time they arrive on college campuses. These findings suggest that prevention programs should include a clear discussion of the continuum of violence to explain the way that these behaviors are linked and contribute to a culture that supports sexual violence. Additionally, the results indicate that more education is needed on primary prevention and what actions students can take to help prevent sexual violence from occurring in the first place.

The results suggest that gender (namely being female) is a salient factor for both increased positive bystander attitudes and behaviors. This is consistent with previous findings (i.e., Banyard, 2008). With the growing evidence that gender is a significant factor in bystander attitudes and behaviors, this is certainly an area needing further investigation. We concur with Banyard's call for more research in this area to determine whether the contexts for bystander intervention may be different for men than for women and whether subsequent education and skill development may also be different. This is especially important given that most rape survivors are female and most perpetrators are male. The findings from the latest National Violence Against Women Survey indicated that 85.8% of survivors were women and that almost all of the female victims (99.6%) and most of the male victims (85.2%) were raped by a male

(Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). This suggests that the way in which women and men perceive the relevance and implications of bystander intervention may also be quite different.

Knowing someone who was sexually assaulted was another factor related to engaging in more positive bystander behaviors, which is also consistent with Banyard's (2008) findings. It was not related to more positive bystander attitudes, however, which was surprising. This warrants further exploration and minimally suggests that building empathy for victims may be an important piece for prevention programs to include.

Also surprising was the finding that previous rape education did not produce significant differences in bystander attitudes or behaviors. This may be because the concept of "rape education" is broad and may include a variety of approaches, depending on how the participant defines rape education. For example, someone taking a self-defense class may view it as a form of rape education, but would not necessarily connect it with the need to participate in positive bystander behaviors. This is an area worth further investigation, as certain types of education may encourage more positive bystander behaviors. Those programs that present sexual violence as a community issue, for example, may be more related to positive bystander attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, our results indicate that 63% of all participants did not receive any previous rape education before entering college. Given that agencies such as the CDC (2004) are currently recommending that rape prevention efforts should be continuous and occur across the lifespan, the number of students who have not received previous education is alarming. This underscores the importance of providing education about rape as students enter college, as well as working with high schools to encourage the implementation and

coordination of rape prevention efforts.

The findings from the study indicate that members of certain groups identified as "at risk" groups, namely fraternities and athletic teams, have less positive bystander attitudes than do their counterparts. This is an important finding that needs replication and further exploration to better understand why these differences exist. These groups are often characterized as having tight-knit communities that value loyalty and even secrecy, and further investigation can determine whether these values may serve as barriers to engaging as a bystander. Although preliminary, this finding suggests that separate prevention efforts may be needed for subgroups on campus, which has already been argued as beneficial for addressing rape myths (McMahon, 2007) and may also be beneficial for engaging bystanders. The EBA holds particular promise for working with groups traditionally deemed "at-risk," such as fraternities and athletes, because it can be used to approach these groups as potential leaders who can take a stand against sexual violence, rather than approaching them as potential perpetrators, which automatically positions them on the defensive. The EBA offers student affairs professionals a new way of working with these groups by challenging members of communities to take responsibility for the issue of sexual violence and to recognize their ability to intervene and create community standards where sexual violence is not tolerated. The EBA also offers promise for fraternities and athletic teams because it can be tailored to build upon the strengths and resources that are unique to the community. For example, those administrators working with student-athletes can capitalize on the close team bonds by encouraging student-athletes to regard sexual violence as a team issue and to adopt an active bystander approach as a way to look out for one another.

LIMITATIONS

Several limitations exist with this study. Measurement related to sexual violence may be influenced by social desirability bias due to its sensitive nature. Future studies may wish to include measures to counteract social desirability bias. Additionally, although this study attempted to update the language for this particular campus, it may not reflect the specific discourse that is used by all subcultures on campus nor by students on other campuses. Certain terms used, such as “hooking up,” encompass a range of behaviors and these may be defined differently on various campuses. This suggests that other groups looking to use and measure the EBA must carefully review the language to make sure it reflects the dominant culture and discourse of the population under study. The issue of balancing context-specific language with terms that can be used more universally on instruments measuring sexual violence should be addressed in further research, as this represents an ongoing and important dilemma. Additionally, the representation of ethnicity was not diverse enough in this sample to conduct meaningful analysis, but it is an area that needs further exploration.

CONCLUSION

The EBA applied to sexual violence is a concept that is still relatively unexplored. Further research is needed to understand the mechanisms by which students transform their intentions to intervene to actual action. Further studies should examine the connection between bystander attitudes and behaviors. The factors that facilitate or prohibit students’ likelihood to intervene are unclear and need further investigation, and Banyard (2008) has begun this exploration. Other researchers (i.e., Banyard et al., 2004) suggest that sexual violence prevention programs must not only address bystander intervention, but must also provide concrete skill development. This area needs further exploration to determine how these skills should be taught and, on a basic level, what skills actually constitute effective bystander intervention. Future research exploring the EBA can test the effectiveness of sexual violence prevention programs in actually implementing the EBA to determine which methods of programming are most effective. Specifically, further research can investigate how to successfully educate students about the continuum of violence and primary prevention.

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APPENDIX.

Items on the BAS-R and BBS-R

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1. Ask for verbal consent when I am intimate with my partner, even if we are in a long-term relationship*
 2. Stop sexual activity when asked to, even if I am already sexually aroused*
 3. Check in with my friend who looks drunk when s/he goes to a room with someone else at a party*
 4. Say something to my friend who is taking a drunk person back to his/her room at a party*
 5. Challenge a friend who made a sexist joke*
 6. Express my concern if a family member makes a sexist joke*
 7. Use the word "ho," "bitch," or "slut" to describe girls when I was with my friends
 8. Challenge a friend who uses "ho," "bitch," or "slut" to describe girls
 9. Confront a friend who plans to give someone alcohol to get sex
 10. Refuse to participate in activities where girls' appearances are ranked/rated
 11. Listen to music that includes "ho," "bitch," or "slut"
 12. Confront a friend who is hooking up with someone who was passed out
 13. Confront a friend if I hear rumors that s/he forced sex on someone
 14. Report a friend that committed a rape
 15. Stop having sex with a partner if s/he says to stop, even if it started consensually
 16. Decide not to have sex with a partner if s/he is drunk.
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* Items modified from Bystander Attitude Scale (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2005).