

Contesting Sexual Assault on Marquette's Campus: A Look Into Student Misconceptions, Its Implications, and Possible Solutions

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Living on Marquette University's campus for two years now, I have learned that education is not strictly academic. In fact, it is outside of the classroom that students typically form relationships and spend the majority of their time. Whether students enjoy being involved in extracurricular activities or just hanging out with friends, it is their social life which contributes to a large part of their "college experience." For many students, the college party is an iconic part of their college experience. It often absorbs students' weekends and gives them a common connection. Although partying is often viewed as normal behavior, it is questionable whether or not these behaviors positively influence the relationships and interactions students have with each other. Many students refer to Marquette's campus as the "Marquette bubble", making it seem as if our campus is close-knit, shut off, and rather safe. However, there are violent crimes being committed by students on our own campus, specifically sexual assault. As reported by the Department of Public Safety, the number of reported sexual assaults on campus doubled from five to ten between 2007 and 2011 (Morrissey 8). This statistic, however, only accounts for the sexual assaults actually reported. In fact, less than five percent of completed and attempted rapes of college students are brought to the attention of campus authorities and/or law enforcement (Karjane, Fisher, and Cullen 3).

Sexual assault is not only a problem, which is ever increasing, on Marquette's campus alone. The National Institute of Justice reported that in a now-typical five-year college career one in five young women will be sexually assaulted (Karjane, Fisher, and Cullen 2). My own experience, as a victim of a date rape drug, has led me to pursue further research regarding the

topic of sexual assault. As a victim, I was left asking myself many questions. Why me? Where were my friends when I needed them? Who would do such a thing? Unfortunately, I am unable to answer these questions, but it is this unknown which has inspired me to take a closer look at my own behavior and the behavior of my peers. In moving forward, I have made it my own personal mission to raise awareness of the prevalence and seriousness of sexual assault on college campuses. Such awareness, I hope, will make students reevaluate their own behaviors as well as take a stand in the fight against sexual assault.

Formulating a Research Question and Sub-Questions

Over the past few months, I have explored the way Marquette University and its students—myself included—view sexual assault. First, by reflecting on my own experiences as a student, I recognized specific attitudes and behaviors among students that I found either interesting or troubling. It is these behaviors and attitudes I paid close attention to when taking observation field notes at a house party. Along with this, I addressed these issues within the two student interviews and the one faculty interview I conducted. Finding commonalities between my field notes and interviews, I targeted four specific areas which I found to be most troubling to a student's perception of sexual assault. These problems are addressed as follows: the party scene, hooking up, gender roles, and the role of bystanders. It was the following sub-questions which led me to further understand the general student perception of sexual assault on Marquette's campus. What settings or behaviors prevalent on college campuses contribute to the likelihood of sexual assault? How does alcohol play a role in such behaviors? How does the common behavior of hooking up play a role in students' perceptions of sexual assault? What role do friends and bystanders play in discouraging and preventing such behaviors? Realizing

that many students have skewed perceptions of sexual assault, I formulated my primary research question:

How can we make students more aware of the prevalence and seriousness of sexual assault on college campuses? Looking to propose an answer to this question, I turned to scholarly articles and Marquette publications to gain more information about sexual assault in general, what programs and policies Marquette currently offers, and various programs used to increase sexual assault awareness. From there, I created my three-step proposal which focuses on education, resources, and communication.

Methods

In conducting this project, I went through a variety of research methods to gather data. Using a qualitative mixed method, I was able to collect a wide variety of information which I found helpful in my overall project. Given that this was my first time doing a project of this nature, I gave myself ample amounts of time to complete the various steps necessary in order to prepare my final presentation. In this section I discuss the six methods of data collection and three methods of analysis I used to arrive at my findings and proposal.

Data Collection

Personal Reflection. A large amount of my research was guided by my own experiences as both a student and a victim of the date rape drug. In search of a research topic, I initially wrote a short narrative reflecting on my own experience with a date rape drug. Looking back at this experience, I was finally made fully aware of the various questions I had, which were still unanswered. Through this reflection and an evaluation of my own behavior, I was able to recognize specific issues and behaviors on campus that concerned me. It was these concerns which guided my further research. Overall, reflecting on my own experiences became a valuable

tool when completing this research. I often found myself observing my own behavior and the behavior of my peers while attending parties and other social gatherings. It was my own experiences as a student and a partygoer which aided my research as I was able to further understand many students' behaviors and perceptions of sexual assault.

Formal Observation. I formally began collecting data by taking observation field notes on the behaviors, actions, and conversations of students at a house party on February 4, 2012. As an active participant, I noticed a repetition of certain behaviors. It was these behaviors that I ultimately address throughout the rest of my research. Topics such as hooking up, the effects of alcohol on students' behavior, the party scene, male and female interaction, and the role of friends all soon emerged as recurring themes. These topics, I believe, are important in assessing the behaviors and settings on college campuses which are conducive to sexual assault.

Student Interviews. I conducted my first interview on February 15, 2012 with a nineteen year old male student, who I will refer to as John. John is a sophomore at Marquette University. Within this interview, I asked John various questions which addressed his own views, behaviors, and experiences as a male partygoer. It was through his responses that I gained further understanding of a college student's perception of certain topics such as gender relations, hooking up, partying, and rape. These responses became useful in assessing the behaviors and thoughts of students which may contribute to situations or manners which facilitate sexual assault. Some of the answers I received from John struck me as important as they became vital in my ultimate proposal. Through this interview, I realized that it is not just university policies or offerings that need to change. Instead, it is the students' perceptions and understandings of sexual assault which need to be addressed.

The second student interview I conducted was far different from my interview with John. On March 22, 2012 I spoke with Mary, a female student at Marquette University. Mary was raped by a student on Marquette's campus. This interview proved to be extremely helpful in understanding a student's perception of sexual assault and possible solutions to gain awareness. Discussing her experience in relation to the topics I have previously established, I gained further insight of what must be done by the university and by students in order to increase the awareness of sexual assault.

Faculty Interview. I conducted a third interview on February 29, 2012 with Heather Hvlaka, an Assistant Professor within the Criminology and Law Studies Department at Marquette. This interview became an extremely important tool as I was able to build connections with other people who also have the same goal as I do, to increase awareness about sexual assault on college campuses. She provided me with an extensive amount of information, a list of people to contact, and possible solutions for my project. The topics discussed in this interview were very similar to the subjects I address in my first two interviews, the analysis of these interviews, and my personal observations. Through this interview, I learned that both students and professionals have similar insights with regard to this topic. Overall, it was the information gained in this interview which truly shaped my proposal as I gained ideas on how to increase the awareness of sexual assault on campus.

Scholarly Articles. Looking to gain further insight on this topic, I used various scholarly articles in which I was able to access through the university's research database. The majority of these articles were part of the curricula for a Sexual Offenders and Offenses course I took last semester. Through these articles, I was able to support many of my own findings as many professionals had completed similar research and had obtained similar outcomes. Along with

this, these articles were helpful in drafting my ultimate proposal as I was provided with background information about various programs which have been used to increase awareness of sexual assault.

Marquette University Publications. Other sources I used in completing this research were The Marquette Tribune and the Department of Public Safety's Safety Resource Guide. An article featured in the March 6, 2012 edition of The Marquette Tribune addressed the school's policy on sexual assault and the programs offered to build awareness on campus. The Department of Public Safety's Resource Guide provides the university's policies on sexual misconduct and the various services they offer for victims. Both of these sources provided me with information on what Marquette is currently doing to address the issue. I used this information as a basis for my proposal. It is within my proposal that I suggest changes to the current policies and programs in order to increase awareness and reduce sexual assaults of students on campus.

Data Analysis

As I used various research methods, I also used various forms of data analysis, ultimately arriving at an understanding of the student perception of sexual assault. Looking closely at my various resources, I was able to use three analysis techniques to deduce these findings.

Interview Coding. After completing three interviews, two with students and one with a faculty member, I noticed recurring themes. Reading the annotated interview transcripts, I coded each transcript using different colors for different topics. It was these eight themes that encapsulated the topics discussed in all three interviews: masculinity and femininity, hooking up, understanding of sexual assault on college campuses, building awareness, the party scene, consent, alcohol consumption, and the role of friends and bystanders.

Observation Coding. Reflecting on my own experiences and the observation field notes I collected, I also noticed recurring themes, many of which were similar to those found within the interviews. These themes are listed as followed: masculinity and femininity, male and female interaction, level of intoxication, hooking up, the party scene, students' understanding of sexual assault, and the role of friends and bystanders. Analyzing these themes in conjunction with the common themes found in the interviews, I created an in depth account of prevalent behaviors seen in social settings, such as parties, on Marquette's campus. It was these prevalent behaviors which I noticed contributed to the student's overall understanding of sexual assault.

Context Analysis. After analyzing the behaviors of Marquette students in order to understand the students' general understanding of sexual assault, I looked to outside sources for contextual information regarding sexual assault and various programs used to build awareness. I used scholarly articles as a means of providing background information for myself as well as for supporting information for my findings. I analyzed these articles carefully, looking for various statistics and studies which reflected the research I had done on my own. Through scholarly articles, I also researched the various awareness programs available and their critiques. After reading about a multitude of programs, I chose what I thought to be the most effective aspects of these programs and used them as a foundation for my proposal. Along with this, I looked closely at various Marquette publications as a means of understanding the university's current stance on sexual assault. I reflected on this information and thought immensely about what aspects of Marquette's policies and programs were effective and what areas could use change. It is these areas of change which I address in my proposal.

Defining Victim-Offender Relationships

A key in understanding the prevalence and seriousness of sexual assault is understanding the type of relationships many victims have with their perpetrator. Often, students, and people in general, do not view many unwanted sexual encounters as sexual assaults as they know their offender. Instead, they often excuse this behavior or underplay its seriousness. In reality, it is not the “stranger hiding in the darkness” that most people need to worry about. As reported by the National Institute of Justice, between 80 and 90 percent of victims and assailants know each other (Karjane, Fisher, and Cullen 2). Figure 1 below illustrates a number of victim-offender relationships and the various percentages associated with these relationships as taken from a sample of women on an urban college campus.

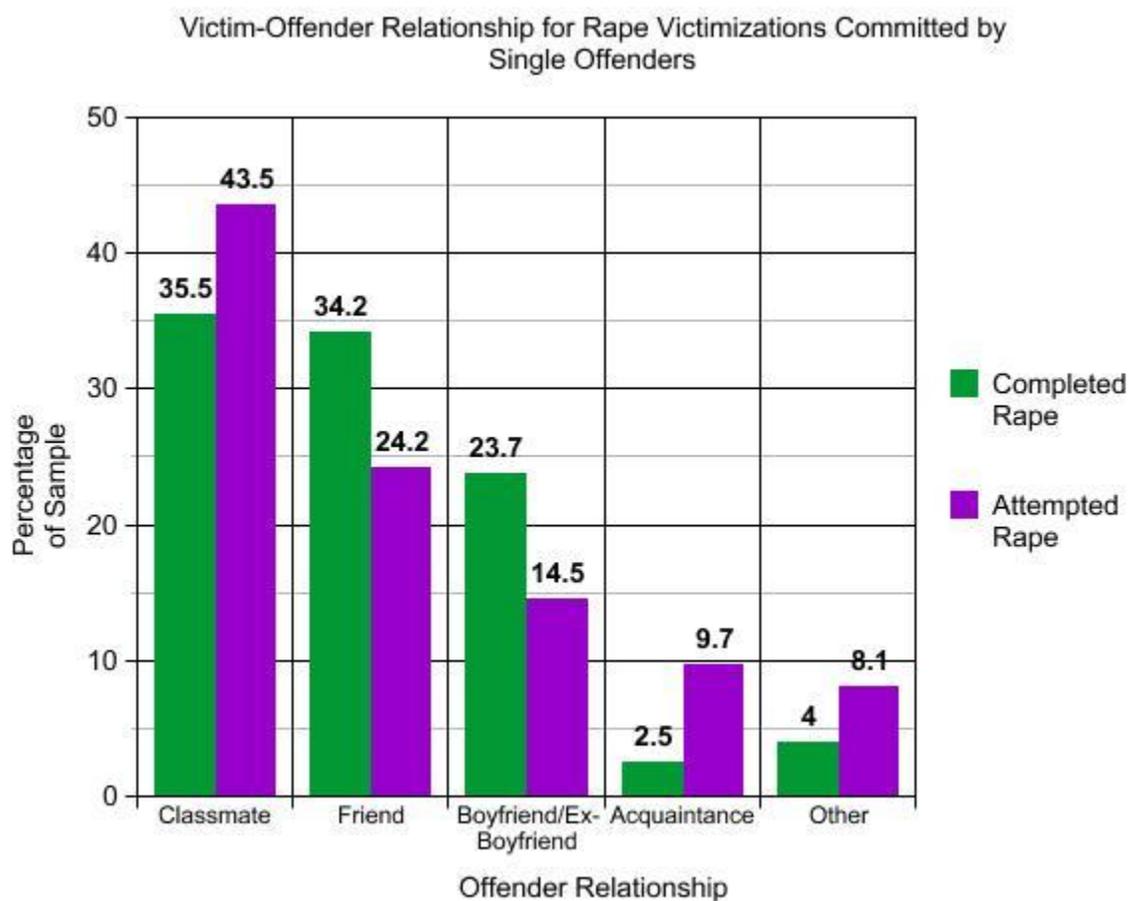


Figure 1: Taken from a study of women on an urban college campus.

Source: Anastasia, Desiré J.M. and Leighton, Paul: “Understanding Rape & The Threat From

Friends' (It's Not Just About Dating)." 4 Jul. 2011. StopViolence.com. Web. 18 Apr. 2012.

Problem Areas: Student Perception and Behavior

For many students, the way in which they construct their perception of sexual assault is often influenced by their surroundings, own behaviors, and socially constructed ideas. On college campuses, these influences often result in a misconstrued perception of sexual assault. Through my own observation, I found this to be the case for many students on Marquette's campus. I found four specific recurring themes which seem to influence such perceptions. Below, I address these four themes: the party scene, hooking up, gender roles, and the role of bystanders. First, however, I must address the current perception most students hold in regard to sexual assault.

Student Perception of Sexual Assault

Based on my observations, own experiences, and interviews with John and Mary, I have found a means of understanding college students' perspectives on sexual assault. Hooking up and the party scene is undoubtedly a large part of the college social life. It is through my understanding of these behaviors that I was able to make larger connections to the topic of sexual assault. I specifically asked John and Mary to define rape and acquaintance rape. When defining rape, they referred to the use of force, the lack of consent, and penetration. When defining acquaintance rape they gave the same definition of rape, but included that the rapist knows their victim, whether it is a friend or even an acquaintance. John stated, "I really don't understand why they categorize all of them. It's still rape. It's not like it gets better just because

you know your rapist.” While John, Mary, and many other college students may technically have correct perceptions of rape and acquaintance rape, there must be a larger understanding of the topic, explicitly in connection to drunken hook ups. I was not surprised as it was seen that students did not view drunken hook ups as a form of sexual assault. Instead, they looked at it as acceptable behavior as long as both parties consented. It only became an issue if the person was too intoxicated to be conscious of what was going on. It was at this point that students viewed this as a form of sexual violence. With this information, it is seen that many college aged students have skewed perceptions of sexual assault. It is because the culture almost encourages hooking up that they do not fully understand the concept of sexual assault, specifically the idea that alcohol could not allow for someone to give consent. This becomes extremely important on college campuses as parties are often environments conducive to sexual assault.

The Party Scene

The college party setting seems to be an environment which negatively influences students’ perceptions as it often promotes behaviors which are conducive to sexual assault. Because partying is a behavior which is widely accepted on college campuses, many students do not recognize various warning signs or problems which may result in dangerous actions. The setting, in general, is dangerous as it allows for a large number of people to congregate in one place where people participate in high-risk behaviors, such as binge drinking. High-risk drinking is a common occurrence at most college parties. Alcohol can majorly affect one’s decision making skills. As it is known, alcohol inhibits the function of the frontal lobe of the cerebral cortex. This area of the brain is used in decision making. Often when intoxicated, people’s inhibitions are lowered and they are thus more comfortable with behaviors that they may dislike when sober. Along with this, excessive alcohol consumption may cause one to lose

consciousness or awareness of their surroundings. It is because of these reasons that intoxicated individuals often fall victim to sexual assault as they are vulnerable and less aware of dangerous behaviors and settings. Not surprisingly, the highest sexual assault risk situation for college women is after they become voluntarily intoxicated (Kilpatrick et al. 59). The use of alcohol or other drugs is a precursor to 75%–80% of rape incidents involving college students (Lisak and Miller 74). Through my observation, I saw that party settings often promote intimate relations rather than genuine friendships. With loud music and many people it is typically difficult to hold a conversation. Most music facilitates dancing, specifically grinding, which is highly sexualized and intimate. Through my own experiences and observations, I learned that when put in a densely populated party setting students often converse with their own friends or people who they are physically attracted to. Such a mindset can be dangerous as some students have preconceived notions of what they want to happen that night, specifically hooking up. It is these notions which may lead to risky intimate behaviors and misinterpretation of other people's intentions, thus being conducive to sexual assault. Within his interview, John discusses the setting of large parties and how it encourages risky intimate interactions. He states, "There is a higher probability of finding someone you're attracted to or finding someone who wants to do stuff like that at a large party. There's also less of social stigma attached to you. If you get with a girl at a large party, less people care. Chances are no one is really going to notice." In general, the party scene is a dangerous environment. Binge drinking is a common behavior which reduces one's awareness of dangerous situations and their ability to reason. Along with this, it is such settings which promote casual intimate relations.

Hooking up

Hooking up itself is a phenomenon that is seen quite frequently in this day and age. However, there is no standard definition for hooking up. Hooking up is defined differently by different people. It usually refers to some sort of physical contact with someone who the person is not exclusively in a relationship with. It is in social settings such as bars and parties which hooking up is typically initiated and a common behavior. It is within party settings that the actions which precede hooking up often take place. Through observation and my interview with John, I found that hooking up is a common occurrence among college students. Parties are where many hook ups are typically initiated, especially kissing and making out. Based on my research, I saw that college students often do not view hooking up as wrong. In fact, they often remove the social stigma from such behavior as it is something that happens so often. It is most often in social settings that students initiate and engage in hooking up behaviors. Typically, people blame alcohol for their actions. So, it can be believed that students look to alcohol as a means of justifying this behavior. In relation to sexual assault, student's perceptions of hooking up can negatively impact their understanding of sexual assault as they view casual sex as a normal behavior. As Mary stated in her interview, "I think there is a certain mentality of college students that everyone is out there for casual sex, and sometimes casual is taken to mean that it's okay even without consent. Many college guys think sex is a game, and there seems to be this feeling that there is no such thing as sexual assault." All in all, the students' understanding of hooking up is dangerous to their overall understanding of sexual assault as many look at sex nonchalantly and fail to realize that alcohol consumption could prevent one from consenting.

Gender Roles

The portrayal of masculinity and femininity becomes an important aspect when discussing the behavior of students in social settings. Influenced by gender role stereotypes, I

found that students act in accordance with what they believe is expected of them as either a male or female. Stereotypically, masculinity is seen as a somewhat power-bearing character in which males assert control over females. Femininity, on the other hand, typically focuses on a woman's appearance and willingness to objectify herself in a male's world. Often, these gender stereotypes are reinforced through social pressures. Society often pressures females to present themselves as objects of male sexual desire. It is through social media, as well as day-to-day behavior, that both males and females are pressured to act in a specific way. Studying the college party setting and the behaviors exerted within this setting, there is a clear representation of masculinity and femininity. This is most often exerted in the appearance of females at parties and the roles males play as a means of controlling certain situations. The college party culture shows that it is normative for women to look at male interest as a source of self-esteem. Along with this, men look to achieve a higher standing among their peers by engaging in intimate relations with highly attractive and desired women. Research shows that women are expected to be appreciative of men's hospitality as they often provide places to party and the alcohol consumed at these parties (Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney 492). These socially constructed gender roles often coincide with rape myths. As discussed in my interview with Professor Heather Hvlaka, it is typically believed that men want sex and are having sex at a high rate. According to socially constructed gendered roles, women, on the other hand, are expected to suppress their sexual desire. This plays into the idea of double standards. Meaning, men who have a lot of sex are glorified, while women who do the same are often viewed negatively. Because of this, it is often thought that although a woman says no, she actually means yes. If this is believed, then males should be coercive and try harder in order to have sex. This is just one of many rape myths which are reinforced by gender role stereotypes. Overall, these

gendered roles can place women in vulnerable positions, making sexual assault a possibility, should men choose to exploit their power.

Role of Bystanders

As the preceding behaviors leading to sexual assault are often exerted in social settings, there are obviously other people around who may have the opportunity to step in and stop a dangerous situation before anything takes place. Based on the Latane and Darley's situational model, there are five steps for bystander intervention:

1. Notice the event
2. Identify it as one where intervention is needed
3. Take responsibility for intervention
4. Decide how to help
5. Act/intervene (Burn 780)

Through my own observation and research, I found that often bystander intervention does not happen for a variety of reasons. Typically, students have trouble with steps one through three, and without completing these initial steps, nothing can be done. Most often, students either feel uncomfortable approaching people they do not know that well or do not want to be confrontational and get involved in something that may not be their business. Along with this, students may not recognize some behaviors as dangerous, such as excessive kissing or touching, as they are common behaviors within the party scene. Through my observation and interview with John, I learned that students typically do not step in to situations unless the individual is obviously very intoxicated or the bystander is exceedingly uncomfortable with something that is going on. Often, students believe they are responsible for themselves, and occasionally for their friends. As John stated, "Ultimately, we're all adults. We're over the age of 18. We can make

our own decisions. We are responsible for our own actions.” This view that students should ultimately be responsible for themselves alone is extremely detrimental to preventing sexual assault on college campuses as bystanders are often present during the proceeding behaviors of sexual assault.

Recent Changes in Marquette’s Policies and Programs

Within the 2011-2012 school years, Marquette University administrators made changes to their sexual assault programming in order to comply with the terms of the “Dear Colleague” letter, a letter which explains the requirements of Title IX, a U.S. law which regulates equal opportunity and education as they pertain to sexual violence on college and university campuses (Morrissey 8). The changes in Marquette’s policies included altering the overall title from the explicit “sexual assault policy” to the broader “sexual misconduct policy.” Along with this, the university refers to parties as “complainants” and “respondents” rather than “victims” and “charged students.” Doing so, the university no longer implies certain findings before the actual conduct hearing.

Other changes in regard to sexual assault focused on educational programs for students. In the fall, over 2,000 first-year students participated in a mandatory educational program which addressed issues such as the risk of sexual assault, what constitutes sexual assault, and the various terms of consent. This program was held in residence halls and led by trained staff members and administrators. A second change in programming targeted upperclassmen in leadership positions on campus. Members of various organizations such as Greek Life, Marquette University Student Government, Residence Life, and athletic teams were enrolled in a three-part training course. The first part of the educational course took place online and focused on consent. The online program used a combination of discussion and testing to help educate

students on issues of sexual assault on university campuses. The second part of this program involved the same staff members and administrators who worked with the freshmen educational program. These staff members facilitated group discussions which allowed for students to speak openly about sexual assault, different situations in which it occurs, the relationship between sexual violence and alcohol, and how to intervene as a bystander in such situations. The third part of this program continued bystander intervention training and gave students hands-on instruction on what to do in various situations. In regard to sexual assault awareness, these changes in policy and programs were positive, yet miniscule.

Proposal

Through my findings, it appears as if the college party scene and the behaviors associated with this setting are the cause for many students' misconstrued ideas of sexual assault. While it seems likely that banning such behaviors would be the most obvious way to solve such a problem, this is impossible as it is something which students will continue to do. Most importantly, banning parties or other social gatherings would not actually change students' behaviors or perceptions. The key to gaining sexual assault awareness on college campuses is education. As Lynn O'Brien, the Sexual Violence prevention coordinator at Marquette University's Counseling Center states, "Our number-one defense in preventing sexual assault is educating the community in what to do when it occurs" (Morrissey 8). Because of this, I propose a three part plan which focuses on education, resources, and communication. This plan will provide students with valuable information regarding sexual assault.

Education

While there have been various changes to Marquette University's policies and programs regarding sexual assault within the past year, these changes were minuscule and only affected a

small percentage of the student population. Because the current education programs target first-year students and students in leadership positions, I propose a program which addresses the student body as a whole. As Professor Hvlaka stated, “There is no reason to pinpoint a specific group to train. Anyone can sexually assault another person. Anyone can be a victim of sexual assault. Everyone should receive training. I think the biggest issue is when? When do you do this?” While I do not know if there is a specific timing which would be most effective to begin sexual assault educational programs, I believe the earlier someone is exposed to this information the more effective it will be. Because of this, my program proposes a mandatory class for all freshmen students. This program would have three main focuses: basic information regarding sexual assault, rape myth attitudes evaluation, and bystander intervention training.

1. Basic information regarding sexual assault- This area of the program will address various issues regarding sexual assault. Students will receive information about topics such as: the terms of consent, what constitutes sexual assault, the risk of sexual violence, how to protect themselves from sexual assault, and various behaviors and settings which are conducive to sexual assault. Along with this, specific gendered issues will be addressed. For example, both men and women will discuss issues females often face, such as the responsible use of alcohol and using friends as supports when at parties or social gatherings, and issues males often face, such as understanding when someone is too intoxicated to consent to sexual activity and the importance of asking one’s partner if she or he is comfortable with the level of sexual activity. Local examples and statistics will also be given as a means of stressing the prevalence and seriousness of sexual assault on campus. The university’s policy on sexual misconduct will be clearly communicated to students, as well as the procedure of what to do if someone has been sexually assaulted.

Lastly, students will create a personalized sexual assault prevention program for themselves, evaluating their own behaviors and devising a plan of what they would do in various situations.

2. Rape myth attitudes evaluation- Because rape myth acceptance attitudes are believed to be related to eventual completed rapes, a decrease in the acceptance of these attitudes is a desirable objective of a sexual assault awareness program (Kress et al. 150). Rape myth attitudes are defined as “attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women” (Kress et al. 150). Various rape myths will be presented to students. Students will discuss why these rape myths are false and the negative implications they have on society. Rape myths such as these may facilitate discussion within this section of the program: the victim instigated the assault, someone is asking for it if they act in a certain way or are dressed in a certain way, no means try harder, men cannot be sexually assaulted, people often make false reports about sexual assault, a man cannot rape his spouse or significant other, men are entitled to sex, good girls don’t get raped, sexual assault usually occurs between strangers, if both people are drunk it is not sexual assault, and if a person doesn't "fight back" she/he wasn't really assaulted. Making students aware that these are myths and by no means true will hopefully change many students’ beliefs about sexual assault. Dismissing these negative beliefs is extremely important as it could not only prevent the number of sexual assaults committed, but also the trauma victims experience after the assault has occurred. As Mary stated in her interview, “College educational programs need to emphasize the falsity of rape myths. Often, students have many false perceptions of sexual assault. Believing in these rape myths, in

a sense, justifies sexual assault. There especially needs to be an emphasis on the innocence of victims. One of the hardest things about rape is the re-victimization of the wounded that comes from the college community and peers after the actual rape is over. I think a lot of this victimization directly relates to students believing these rape myths.” Discrediting these rape myths through group discussion is vital as it will hopefully lead to a change in student’s understanding of sexual assault.

3. Bystander Intervention Training- As Banyard, Plante, and Moynihan explain, bystander intervention training not only reduces an individual’s likelihood of being a survivor, but helps change the culture in which sexual assault occurs (478). By training potential bystanders the skills to intervene in dangerous situations, those present before such a situation occurs have the ability to stop an incident before it actually takes place. Such training will allow for students to recognize when a dangerous situation is occurring, interpret it as a problem, and decide that they have a responsibility to intervene and act. This training will educate students on how to identify characteristics of high-risk individuals, how to help their peers avoid these individuals, and how to get out of dangerous situations. This aspect of the program will be highly interactive as students will be expected to discuss how they would respond to specific occurrences or how they would intervene if they saw something they were not comfortable with. Students would be provided with various scenarios and various intervention techniques to use such as: verbal intervention, diverting attention, physical intervention, and calling the police. Teaching students these intervention skills and allowing them to practice them in role-play type scenarios will make them more comfortable with this behavior, and more likely to actually intervene in dangerous situations.

Overall, this educational program will use variety of teaching techniques including the presentation of educational information, peer theater, peer group facilitation, and large group discussion. The program will cater to different learning styles and keep student's attention by encouraging interaction. Unlike the current online program, this program will take place in a classroom-like setting, face-to-face with other students and faculty. Rather than being held online, students will attend classes and have the chance to interact with those in attendance. Hopefully, this will engage students and have a larger impact on them in general. This educational program will be mandatory for all freshmen students beginning the year that it is initiated. Rather than the current single session program, this program will be an ongoing educational opportunity. As Lonsway and Kothari state, "knowledge and awareness about sexual assault, with multiple and repeated exposures to prevention education, is most beneficial in preventing sexual assaults" (Kress et al. 148). While the university will have to develop a schedule and means of implementing this program, I suggest that student's meet monthly to discuss these various topics. Along with this, in order to ensure attendance, the university could impose ramifications on those who do not participate. Examples of these ramifications could be the inability to register for classes or the inability to graduate without completion of the program. I understand that like many other things that are required, some students will dislike this program. However, I believe it is a beneficial program which can only lead to a safer, more educated community on campus, something Marquette praises. Such programming has the ability to greatly raise awareness of the seriousness and prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses.

Resources

While I am aware that it is impossible to put an end to sexual assault, there are things Marquette can do to better accommodate those who have experienced it. While Marquette currently offers various services to victims after they have been sexually assaulted, this information is not easily accessible. Often, students are unaware of what to do after the assault. For this reason, I propose creating brochures which will be printed in mass and easily accessible to all students. This idea was suggested by Professor Heather Hvlaka. These brochures will be placed on the doors of all stalls in university bathrooms. As the bathroom is a place that all students frequent, the information will be easily accessible, and students will know where to find this information if they or someone they know has been sexually assaulted. These pamphlets will include the information currently provided in the Department of Public Safety's Safety Resource Guide. The pamphlet will briefly describe sexual assault and provide students with a step-by-step process of what to do after being sexually assaulted. The contact information for DPS, the Milwaukee Police Department, various hospitals in the area, and counseling centers will also be provided in the pamphlet. Providing such information is important as it will hopefully increase the number of reported sexual assaults as students will be more aware of what to do in such instances. Along with this, the frequency in which students will come in contact with these information pamphlets stresses the seriousness and prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses.

Communication

Ultimately, the most effective way to raise awareness of sexual assault is to communicate. Sexual assault is a sensitive subject, and thus something that is not often spoken about. Encouraging communication among students and faculty can be influential as people can discuss their own experiences, what they believe is important, and ways to bring about change.

Not only should communication be encouraged with student and faculty, I propose that the university opens the doors of communication with the community at large. Rather than pretending that sexual assault does not happen, Marquette University should be required to notify students and faculty of sexual assaults that occur on campus. Much like the Department of Public Safety emails students and faculty receive after crimes, such as robberies, occur, these emails should also be generated when sexual assaults happen. As I am aware that these are personal, sensitive crimes, they are also violent crimes. These emails will not need to include personal information about the victim or assailant, rather they should include information that discloses the vicinity in which the assault happened, the extent of seriousness of the assault, and how the university has responded. This communication is important as it not only conveys the importance of safety to the campus, but also proves that the university takes sexual assault seriously, making students further aware of the seriousness and prevalence of sexual assault on campus.

Proposal Conclusion

Through my three-step program, which focuses on education, resources, and communication, Marquette University will be able to increase the awareness of sexual assault on campus. Rather than trying to conquer the impossible task of controlling the settings in which sexual assault may be conducive, this program positively influences student's attitudes and behaviors, giving them the tools and information they need to deal with such situations.

Goals and Conclusion

Through my research, I found that many college students are unaware of the seriousness and prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses. Often, students put themselves in social settings, specifically those that involve drinking, which facilitate behaviors that are conducive to

sexual assault. The party scene, in general, along with the over exemplified importance of gender roles, the common behavior of hooking up, and the lack of concern by bystanders are problem areas which lead to many student's misconceptions of sexual assault. As a student, these are problems I personally face as I frequent social functions. Observing such behavior, I often ask myself: How can we make students understand the importance of these difficulties? How can we influence their attitudes and behaviors, ultimately making them more aware of sexual assault? This research urges Marquette students to recognize the seriousness of sexual assault and do something about it. Through this proposed program, I anticipate that students will encourage the development of healthy friendships and will recognize risky situations in which a helping hand or an intervention may save someone from the trauma of sexual assault. Overall, I believe this program has the potential to make students question their own behavior, reshape their ideas in regard to sexual assault, and ultimately create change on campus---all of which will lead to a better understanding of sexual assault and what to do when students are in such situations.

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