

Selected Studies for Social Norms and Sexual Consent

Title: **Engaging men as social justice allies in ending violence against women: evidence for a social norms approach.**

Authors: [Fabiano,P.M.](#); [Perkins,H.W.](#); [Berkowitz,A.](#); [Linkenbach,J.](#); [Stark,C.](#)

Source: [J.Am.Coll.Health](#), 2003, 52, 3, 105-112, United States

Abstract: The field of sexual assault prevention is shifting attention to educational interventions that address the role of men in ending violence against women. Recent studies document the often-misperceived norms men hold about other men's endorsement of rape-supportive attitudes and behaviors. The authors provide further evidence supporting the design of population-based social norms interventions to prevent sexual assault. Data from this study suggest that men underestimate the importance that most men and women place on consent and willingness of most men to intervene against sexual violence. In addition, men's personal adherence to only consensual activity and their willingness to act as women's allies are strongly influenced by their perceptions of other men's and women's norms. These findings support the proposition that accurate normative data, which counters the misperception of rape-supportive environments, can be a critical part of comprehensive campus efforts to catalyze and support men's development as women's social justice allies in preventing sexual violence against women.

URL: http://www.ncdsv.org/images/Men_Soc_Justice_Allies.pdf

Title: **Social norms and beliefs regarding sexual risk and pregnancy involvement among adolescent males treated for dating violence perpetration.**

Authors: [Silverman,J.G.](#); [Decker,M.R.](#); [Reed,E.](#); [Rothman,E.F.](#); [Hathaway,J.E.](#); [Raj,A.](#); [Miller,E.](#)

Source: [J.Urban Health](#), 2006, 83, 4, 723-735, United States

Abstract: The present study explored perceived sexual norms and behaviors related to sexual risk and pregnancy involvement among adolescent males (ages 13 to 20) participating in programs for perpetrators of dating violence. The purpose of this study was to generate hypotheses regarding the contexts and mechanisms underlying the intersection of adolescent dating violence, sexual risk and pregnancy. Six focus groups were conducted (N = 34 participants). A number of major themes emerged: 1) male norm of multiple partnering, 2) perceived gain of male social status from claims of sexual activity, 3) perception that rape is uncommon combined with belief that girls claiming to be raped are liars, 4) perception that men rationalize rapes to avoid

responsibility, 5) condom non-use in the context of rape and sex involving substance use, 6) beliefs that girls lie and manipulate boys in order to become pregnant and trap them into relationships, and 7) male avoidance of responsibility and negative responses to pregnancy. The combination of peer-supported norms of male multiple partnering and adversarial sexual beliefs appear to support increased male sexual risk, lack of accountability for sexual risk, and rationalization of rape and negative responses to pregnancy. Further research focused on the context of male sexual risk and abusive relationship behaviors is needed to inform intervention with young men to promote sexual health and prevent rape, dating violence, and adolescent pregnancy.

URL: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/w811243p46602p4j/>

Title: **Injunctive social norms of adults regarding teen dating violence**

Authors: [Taylor,C.A.](#); [Sorenson,S.B.](#)

Source: [Journal of Adolescent Health](#), 2004, 34, 6, 468-479

Abstract: PURPOSE: To assess applied injunctive social norms of adults regarding teen dating violence (TDV) and compare them with those regarding adult domestic violence (ADV). METHODS: A total of 3679 California adults from six ethnic groups (roughly equal numbers of African-American, Hispanic, Korean-American, Vietnamese-American, other Asian-American, and white respondents) participated in a 27-minute interview. An experimental vignette design was used to test for associations among contextual (i.e., victim, assailant, and situational) characteristics of TDV and ADV, respondent demographic characteristics, and injunctive social norms (i.e., whether adults thought the behavior was wrong, illegal, or should be illegal, police should be called, or a restraining order issued). Data were analyzed using multivariate logistic regression, controlling for vignette variables (i.e., contextual characteristics) and respondent characteristics. Interactions were examined to test for differences in responses to TDV and ADV. RESULTS: Nearly all adults report that most forms of TDV are wrong (97%) and should be illegal (81%), and a majority support interventions for TDV such as calling police and issuing a restraining order. TDV involving sexual assault, physical assault, or weapons received the greatest levels of support for societal intervention. Differences in respondent judgments regarding TDV and ADV were evident when the victim had been raped. Respondent characteristics generally were not associated with responses. CONCLUSIONS: Findings suggest that there is general public support for prevention and intervention strategies aimed at reducing and responding to TDV, and may inform efforts to alter social norms and expectations regarding TDV.

URL: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1054139X03003422>

Title: **Social norms and the likelihood of raping: Perceived rape myth acceptance of others affects men's rape proclivity.**

Authors: [Bohner,G.](#); [Siebler,F.](#); [Schmelcher,J.](#)

Source: [Pers.Soc.Psychol.Bull.](#), 2006, 32, 3, 286-297, United States

Abstract: Research showing that rape myth acceptance (RMA) causally affects rape proclivity (RP) was extended by examining the impact of RMA-related norms on RP. Male students (total N = 264) received feedback about the alleged responses of other students to RMA items either before (Experiment 1) or after (Experiment 2) they reported their own RMA, and then their RP was assessed using acquaintance-rape scenarios. The level of RMA feedback was varied. Results showed that higher norms led to higher RP. In Experiment 1, this effect was mediated via self-reported RMA. Experiment 2 yielded main effects of both RMA feedback and self-reported RMA and an interaction effect showing that RMA feedback was particularly influential at higher levels of own RMA. Theoretical and practical implications of these findings are discussed.

URL: <http://psp.sagepub.com/content/32/3/286>

Title: **A Prospective Analysis of Sexual Assault Perpetration: Risk Factors Related to Perpetrator Characteristics**

Authors: Loh, C., Gidycz, C.A., Lobo, T.R. & Luthra, R.

Source: [Journal of Interpersonal Violence](#), 2005, 20 (10), 1325-1348. Doi: 10.1177/0886260505278528

Abstract: This study prospectively evaluated perpetrator risk factors for sexual assault perpetration, including peer influences, beliefs and attitudes about sexuality, alcohol use, and token resistance. Perpetration of sexual assault was evaluated at three time periods: pretest, 3-month follow-up, and 7-month follow-up. Retrospective and prospective analyses yielded differential predictors of sexually aggressive behavior. However, perpetration of sexual assault at any particular assessment period was a predictor of perpetration during the subsequent follow-up period. Furthermore, several variables that have previously been demonstrated in the literature to be related to the perpetration of sexual assault were not significant in regression analyses, indicating that these variables may be rendered insignificant when accounting for past perpetration in prospective analyses. These findings may have significant potential impact on development of sexual assault prevention programming with men.

URL: <http://jiv.sagepub.com/content/20/10/1325.short>

Title: **Preventing Sexual Aggression Among College Men: An Evaluation of a Social Norms and Bystander Intervention Program**

Authors: Gidycz, C.A., Orchowski, L.M. & Berkowitz, A.D.

Source: [Violence Against Women](#), 2011, 17(6) 720–742

Abstract: Men and women living in randomly selected 1st-year dormitories participated in tailored single-sex sexual assault prevention or risk-reduction programs, respectively. An evaluation of the men's project is presented ($N = 635$). The program incorporated social norms and bystander intervention education and

had an impact on self-reported sexual aggression and an effect on men's perceptions that their peers would intervene when they encountered inappropriate behavior in others. Relative to the control group, participants also reported less reinforcement for engaging in sexually aggressive behavior, reported fewer associations with sexually aggressive peers, and indicated less exposure to sexually explicit media.

URL: <http://vaw.sagepub.com/content/17/6/720.full.pdf+html>

The following studies may also be of interest to you:

1) James Madison University's "A Man..." Sexual Assault Prevention Campaign

<http://www.socialnormsresources.org/CaseStudies/sexassaultprev.php>

In a project funded by the Virginia Department of Health, James Madison University's "A Man..." Project used three approaches to address male sexual assault prevention: a social norms marketing campaign, intentional educational programs, and male peer-to-peer education.

2) Alan Berkowitz's Social Norms Approach to Violence Prevention examines social norms and males' attitudes and behaviors towards sex, including 1) men's misperceptions of other men's sexual activity, 2) incorrect beliefs about other men's support of rape myths, and/or 3) false assumptions about other men's comfort with degrading language towards women.

www.alanberkowitz.com/articles/BPI.pdf and

<http://www.alanberkowitz.com/Preventing%20Sexual%20Violence%20Chapter.pdf>

3) The Social Norms Approach to Violence Prevention 1 page summary from the Family violence Prevention Fund:

<http://toolkit.endabuse.org/Resources/TheSocial.html>

4) RAINN's Social Norms Poster Campaign:

<http://www.feminist.com/violence/vawnews12.html>

5)WHO Briefing on changing cultural and social norms that support violence

This briefing for advocates, programme designers and implementers and others is one of a seven-part series on the evidence for interventions to prevent interpersonal and self-directed violence. The other six briefings look at reducing access to lethal means; increasing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers; developing life skills in children and adolescents; reducing availability and misuse of alcohol; promoting gender equality; and victim identification, care and support.

http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/norms.pdf