Envisioning a Safer Sex Culture: The Anthropology of Choice and Friendship in Treating the Whole Disease

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Introduction

We know the statistics. Sexual violence is a troublingly ubiquitous problem on college campuses. An extensive report from 2007 (n=6,800) found that 28.5 percent of college-aged women reported having experienced an attempted or completed sexual assault either before or since entering college (Krebs et al. 2007). Four out of five sexual assault victims suffer from chronic physical and/or psychological distress after assault (Krebs et al. 2007).

Researchers have consistently reported that at least half of sexual assaults involve the use of alcohol or other drugs by the perpetrator, victim, or both (Abbey 1991) and that the vast majority of instances of sexual violence – 85 to 90 percent – go unreported to crisis centers and to law enforcement (Krebs et al. 2007). The statistics reveal and reiterate that sexual violence is a culture as much as it is an action, perpetrated most often by those we trust – boyfriends (41 percent), friends (29 percent), and acquaintances (21 percent) (Gross et al. 2006) – and upheld by social norms like toxic conceptions of masculinity and the belief that intoxicated women are sexually 'available' and should keep themselves safe (Conley and Griffith 2016). Increasingly, women and allies have been forced and empowered to steer the national dialogue to sexual violence issues. The viral #MeToo movement, sparked in October of 2017, exemplifies the power of collective feminist voices in raising awareness about the startling prevalence of sexual assault. Grassroots campaigns like Know Your IX have worked to push colleges and universities specifically to undertake preventative measures against sexual violence because sexual violence disproportionately affects college women.

In this paper, I analyze one such preventative effort: the Green Dot Bystander Intervention program at Carleton College. Carleton College is a small liberal arts college located in Northfield, Minnesota with about 2,000 students. The Green Dot Bystander Intervention Program (livethegreendot.com) is an interna-

tional sexual violence prevention training program that was developed in 2007 by Dr. Dorothy J. Edwards, former director of the UK's Violence Intervention and Prevention Center. Like many other sexual violence prevention programs, Green Dot works on the premise that bystanders can reinforce anti-violence norms while increasing other bystanders' sense of responsibility for their peers (Burn 2009). Bystander models avoid defensiveness by envisioning participants as allies rather than victims or perpetrators (see Note 1) (Banyard et al. 2004). The Green Dot curriculum focuses on empowering potential bystanders by giving them tools to respond to sexual violence both reactively through "red dots" (e.g. step in and distract the perpetrator in a potential act of violence) and proactively through "green dots" (e.g. identify and safely confront peers who demonstrate the potential for violence) (Coker et al. 2015). An extensive study (n=7,206) that compared rates of sexual violence between Green Dot campuses and non-Green Dot campuses found that Green Dot campuses had lower rates of violent attitudes and violent actions; furthermore, students who had taken the Green Dot training on those campuses reported lower rates of violent attitudes and violent behavior than those who had not taken the training (Coker et al. 2015). These findings support the efficacy of Green Dot as a whole in preventing violence. Carleton faculty, staff, and students introduced a modified six-hour Green Dot training to the campus in 2015. So far, 225 students have completed the training, which is run by Carleton's Gender and Sexuality Center with help from other campus organizations (Green Dot Bystander Intervention 2017).

Defining the Problem

My aim is to illuminate the context in which sexual violence occurs at Carleton using original interviews and survey responses from Carleton students about the problem of sexual violence at Carleton and the role of Green Dot in response to it. I would like to make clear from the start that I do not attempt to analyze broadly the efficacy or impact of Green Dot at Carleton – indeed, that would be impossible given that the majority of students I talked to had not even completed the Green Dot training. Instead, I hope to provide insight into what students believe Green Dot offers and does not offer to the campus and how the program's goals align with the perceived needs of students. This

paper is descriptive in that it states the current state of affairs as described by Carleton students: what the dimensions of the problem area and whether Green Dot is working as a solution. I approach the issue through the lens of choice in an attempt to show that agency and responsibility in a culture of sexual violence might pave a way toward change and at the same time to highlight the complexity of agency and responsibility in choice. In my theory section, I outline a few points about descriptive and normative models of choice and decision-making that frame my discussion. The bulk of the paper puts my interviews and survey results in conversation with major voices from psychological, social, and criminal anthropology. I conclude with a few suggestions for how Green Dot might improve to better fit Carleton students' needs.

I found that while students value Green Dot's intervention training, they also are acutely aware that the choice to intervene is just one choice relevant to sexual violence. Choices present themselves at all levels of sexual violence culture: students choose to (or to not) talk about assault, to attend trainings, to seek help, or to assault.

Intervention training is simply not comprehensive enough. Specifically, survey responses and interviews reveal that students feel particularly unsure about how to deal with friends who are known to be either victims or perpetrators of assault. Students feel that this is particularly relevant at a small campus such as Carleton, where everyone knows everyone and anonymity is difficult to achieve. Friendships with victims and perpetrators are inevitable and inform our practices in ways that both inhibit and facilitate violence. This gets at a broader point, appearing in both our original research and in broader academic conversations, which is that the way we imagine the actors in a culture of sexual violence – victims and perpetrators, ourselves, our friends – informs our choices. The stark "good"/"evil" dichotomy present in discourses on victims and perpetrators of sexual assault prevents opportunities for essential dialogues that might allow perpetrators to take responsibility for their violent actions and consequently not repeat them. Moving away from a good/evil dichotomy also allows for us as a society to realize that sexual violence is not perpetrated by a distant evil, but by people we know and live and work with who we do not necessarily think of as evil, who we in fact call our friends and family. This perhaps uncomfortable

recognition causes us to hold our own friends accountable and to see that sexual violence is not a black and white issue. Analysis of three interconnected proportions of "choice" – knowledge (e.g. training), attitudes (e.g. norms and framing), and practice (e.g. intervention) – helps us to better understand the intricacies of defining agency and responsibility in the context of sexual violence.

My discussion draws from an online survey (n=84) and interviews (n=15) with Carleton students about the Green Dot Bystander Intervention Program particularly and sexual assault at Carleton generally. The study was conducted in winter of 2018 as a part of Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg's Anthropology of Health and Illness course. Thank you to Liam Holloway-Bidwell, Jessica Makori, and Sarah Rost for assisting me in data collection. The survey was created using Google Forms, and so our basic statistical analysis and data visualization we owe to Google Forms. Much of our data, however, is qualitative rather than quantitative.

Theorizing Choice: Descriptive and Normative Considerations

Anthropologist James J. Fox argues that human choice is of fundamental significance for anthropology because it is basic to the very formation of culture – choice distinguishes us from other animals by enabling us to "rebel" against the "tyranny" of our genes (Fox 2017, 27). I am reminded of an Annie Dillard essay that distills this notion that the human's primary state is choice: "A weasel is wild, obedient to instinct…The weasel lives in necessity and we live in choice" (Dillard 1982). Dillard's story weighs of regret, but Fox asserts that the capacity of choice allows for great freedom and develops the skill of imagination. Language brings to life the "alternity" of choice by facilitating the conceptualization of "possibilities not previously perceived" (Fox 2017, 36). Fox's interpretation of the Genesis story renders human choice not merely powerful, but divine. The "tree of knowledge of good and evil" and the "Fall" attributed to Adam and Eve's choice to rebel against God's command reflect an imagining of choice as a form of behavior so potent "as to outstrip, in the twinkling of an eye, the omnipotence of the Creator himself" (Fox 2017, 37). Choice grants man (or woman) the power to imitate "either god or devil, and then, should his imagination be sufficiently fecund, to outdo either of them" (Fox 2017, 37).

Fox's theory aptly applies to choices regarding sexual violence culture, for it empowers the individual to recognize her (God-given) right to "rebel," to imagine, to choose better alternatives.

Linda Garro (1998) likewise concerns herself with why people do what they do; her real-world orientation expands upon Fox's theoretical model. While Fox is interested in the strength of choice, Garro focuses on how we choose. Garro articulates in her work a distinction between normative and descriptive models of decision-making – the first prescriptive, oriented toward how people should choose, and the second reflective, constructed from data on how people do choose (Abelson and Levi 1985). This distinction parallels a proportion of choice Fox identifies – the gap between reality and imagined alternatives – that is relevant to sexual violence culture.

Why do people choose to sexually assault other people, or not intervene when they see someone in danger, or not speak out when they are assaulted themselves? Garro's extensive literature review gives voice to scholars who identify various considerations for those interested in descriptive models. Her review reveals that choice concerns not just action, but knowledge and attitudes as well. We choose what knowledge to seek out and question, which attitudes to support or contest, what practices to exercise, to endorse, to protest. Luhrmann (1989) questions whether people act on their beliefs, or whether beliefs follow action and experience. Various anthropologists point out that 'beliefs' may actually be "post hoc rationalizations" presented to justify action (Boster 1984, 387; Kirmayer 1992; Luhrmann 1989). This question of the value or harm of rationalizing discourse finds resonance in literature on the rehabilitation of sex offenders, which I will discuss later on. Other descriptive decision theorists have demonstrated that the framing or conceptualization of situations informs our choices (Tversky and Kahneman 1981).

I am interested in the descriptive and will employ these considerations in my analysis, but I also want to imagine in this essay, if only because the statistics are too depressing. I believe it is useful to conceive normative models for the sake of having something defined to strive toward. In addition to describing the state of sexual assault at Carleton, then, I hope to sketch out in this essay a vision of a more perfect sex culture defined against our present reality. I also hope to remind the reader that even though individual action may be mired in common expectations

and understandings, we cannot deny the agency of the individual in his (good or bad) chosen actions.

Results

The link to our 20-minute survey was posted on all of Carleton's class Facebook pages, which are regularly used to disseminate information about events as well as to solicit student responses to surveys for personal use or for classes. The survey was also emailed to lists of people who were likely to have taken the training (e.g. student workers in the Gender and Sexuality Center, or specific sports teams who had decided in the past to take the training as a team). At the end of the survey, participants had the option of entering their email if they wished to continue talking about sexual violence at Carleton via interview. The majority of the survey respondents (66 percent) were women and four respondents identified as non-binary or gender queer. Fifteen percent of respondents identified as people of color, and 31 percent identified as part of the LGBTQ+ community. Class years were relatively equally represented. Only 20 percent of the respondents had actually completed the six-hour training; the majority responded to sexual violence on campus in general and helped us identify barriers to completing the training. The participants in the comprehensive follow-up interviews were mostly white women, though we spoke to some men and one varsity football coach who actively encouraged his team to take the Green Dot training.

Our survey results depicted in Figure 1 indicate that students believe there are topics related to sexual violence that are at least equally important as, if not more important than, bystander intervention. These topics include how to deal with friends who are victims and perpetrators of assault, bystander intervention, alcohol and assault, the legal implications of assault, self-defense, and resources for assault victims. One set of survey questions asked students to rate topics related to sexual violence on a number of scales, including how likely they would be to attend a workshop on each topic, how much they already know about each topic, and how relevant each topic is to Carleton students' lives. Our most significant finding was that students responded they were much more likely to attend workshops on how to deal with friends who have assaulted or been assaulted than any other topic.
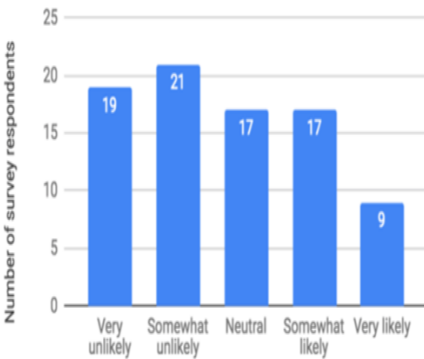
How likely would you be to take time out of your schedule to attend a workshop on how to deal with friends who are perpetrators of assault?
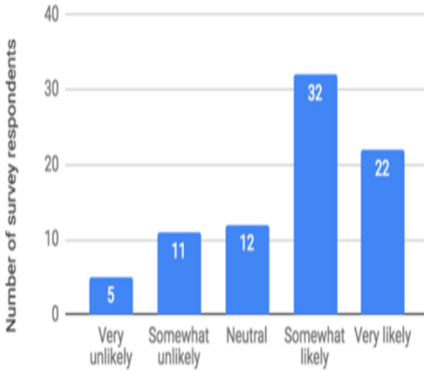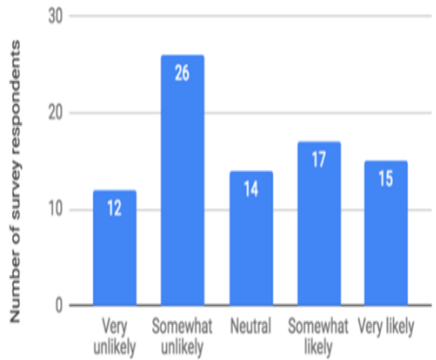
How likely would you be to take time out of your schedule to attend a workshop on bystander intervention (how to act when you see signs of sexual assault, and what those signs are)?
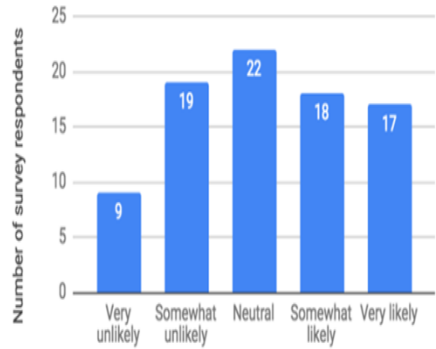
How likely would you be to take time out of your schedule to attend a workshop on the legal implications of sexual assault?

How likely would you be to take time out of your schedule to attend a workshop on alcohol use and assault?

How likely would you be to take time out of your schedule to attend a workshop on how to deal with friends who have been assaulted?
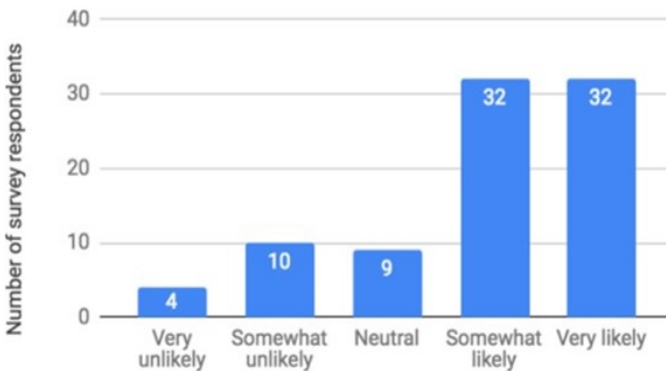
Figure 1: Student responses to the question of how likely they would be to take time out of their schedule to attend workshops on various topics related to sexual violence.

We also found that the topic students were the least familiar with was how to deal with friends who are perpetrators of sexual assault. Sixty-four participants responded that they knew "very little" or "little" about this topic, whereas no participants responded that they knew "very little" about bystander intervention and only 13 responded that they knew "little" about bystander intervention.

Interviews further illustrate that students feel they already have a fair amount of knowledge about bystander intervention. Many indicated that the reason they did not take the Green Dot training was that they thought it would cover information they already knew. Students who had taken the training mentioned that much of the information was, indeed, not new.

Alcohol came up frequently in interviews. Students often reported that the factor that most complicated sexual assault bystander intervention was the use of alcohol, and that it was difficult to know where to draw the "too drunk" line. Students also told me that relationships with people involved in the potentially dangerous situation strongly influenced their willingness to intervene. Students generally did not feel comfortable intervening in a situation involving students they did not know personally.

Descriptive Findings: Moving Beyond Intervention

Talking to Carleton students reveals the disparity between reality and ideality, between action and belief, which I identified in my theoretical framework. As one woman succinctly put it, "I think a lot of people care intellectually but have a hard time stepping up to the plate when there is an actual situation." I asked whether Green Dot should publicize Carleton assault statistics, and one woman responded, "I feel like it would just spread awareness. I know

lot of the statistics already. Awareness maybe would affect how people act," she said doubtfully, and then – "but I feel like people already know, especially with consent. It's been drilled in." Another woman described toxic masculinity on campus as "being able to talk the talk of feminism but not actually putting that into practice." Other students, however, contended that reminders can be useful – one woman requested published information on "how many people think about sexual assault on a daily basis," a request that calls explicitly for empathy with sexual violence victims.

Carleton students also want and need more than just intervention training. Interviewees voiced that the problem of sexual assault extends beyond the act itself: "Green Dot is good, but it only addresses a tiny, tiny aspect of rape and rape culture, so Green Dot is really as if a health provider gave people vaccinations for rabies but not tetanus, MMR, the flu, or anything else." Green Dot is not enough.

Survey responses indicate that students need and want training specifically related to friendship and assault. We asked respondents to rate sexual violence topics according to different variables concerning the relevance of, level of knowledge on, and likelihood of attending a training on each topic. The majority of respondents reported that all issues were "extremely relevant" to Carleton students' lives, but levels of previous knowledge and interest in trainings varied drastically by topic. Forty students rated their knowledge of bystander intervention as 4 or 5 out of 5. Only 13 students selected 2, and none selected 1. Interviews further emphasized that students did not take the training because they already feel equipped to intervene: "It would be redundant," "it would be a lot of repeated stuff," "I already know how to intervene." Green Dot posters made some people less likely to take the training because the posters contain information people already know. The six-hour time of the training further exacerbates this fear of redundancy: "If the training was just one hour of new material out of six, maybe it's not worth it."

Student were less familiar with how to help victim friends, and far less familiar with how to deal with perpetrator friends. They were also significantly more likely to "take time out of their schedule" to attend workshops on dealing with victim friends (64 responded likely or very likely) and perpetrator friends (54) than bystander intervention (26), which indicates that students believe these issues to be relevant on campus and want to learn more about them. It is worth noting, too, that interviewees also brought up "stalking and intimate relationship violence" as issues Carleton needs to deal with, as well as workplace sexual assault: "In a party, in a way it's easier, because we know that it's a dangerous situation. What's more confusing is at work or something, when I see someone touching someone in a way that I don't think is okay." The Green Dot training focuses on sexual assault at parties and might want to consider expanding its focus to include workplace assault and other forms of violence.

Normative Models: Considering Dichotomies and Ambiguities

One prominent tension in the literature and research is how we should conceptualize or frame victims, perpetrators, and assault to best prevent violence. These issues are embedded in notions of the good/evil dichotomy Fox brings up. Questions of choice, agency, and blame are confused by friendships with both victims and perpetrators and the presence of alcohol in assault. Prevalence and Fatalism: One thoughtful third-year woman, who I will call Mia, reflected in our interview, "I think there should be more thought in training about the 'big-ticket cases' versus everyday incidents, and how those things interact. Talking just about the really awful, graphic, publicized rape cases, what does that do to help safety on campus, but what does it do to diffuse the image or portray a false image of sexual assault?" She raises a complex point – to what extent do we need to think of sexual violence as those "awful, graphic, publicized" cases in order to mourn their real existence and ignite action, and is that imagining a misrepresentation? We know sexual violence is not at all rare, but we talk more about the 10 percent of "big" cases than the 90 percent of more ambiguous and unreported cases (Krebs et al. 2007). Medical anthropologists have observed a "sense of fatalism" in epidemics that seem so deep and wide that individuals feel "little can be done" (Senior and Chenhall 2013, 156). We want to avoid fatalism and the mindset that 'it happens all the time, it's no big deal.' But we also hope that sharing our varied experiences will compel action. The following discussion of conceptualizing perpetrators and victims aims to begin to break down this dilemma.

The Evil Perpetrator: Interviews make clear that one barrier to reporting or intervening is that sometimes, perpetrators are our friends. Can we be friends with perpetrators of sexual violence? Student responses suggest that we can, and are: "This type of violence happens among friends," one said simply. But it is difficult; someone suggested Green Dot cover "how to address friends who may have committed assault and support victims while not losing a friend who was a perpetrator. I need a better vocabulary for supporting perpetrators." The football coach we interviewed identified "not confronting a friend" as the largest barrier to intervention within his team. I asked Mia why students do not intervene in assault, and she expanded upon these points:

> You can really lose friends, I think that happens often when people speak out against someone. Because it's such a huge assumption to make. Maybe that's because rape is thought of as this thing only a few people do, and if you call someone out for doing it, you put them in a category that's almost inhuman. Rape is the ultimate evil. Maybe if it was something people thought of as happening all the time, it would be less of a socially difficult thing to call people out.

Criminal and psychological anthropology voice these exact concerns about constructing the perpetrator as the embodiment of evil. James Waldram researches public discourses of 'evil'– defined as "defilement of something that is fundamentally natural" – as they pertain to and are understood by sex offenders (Waldram 2009, 224). Waldram finds that sex offenders, while admitting to having committed evil acts, generally "reject the label of 'evil' as understood in essentialist terms…To be essentially 'evil,' in their view, is to be almost nonhuman…and, therefore, beyond rehabilitation" (Waldram 2009, 219). Fatalism defines such a construction. If rehabilitation is impossible, why report sexual violence? Sexual violence culture becomes indelible and incurable. In his critique of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT), Waldram (2010) emphasizes the value of rationalizing discourse (e.g. 'It was a mistake') that I brought up in my theoretical framework. He argues that narratives offered by offenders about their offenses contain the seeds of moral agency and responsibility that lead to rehabilitation (Waldram 2010). CBT, which eliminates such narrative, eradicates the possibility for offenders to "communicate something salient, enduring, and moral" about themselves (Waldram 2010, 271). Waldram argues that we should work with rather than shut down narrative to allow the offender to apply an interpretative framework to his actions and teach himself that he can avoid reenacting past violence.

We are also less likely to even suspect our friends or acquaintances of assault when we think of assault as the ultimate evil, because we generally do not think of our friends or their friends as immoral:

> Students do not intervene because the potential offender could not be deemed immoral…. statements

revealed hesitation to intervene in a situation in which the potential predator was a friend or acquaintance [and reflect] a sense of inherent trust in an individual in the case that the bystander knew the potential predator or was able to place [him] in relation to another friend (Butler et al. 2017, 800).

Social identity theories explain this phenomenon: people hold more favorable views of 'in-group members' than 'out-group members' (Katz et al. 2015). The question of knowledge versus practice arises here; we know that on such a small campus, perpetrators necessarily are people we can place in relation to a friend, yet we still feel disinclined to intervene when we know or sort of know the perpetrator. Likewise, even though we know sexual assault is more common among acquaintances than strangers, students iterated over and over that they did not intervene if they thought "the two people involved knew each other" because it would "feel intrusive."

We need to strike a balance. To construct the rapist as the ultimate evil prevents us from talking to our friends about their inappropriate or violent actions. Green Dot does not call perpetrators "perpetrators." That is one of its appeals for many men (Banyard et al. 2004). But at the same time, perpetrators must feel the harm and face the consequences of their actions, and women should not be expected to protect their assailants just because they know them (Spencer et al. 2017). A few women believed Green Dot wrongly displaces blame: "Green Dot should push itself more to have more recognition of perpetrators and not just bystanders," Mia told me, "and make us look at perpetrator behavior in ourselves." Mia reflects an empathy for the perpetrator that I expect is rare but derives from the reality that perpetrators are people we know. Another student more bluntly lamented that "Green Dot puts the responsibility for preventing assault on bystanders rather than rapists and doesn't really do anything useful."

Victimization and Moral Economies: Conceptualizations of the "victim" – again, a word Green Dot does not use – also have implications for intervention. Feminist theory points out that labeling women as victims is problematic for a variety of reasons: 1) the concept narrowly delimits who is a "real" victim; it serves as the basis for moralizing judgments about victims, 2) the concept connotes powerlessness and weakness that may exacerbate

exploitation and prevent the victimized from coming forward, and 3) "victim" becomes a stable, fixed identity that does not represent the varied and changing experiences of real women (Gilson 2016). These norms, particularly the first, uphold a sort of "moral economy" (Babül 2015) in which victims must "fit a particular profile to count, that is, to be convincing to those who would judge the validity of their claims" (Gilson 2016:80). To be a "true" victim *deserving of help and belief* one must fit the "victim" identity by demonstrating "suffering, distress, and humiliation" (Gilson 2016, 80). Such an equation is conducive to victim blaming, decreased reporting, and decreased intervention when the victim does not "seem like a victim.

A huge barrier to intervention is lack of relationship with the "victim." We construct the people deserving of help as friends; strangers are excluded from our realm of responsibility. Social identity theories posit that people feel more responsibility for 'in-group members' (Katz et al. 2015), and so friendship with the victim makes intervention more likely (Palmer, Nicksa, and McMahon 2016). When asked why Carleton students do not intervene in suspicious situations, many students offered simply, "They don't know her." One woman noted that her comfort level in intervening "really depends on what my relationship is with the person in the victim role. If I don't know them, I really don't want them to feel like I'm intruding on their night, maybe they are having fun." Another reiterated: "If I don't know them I feel like I would be crossing a line." Students, however, generally felt "very comfortable intervening if I saw something happening with a friend." Respondents also discussed how masculinity plays into friendship intervention. One gay man who I spoke to noted:

> In a boy-girl situation, her friends are going to be looking out for her and are more likely to intervene. With a guy, there's an assumption with friends that he's supposed to be doing that, it's a prideful thing. His friends would never ask if everything's okay, it'd be weird. Because she's the less powerful one.

Alcohol further disturbs the "victimization" problem by allowing society to place the blame of sexual assault on women. Feminist theory posits that "the belief that women who have consumed alcohol are sexually available" forms a component of rape

culture (Conley and Griffith 2016), and interviews affirm that "drunk sex" is both "normalized and a huge issue." Carleton students repeatedly explain that alcohol makes assault "ambiguous" rather than threatening, and decreases the likelihood of intervention. "There's an assumption that it's okay to hook up with people after drinking," I was told by almost every student. "Often people will be drunk, dancing, kissing. You don't know if it's being tipsy, or if it's incapacitation." Emotions further complicate the issue; as one student put it, "How the victim feels can change. Being intoxicated makes your emotions way more confusing." Few expressed solutions to the problem, voicing the impossibility of sober social spaces and emphasizing explicitly that "Green Dot didn't deal with alcohol well":

> The school's in a weird position where they know that people drink and sexual assault happens, but we're not supposed to drink, so what does the school do? It's unrealistic to say you should never hook up with someone when you're at all drunk. That's unrealistic. We need more training on alcohol and hook-up culture.

Imagining Forward: Take a (Different Type of) Stake

Carleton is a small school. The closeness of campus directly interacts with violence culture: "at Carleton specifically, the small community, things can be ambiguous because you have multiple relationships with people, and everyone you talk to about sexual assault knows the people you're talking about." One student emphasized that "Carleton's size has a huge impact on call-out culture. Accountability influences people's decisions. Everyone knows everything." And Carleton is not unique; it can represent all small colleges in this discussion.

The closeness of campus both facilitates and hinders sexual violence culture. We protect and trust our friends, which means we look out for them when they are at risk – but we also give them the benefit of the doubt. Sadly, on such a small campus, assault perpetrators are our friends. To think of sexual violence as an incurable evil makes confrontation (doing "right") and friendship incompatible. Rather than urging students to "do right," we should eliminate such a stark equation in the first place by allow-

ing for dialogues where perpetrators can take blame and learn from mistakes with the help of friends. How exactly this might be done remains a question up for debate; there is a dearth of research on dialogue-based programs for college-aged men who have perpetrated sexual assault and who want to learn from their past violence.

It is clear, however, that since it is mostly men who perpetuate sexual violence, men need to hold each other accountable to prevent sexual violence. When I asked how men can do this, students emphasized homosocial spaces; men need to "step away from toxic masculinity" and "have real conversations about actual experiences having sex." Recent research consistently supports that the best way to get men involved in the prevention of sexual violence is by having men talk to other men in male-only spaces (furthermore, women also reported experiencing more beneficial change in single-gender training groups) (Berkowitz 2002; Brecklin and Forde 2001). One study that tracked pathways related to men's involvement in all-male assault prevention programs found that most of the men described the all-male aspect as the main reason they joined the group, and 84 percent believed that to get male students involved, it would be more effective if the messenger were male as opposed to female (Piccigallo, Lilley, and Miller 2012). All-male programs are particularly good at increasing empathy toward victims, which has been shown to increase intervention (Katz et al. 2015). Other reasons gender-segregated trainings are useful are that men tend to be more honest and open in all-men groups, men participate more without the presence of women, mixed- gender discussions can become polarized, and male-only groups may reveal a diversity of opinion among men that is not possible in mixed-gender groups (Berkowitz 2002). Sexual assault training specifically for men in addition to the all-gender training would likely be an easy step for Green Dot.

My findings get at a broader point: we develop knowledge differently than attitudes and practices. While adults are most effective at transferring information, peers are most effective at transferring norms. Peer attitudes toward assault significantly predict intervention: "The first thing I do in a potential assault is consult my friends." Peers likewise have more influence in convincing their friends to take sexual assault trainings (Piccigallo, Lilley, and Miller 2012). Perhaps this means Green Dot should advertise explicitly through students, or even allow students to lead

some portions of the training that deal with social norms and personal stories.

In sum, we must understand responsibility as taking a stake in a safer community rather than protecting our friends. We need to ground ourselves in what we know – sexual violence happens, often, to and by our friends – and let that knowledge guide our practice. I want to come back to choice here, for it is vital to resist fatalism and remember agency in subverting unsafe cultures:

> That many humans are prone to accept information on authority and unreflectively is undeniably true. But there is also a highly invigorating cordial that anthropology has to offer; for throughout human history there have always been those who have questioned tradition, and who have taken action, often courageously, to bring about humanly valuable changes… it is always possible for those involved to change (Fox 2017, 41).

It is time to choose to change.

Notes

1 Note that even though Green Dot does not use the terms "victim" and "perpetrator," I employ them in this paper because everyone I talked to used them. The way we as a society imagine them is still relevant and the victim-perpetrator dichotomy still reflects dominant common discourse and understanding.

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