

Health Promotion Messages in Entertainment Media: Crime Drama Viewership and Intentions to Intervene in a Sexual Assault Situation

STACEY J. T. HUST

Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, USA

EMILY GARRIGUES MARETT

Management and Information Systems, Mississippi State University, Starkville, Mississippi, USA

MING LEI

Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, USA

HUA CHANG

Department of Marketing, LeBow College of Business, Drexel University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA

CHUNBO REN

Department of Journalism, Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, USA

ANNA LAZÁROVÁ McNAB

Department of Commerce, Niagara University, New York, USA

PAULA M. ADAMS

Health and Wellness Services, Washington State University, Pullman, Washington, USA

Popular crime dramas have tackled sensitive issues such as sexual assault with increasing frequency over the past 20 years. These popular programs increasingly demonstrate the emotional and physical effect of sexual assault on its victims, and in some instances they depict individuals being rewarded for intervening to prevent or stop an assault in progress. It is possible that this content could affect attitudes related to sexual assault prevention. However, no previous research has examined

Address correspondence to Stacey J. T. Hust, Edward R. Murrow College of Communication, Washington State University, Communication Addition 101, Pullman, WA 99164, USA. E-mail: sjhust@wsu.edu

this possibility. In the fall 2008 semester, 508 undergraduates at a large northwestern university completed a questionnaire about media use and bystander intervention in a sexual assault situation. Results from hierarchical regressions lend support for the integrative model of behavioral prediction in that instrumentality, rape myth acceptance, perceived social norms, perceived efficacy related to intervening, and exposure to primetime crime dramas were associated with participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault. The results suggest that crime dramas may be a useful venue for prevention messages as exposure to crime dramas uniquely contributed to intentions to intervene in a sexual assault.

Sexually violent media content and its effects on viewers are a pressing concern among prevention specialists, researchers, and advocates. Approximately 1 in 6 adult women and approximately 1 in 30 men in the United States are sexually assaulted at some point in their lives (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). In particular, college women face a serious threat of sexual assault on college campuses—nearly 1 in 4 college women will encounter sexual assault or other kinds of sexual victimization during their time at college (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000).

Sexual assaults often occur in a setting familiar to the victim, such as at a party, and are committed by a person the victim knows (Burn, 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). This means that bystanders are often present in the events leading up to a sexual assault (Burn, 2009; Fisher et al., 2000). As a result, a number of prevention programs have focused on increasing the likelihood that bystanders will intervene before or during a sexual assault (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2004; Berkowitz, 2002). Although an individual cannot prevent becoming a victim of sexual violence, bystander intervention is considered a protective factor. Prevention programs typically focus on changing the acceptance of rape myths or perceived social norms related to bystander intervention (e.g., Berkowitz, 2002; Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach, & Stark, 2003).

The integrative model of behavioral prediction can help identify determinants of intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation. According to the integrative model of behavioral prediction, the three primary determinants of intentions to perform actions are attitudes toward performing the behavior, perceived norms related to the behavior, and perceived self-efficacy in performing the behavior (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006). This model also accounts for individual difference variables, such as personality traits and demographic characteristics, which play a role in a person's decision to act. Although some research has tried to establish which attitudes and perceptions are related to intentions to intervene in sexual assaults, few studies have considered the media's influence on such intentions. Yet, the integrative model of behavioral prediction posits that media exposure does affect intentions to act (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006).

Media researchers have been interested in the role the media play in attitudes and intentions related to sexual violence for decades. Portrayals of sexual violence have been commonplace in non-pornographic movies for a number of years, and a number of studies have focused on the effects of sexually violent content in these movies (Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders, 1997; Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, 1989; Malamuth & Check, 1981; Weisz & Earls, 1995). In contrast, televised portrayals of sexual violence are a relatively new phenomenon, and investigations of its effects are rare (for an exception, see Lee, Hust, Zhang, & Zhang, 2011). Rape did not emerge as an acceptable television drama plotline until the 1980s (Brinson, 1992), and

previously the issues surrounding sexual violence were infrequently depicted on primetime network television channels (Greenberg & Hofschire, 2000; Greenberg et al., 1993; Kunkel et al., 1999). Since then, the criminal drama genre has become widely popular (Arthur, 2006; Nielsen, 2007, 2008), and television portrayals of sexual violence have increased (Cuklanz & Moorti, 2006). Cuklanz and Moorti (2006) argued that crime dramas are now “the most fertile prime-time sites for the depiction of rape” (p. 306).

Despite the prevalence of sexually violent content in crime dramas, the storylines often include dialogue that contradicts or opposes attitudes that support sexual violence (e.g., Lee et al., 2011). These storylines sometimes depict a bystander who becomes involved in a criminal situation either during or after the crime has been committed (e.g., *Law & Order, SVU*: “Babes”; *Law & Order, SVU*: “Responsible”). In some episodes, bystanders call the police when they notice someone is in trouble (e.g., they hear gunshots or a woman screaming). In other episodes, detectives remind individuals of the importance of intervening before or during the assault. To expand the existing body of knowledge, the present study questions whether exposure to crime dramas is positively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, after accounting for other relevant attitudes and beliefs.

Predictors of Bystander Intervention

Bystander intervention, in general, occurs when individuals, who are not directly affected by the situation, choose to intervene to help another person (Banyard, 2008; Banyard et al., 2007). Bystander intervention in a sexual assault situation can occur by taking action before or during a sexual assault or by speaking out against attitudes that support sexual violence (Banyard et al., 2007). Bystander intervention establishes an environment in which sexual assault is not accepted; while simultaneously creating an environment supportive of victims (e.g., Banyard, 2008). It is perhaps the single most effective tool in perpetrator prevention, according to some scholars (Berkowitz, 2001; Burn, 2009).

Academic investigations into the “bystander effect” became increasingly more common in the late 1960s. This, in part, was the result of media coverage of the Kitty Genovese murder. In 1964, 38 individuals witnessed the stabbing of Kitty Genovese in a residential section of New York City. The witnesses’ lack of action to help Genovese prompted a notable study in individuals’ willingness to help others (e.g., Darley & Latane, 1968). In an experimental test of bystander intervention, Darley and Latane (1968) found that the perceived number of bystanders was associated with whether someone would choose to intervene. Since then, much research has focused on environmental and situational factors that contribute to individuals’ decisions to help others (e.g., Carlo & Randall, 2001; Eisenberg et al., 2002; Micheline, Wilson, & Messe, 1975). Research has identified that perceptions of victim distress (Yee & Greenberg, 1998), perceptions of personal responsibility for the problem (Batson, 1998; Brickman et al., 1982), and perceived similarity to the victim (Levine, Cassidy, Brazier, & Reicher, 2002; Levine, Prosser, Evans, & Reicher, 2005) contribute to intentions to intervene. Recent research has identified that a situational model, which accounts for ability to identify the situation as risky and audience inhibition, can help predict an individual’s intention to intervene in a sexual assault (Burn, 2009).

Yet, research also indicates that personal factors, such as religious faith (Hardy & Carlo, 2005), perceived skill level of the bystander (Huston, Ruggiero, Conner, & Reis, 1981; Laner, Benin, & Ventrone, 2001), and motivation (Michellini, Wilson, & Messe, 1975) contribute to intentions to intervene. Personal factors, such as efficacy and attitudes about intervention, were associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault (Banyard, 2008). On the basis of this research and the integrative model of behavioral prediction, this study is focused on personal factors that are associated with intentions to intervene. These factors include personality traits, beliefs about rape, perceived peer norms, efficacy related to bystander intervention, and media exposure. The integrative model of behavioral prediction posits that not all factors will be strongly associated with every behavior. Instead, some behaviors may be primarily determined by attitudes; whereas, other behaviors may be determined by perceived peer norms (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006). In this study, we aimed to explore which factors play a role when it comes to bystander intervention in a sexual assault situation.

Prior research has found an association between personality traits such as instrumentality, which is operationalized as confidence, decisiveness, independence, and helping behaviors (Senneker & Hendrick, 1983; Siem & Spense, 1986; Tice & Baumeister, 1985). It is unclear, however, whether instrumentality is positively or negatively associated with helping others as existing research has produced inconsistent results. In 1983, Senneker and Hendrick's lab experiment results indicated college-age participants high in instrumentality were more likely to help a female choking victim. In contrast, Tice and Baumeister (1985) found instrumentality was negatively associated with college students helping a male choking victim. In an attempt to reconcile these conflicting results, Siem and Spense (1986) experimentally tested college-age participants' willingness to help a female who said she was going to pass out. Among the male participants, instrumentality was negatively associated with helping, but there was no significant relation between instrumentality and helping among the female participants (Siem & Spense, 1986). The authors concluded that "subtle differences between situations, whether in the laboratory or the field, may lead to positive relations or to negative relations in both sexes" (p. 620).

Some studies have looked specifically at the association between self-confidence, which is one aspect of instrumentality, and helping behaviors (Banyard, 2008; Huston et al., 1981). Research specific to criminal situations found that individuals who had greater self-confidence were more likely to intervene (Huston et al., 1981). More recently, research indicated an individual's self-confidence was associated with greater intentions to intervene in a sexual assault (Banyard, 2008). We tested the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Instrumental characteristics will be positively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation.

Rape myth acceptance is an attitudinal measure associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault (Burn, 2009; Gerber et al., 2004). Rape myths are "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (Burt, 1980, p. 217). For example, some common rape myths include beliefs that rape is a trivial event and that women ask to be raped. These myths place greater blame on the victim of a sexual assault rather than on the perpetrator (Brownmiller, 1975; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994) and excuse perpetration (Gilmartin-Zena,

1987; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Acceptance of such myths is negatively associated with intervening in a sexual assault (McMahon, 2010). McMahon (2010) found that belief in trivializing rape (e.g., if a woman does not physically resist, it is not rape) was a strong predictor of not intervening in a sexual assault. Further, bystanders are significantly less likely to intervene if they perceive that a potential victim is to blame for the sexual assault because of his or her personal decisions (Banyard, 2008; Banyard et al., 2004; Burn, 2009). We tested the following second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: Rape myth acceptance will be negatively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, after accounting for the effects of instrumentality.

Subjective norms refer to individuals' perceptions of their peers' intentions to perform the behavior and the perceived social pressure to comply with the broader community norms (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006). An individual's perception of how his or her peers feel and act can be a strong determinant of individual action, even if the perceived norm is inaccurate (Fabiano et al., 2003; Fishbein & Capella, 2006). Existing survey research indicates that people typically underestimate whether their peers will intervene in a sexual assault situation (Fabiano et al., 2003; Stein & Barnett, 2004). Further, men's perceptions that their peers will not intervene were negatively associated with their own intentions to do so, explaining as much as 42% of the variance in men's intentions to intervene (Fabiano et al., 2003). Essentially, individuals may fail to intervene in a sexual assault situation if they perceive that the broader community norms do not value helping or if they believe their friends would not intervene (Banyard et al., 2004; Fabiano et al., 2003). Thus, we tested the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Greater perceptions of peers' willingness to intervene will be positively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, after accounting for the effects of instrumentality.

Efficacy is the third predictor of behavioral intentions, according to the integrative model of behavioral prediction. Bandura (1986, 2002) conceptualized self-efficacy as the level of confidence an individual has about being capable of performing certain behaviors. The greater confidence an individual has in his or her ability to complete an action, the more successful they will be doing so. As such, perceived self-efficacy determines how individuals think and behave. Not surprisingly, individuals who doubt their abilities to successfully intervene are much less likely to attempt to intervene (Burn, 2009). In contrast, individuals who perceive that they can effectively intervene are much more likely to do so (Banyard, 2008). Thus, we tested a fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: Greater confidence in the capability to intervene will be positively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, after accounting for the effects of instrumentality.

Considering the Media's Effects

In the article that introduced the integrative model of behavioral prediction, Fishbein and Capella (2006) conceptualized media exposure as one of a number of background influences on behavioral intentions. The model identifies that exposure to media affects behavioral intentions, although it primarily focuses on media's influence on attitudes and beliefs that subsequently affect behavior. Yet, existing mass communication research, based largely on popular media effects theories such as cultivation and social cognitive theory, has shown that media exposure can contribute uniquely to behavioral intentions. For example, some evidence suggests that exposure to the meta-narratives present in television is associated with behavioral intentions. In one such study, Nabi and Sullivan (2001) found general television exposure was associated with intentions to take protective action to avoid criminal situations. Further, exposure to entertainment media programs that include specific prohealth messages can influence viewers' behavioral intentions. For example, seeing an episode of a popular television program that focused on syphilis predicted viewers' intentions to get screened for the disease (Whittier, Kennedy, St. Lawrence, & Beck, 2005). Similarly, watching an *ER* storyline about obesity and hypertension was associated with self-reported changes in adopting healthy behaviors (Valente, Murphy, Huang, Gusek, & Beck, 2007). Nabi (2009) found that exposure to reality television programs highlighting cosmetic surgery was positively associated with participants' intentions to undergo some forms of cosmetic surgery. When considering the influence of the mass media on bystander intervention in a sexual assault situation, one particular television genre, the primetime crime drama, stands out as a potential contributor to behavioral intentions.

Crime Dramas: Primetime Depictions of Sexual Assault

Crime dramas are widely popular and comprise a significant portion of primetime programming on many networks. In the spring of 2011, for example, 12 of the 30 programs (40%) in the CBS primetime lineup were primarily focused on crime. *CSI*, a crime drama that features forensic crime scene investigations, is one of the most popular primetime shows ever launched by CBS. *CSI* and its spin-offs *CSI: MIAMI* and *CSI: NY* were among the top ten television programs in Nielsen TV Ratings from 2005 to 2008 (Arthur, 2006; Nielsen, 2007, 2008, 2009). In 2010, *NCIS* and *NCIS: Los Angeles*, both CBS dramas featuring special agents in a naval criminal investigative service who investigate crimes for the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps, were among the top 10 regularly scheduled primetime programs (Nielsen, 2010). Crime dramas garner large audiences during primetime, as many of them are in the top 10 programs during the timeslots they air (Nielsen, 2008), and they are also popular in syndication. *Law & Order: SVU* made headlines in December 2008 when it "had been sold in more than 92% of the United States for its debut next fall [2009] in Monday-Friday broadcast syndication" (TV Newsday, December 18, 2008).

Research has demonstrated that a greater frequency of crime and violence is portrayed during primetime television than during any other time (Hetsroni, 2007; Signorielli, 2003). Further, crime dramas contain a greater amount of violence than any other television genre, depicting almost six violent acts each hour (Smith, Nathanson, & Wilson, 2002). Prior content analyses found that the majority of this violence centers on murder, with about one tenth focusing on sexual assault

(Soulliere, 2003). More recent research indicates storylines about sexual violence are becoming increasingly common (Cuklanz & Moorti, 2006).

Existing analyses of this sexually violent content, however, have predominantly focused on the presence or absence of myths about rape, with far fewer analyses focused on prevention messages that may be included in the content. Brinson (1992) revealed that storylines that blame the victim were prevalent in primetime television portrayals of rape, with at least one such rape myth present in the average storyline. Cuklanz (2000) replicated this study in an analysis of more than 100 primetime television programs that aired between 1976 and 1990. She found that in recent years portrayals of rape began to include more proactive female characters and examples of date and acquaintance rape. A recent content analysis of *Law and Order: SVU* (Cuklanz & Moorti, 2006) revealed that the series routinely contains storylines that discredits victim blaming, a key prevention technique.

Analyses of other prevention storylines, such as bystander intervention, have not been conducted. Yet, a review of existing storyline scenarios indicates that bystanders have been included in some of the episodes focused on sexual violence. For example, in one *Law and Order: SVU* episode titled "Outsider," bystanders yelled "stop" and chased after the fleeing perpetrator after witnessing a rape in progress on a subway platform. In the *NCIS* episode titled "Friends and Lovers" a bouncer at a bar intervenes when a rapist tries to slip a date rape drug in a woman's drink. Still, existing research has not determined if bystander intervention depictions such as these are prevalent in crime dramas.

The Positive and Negative Effects of Sexually Violent Content

Research has yet to establish whether televised sexual violence has negative, positive, or any effects on the viewer. The majority of this research has focused almost exclusively on experimental tests of sexually violent content in movies. Cinematic portrayals of sexual violence have been linked to such negative effects as acceptance of violence against women (Malamuth & Check, 1981), acceptance of rape myths (Emmers-Sommer, Pauley, Hanzal, & Triplett, 2006; Weisz & Earls, 1995); victim blaming (Dexter, Penrod, Linz, & Saunders, 1997), and emotional desensitization (Linz, Donnerstein, & Adams, 1989). Yet, Malamuth and his colleagues found exposure to mediated sexual violence had no effects on the viewer (Malamuth, Reisin, & Spinner, 1979). Further, Cantor and colleagues (2003) found that rape was the fourth most frequent sexual event participants remembered seeing in the media but that participants' emotions related to the memory were neither positive nor negative.

Still, some research suggests exposure to sexually violent content may have some positive effects. Evidence suggests that viewers may gain prevention information from storylines about sexual violence (Keller & Brown, 2002; Singhal & Rogers, 2004). In a recent test of social cognitive theory, Lee and colleagues (2011) found that crime dramas may be used to promote prosocial values such as reducing gender stereotypes and debunking rape myths.

To further explore media's role in affecting behavioral intentions, this study explored the following research question:

Research Question 1: In what way will crime drama viewership be associated to intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, after accounting for the contribution of

instrumentality, general television viewing, and relevant beliefs and attitudes?

Method

A total of 508 undergraduates at a large northwestern university completed a questionnaire about media use, sexual assault, and sexual objectification in the fall 2008 semester. The survey is the first part of a year-long study on college students' attitudes toward sexual assault. A list of all students ($N=2,517$) living in on-campus residence halls was obtained from the university's director of residence life. This list included the majority of first-year students who attended the university, as the university requires freshmen to live in residence halls. Prior survey results collected on the campus involved in the study indicated that the freshmen population is most at risk for sexual assault. A message advertising the survey was then sent to each student via an online announcement system. This online announcement provided instructions for accessing a confidential Internet-based survey. Upon completion of the survey, participants had the opportunity to enter a drawing in which five people would receive \$50 each.

Of those who received the messages, 508 responded, for a response rate (American Association for Public Opinion Research, 2008) of 20%. This response rate is common for internet surveys as suggested by meta-analytic research (Shih & Fan, 2007, 2008). Twenty-six surveys were dropped because of ages that did not fall in the appropriate age range (ages of respondents less than 18 years old). An additional 20 surveys were discarded because of failure to complete large portions of the instrument, yielding a total of 462 usable questionnaires for analysis.

Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 28 years ($M=18.22$, $SD=0.74$). Among the 83% of respondents who reported gender, 67% were female and 33% were male. The majority of respondents were Caucasian (85.2%), followed by Asian American (8.1%), Latino/a (4.6%), African American (1.1%), and Pacific Islander (1.1%). Ninety-one students chose not to report their race.

Measures

Instrumentality ($\alpha=.67$)

To measure instrumental characteristics the authors adapted the masculinity subscale from the Personal Attributes Questionnaire (Spence & Helmreich, 1978), which measures socially desirable instrumental traits that are gender stereotyped (Spence, 1993). The Personal Attributes Questionnaire scales used in this study can be considered a measurement for instrumentality (Dambrot, Reep, & Bell, 1988). The scale included the following items: self-confident, independent, competitive, stand up well under pressure, passive (reverse-coded), give up easily (reverse coded), and have difficulty making decisions (reverse-coded).

Rape Myth Acceptance ($\alpha=.76$)

Participants were asked to rate on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) how much they agreed with a series of statements regarding rape myths. The scale consisted of 10 items and was adapted from the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne, Longway, & Fitzgerald, 1999).

For example, participants answered how much they agreed or disagreed with statements such as “If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control” and “A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on the first date is implying that she wants to have sex.”

Perceptions of Peers’ Willingness to Intervene in a Sexual Assault ($\alpha = .69$)

Participants reported, on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), how much they agreed that their college peers would “make sure their friend is ok if they see him/her in an uncomfortable sexual situation at a party,” “warn someone if they saw a drug being slipped into their drink,” and “discourage someone if he/she was planning to get a person drunk to have sex.”

Confidence in Capability to Intervene in a Sexual Assault Situation ($\alpha = .70$)

Participants reported, on 7-point Likert-type scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) and 7 (*strongly agree*), how much they agreed with four statements about intervening in a sexual assault situation. Items included “I’m confident that I could speak up when I see behaviors that support perpetration of sexual assault” and “I’m confident that I could discourage a friend who plans to coerce someone into having sex.”

Frequency of Watching Crime Dramas

Participants were asked how often they watched crime dramas (e.g., *Law and Order*, *CSI*, *NCIS*) on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 7 (*very often*).

Intentions to Intervene in a Sexual Assault Situation ($\alpha = .75$)

Participants were asked on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) how much they agreed with the following: “I would discourage a friend who said they planned to get someone drunk to have sex,” “If my friend was in an uncomfortable sexual situation at a party, I would make sure he/she is ok,” and “If I saw a drug being slipped into someone’s drink, I would warn that person.” The last two measures were adapted from a bystander intervention scale produced by Banyard and colleagues (2004; see Table 1).

To test the hypotheses and answer the research question, the authors used hierarchical ordinary least squares regression. Instrumentality and general television viewing was entered in the first block of the regression. Rape myth acceptance, perceived norms of peers’ intentions to intervene, and participants’ confidence in their abilities to intervene in a sexual assault were entered in the second block, and frequency of crime drama viewing was entered in the third block.

In addition, the authors originally thought to account for the potential effect of general television viewing, which was measured on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*not often at all*) to 7 (*very often*). General television viewing was entered into the first block of the regression with instrumentality. It was not significantly associated with the outcome measure at the point of entry, and so it was removed from the final analyses.

The casewise diagnostic analysis was applied to detect potential outliers in the model. Cases that exceeded three standard deviations from the mean on the dependent variable were subject to investigation. On the basis of the results of the analysis, cases that exceeded five standard residuals on the dependent variable were removed from the full model as outliers. In total, one case (0.003% of the sample) was

Table 1. Mean scores for measures of interest

	<i>n^a</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>
<i>Rape myths acceptance</i>	410	2.32	0.82	.76
If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control.	400	3.03	1.90	
A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on the first date is implying that she wants to have sex.	400	2.55	1.56	
Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men.	400	3.16	1.65	
When a man is very sexually aroused, he may not even realize that his partner is resisting.	400	3.80	1.78	
If a woman doesn't physically resist sex—even when protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape.	400	1.79	1.28	
Rape is unlikely to happen in the women's own familiar neighborhoods.	400	1.93	1.27	
In reality, women are almost never raped by their boyfriends.	400	2.20	1.34	
If a woman is willing to "make out" with a guy, then it's no big deal if he goes a little further and has sex.	400	1.59	1.09	
If a woman isn't a virgin, then it shouldn't be a big deal if her date forces her to have sex.	400	1.32	0.86	
Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them.	400	1.78	1.37	
<i>Confidence in intervening in sexual assault situation</i>	385	6.10	0.83	.70
I am confident that I could...				
Discourage a friend who plans to coerce someone into having sex	377	6.27	1.19	
Speak up when I see behaviors that support perpetuation of sexual assault	377	5.53	1.36	
Intervene to protect a friend from a potential sexual assault situation	377	6.44	0.93	
Contribute to the safety of the university campus	377	6.18	1.08	
<i>Social norms related to bystander intervention</i>	396	5.81	1.09	.69
Most students at my university would...				
Make sure their friend is ok if they see him/her in an uncomfortable sexual situation at a party	395	5.06	1.33	
Warn someone if they saw a drug being slipped into their drink	395	5.70	1.32	
Discourage a friend who said they planned to get someone drunk to have sex	395	4.77	1.53	
<i>Intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation</i>	388	6.67	0.63	.75
I would discourage a friend who said they planned to get someone drunk to have sex	389	6.51	1.03	

(Continued)

Table 1. Continued

	<i>n^a</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>α</i>
If my friend was in an uncomfortable sexual situation at a party, I would make sure he/she is ok ^b	389	6.65	0.76	
If I saw a drug being slipped into someone's drink, I would warn that person ^b	389	6.81	0.61	
<i>Instrumentality</i>	382	5.05	0.97	.68
<i>Exposure to crime dramas</i>	460	4.01	2.13	

^aSample size differs between items and the scale because of listwise deletion in reliability analyses.

^bItems were adapted from Banyard et al. (2005).

removed in the presented models. Outliers were removed because methodologically they exerted extreme influences on the regression line. In theory, outliers may represent individuals who are fundamentally different than the general population on the dependent variable. Thus, it is more appropriate to investigate those cases in a separate evaluation. A regression analysis including all cases was examined by the researchers, but because of space limitations, this model is not presented here.

Results

Instrumentality was entered in the regression as the first predictor (see Table 2). It explained a modest, but significant amount of variance in participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, adjusted $R^2 = .022$, $F(1, 372) = 9.55$, $p < .01$. Instrumentality was shown to positively predict participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, $\beta = .158$, $t(372) = 3.09$, $p < .01$. That is, participants who had higher levels of instrumentality were more likely to intervene in a sexual assault situation. Hence, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

The three predictors identified by the integrative model of behavioral prediction, rape myth acceptance, perceived social norms related to intervening, and confidence in intervening, were entered in the next step of the regression. All the predictors explained 36.7% of the variance in intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, adjusted $R^2 = .360$, $F(4, 369) = 53.46$, $p < .001$. In addition to instrumentality, the three new predictors explained 34.2% more variance compared with instrumentality alone, $\Delta R^2 = .342$, $F(3, 369) = 66.42$, $p < .001$. The influence of instrumentality, however, was no longer significant.

As predicted, rape myth acceptance negatively predicted participants' intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation, $\beta = -.217$, $t(369) = -.03$, $p < .001$. Individuals who were more likely to accept rape myths had lower intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation. The results also indicated that perceived social norms positively predicted intentions to intervene. Participants who perceived their peers would intervene in a potential sexual assault situation were more likely to intervene themselves, $\beta = .118$, $t(369) = 2.81$, $p < .01$. In addition, the model indicated that participants' confidence in their ability to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation positively predicted their intentions to intervene as well,

Table 2. Summary of hierarchical regression analysis for intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation

Variable	Block 1			Block 2			Block 3		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	β	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β
Instrumentality	.101	.033	.158*		-.008	.028	-.012	.028	-.017
Social norms related to bystander intervention					.067	.024	.118*	.024	.119*
Rape myths acceptance					-.168	.033	-.217*	.033	-.217**
Confidence in intervening in sexual assault situation					.366	.034	.484***	.034	.481***
Crime drama exposure								.012	.086*
R^2		.025				.367		.374	
Adjusted R^2		.022				.360		.366	
F		9.56**				53.46***		44.01***	
Change in R^2		.025				.342		.007	
F for changes in R^2		9.57**				66.41***		4.29*	

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

$\beta = .484$, $t(369) = 10.64$, $p < .001$. Participants who had greater confidence in their abilities to intervene were more likely to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation. These results were consistent with Hypotheses 2, 3, and 4.

To answer the research question, crime drama viewership was added in the last step of the regression to predict participants' intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation. It explained .7% more variance after considering all previous predictors, $\Delta R^2 = .007$, $F(1, 368) = 4.29$, $p < .05$. Although the percent of variance explained is not large, the fact that crime drama viewership had a unique contribution to bystander's intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation, even after controlling for all previous predictors, is significant and meaningful. Crime drama viewership positively predicted participants' intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation, $\beta = .086$, $t(368) = 2.07$, $p < .05$, with more frequent viewing of crime drama leading to greater intentions to intervene.

The final model explained 38% of the variance in participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, adjusted $R^2 = .366$, $F(1, 368) = 44.01$, $p < .001$. To conclude, the final model revealed that perceived social norms related to intervening and confidence in intervening positively predicted participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation, whereas rape myth acceptance negatively predicted participants' intentions to intervene (see table two for the parameter estimations in the final model). Further, crime drama viewership positively predicted participants' intentions to intervene even after taking into account all previous predictors.

Discussion

The integrative model of behavioral prediction provides a framework for how personal attributes, attitudes and beliefs can influence behavior. On the basis of this model, it was predicted that instrumentality, rape myth acceptance, perceptions of peers' willingness to intervene, and perceived confidence in abilities to intervene would be associated with intentions to intervene. Given that media exposure was also identified as a background influence in the integrative model of behavioral predication, we questioned whether exposure to prime time crime dramas would be associated with intentions to intervene in a potential sexual assault situation.

Prior research has indicated that an individual's confidence and self-assertiveness is associated with their intentions to intervene in a sexual assault (e.g., Banyard, 2008), which was supported in this study. Instrumentality was positively associated with intentions to intervene. After considering the effects of relevant attitudes and beliefs, however, instrumentality was no longer a significant predictor of bystander intervention. This may signify that other beliefs and attitudes play a greater role in an individual's intentions to intervene. Additional investigations are needed, however, to fully identify the role instrumentality plays in intentions to intervene in a sexual assault.

As expected, individuals who accept rape myths were significantly less likely to report intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation. This finding lends support to prior research (Banyard, 2008; Banyard et al., 2004; Burn, 2009; McMahon, 2010) that indicates rape myth acceptance is a particularly salient attitude associated with bystander intervention in sexual assault. Thus health communication practitioners attempting to encourage bystander intervention in sexual assault situations will need to also decrease individuals' beliefs in rape myths.

Individuals are also more likely to intervene if they perceive that their friends will also intervene (Banyard, 2004; Burn, 2009). In this study, greater perceptions of peers' willingness to intervene were associated positively with intentions to intervene. The development of a sense of responsibility among bystanders is essential in initiating their decision to help prevent a sexual assault, and this includes changing their perceptions of how others would act if faced with a similar situation (Gaulin & McBurney, 2001). These results indicate that prevention programs may need to focus on increasing individuals' positive perceptions of their peers' behaviors.

Confidence in one's ability to intervene in a sexual assault was also positively associated with intentions to intervene, as predicted. This supports previous research (Banyard, 2008; Burns, 2009) and lends additional support to the importance of self-efficacy in behavioral intentions. As Bandura (1986) posited, the greater confidence individuals have in their abilities to complete an action, the more successful they will be doing so. In addition, these findings suggest that sexual assault prevention should focus on increasing confidence in one's ability to intervene. Future research will need to identify the factors associated with increased confidence in intervention.

This study tested the three primary determinants of intentions as identified by the integrative model of behavioral prediction (Fishbein & Cappella, 2006). Fishbein and Cappella posit that not all three predictors will always be significantly associated with the behavior intention under investigation as some behaviors will be primarily determined by one or two of the predictors. The results of the present study indicate that all three primary determinants are significantly associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault. Further, these three predictors account for 34% of the variance in participants' intentions to intervene. In recent years, sexual assault prevention research has increasingly focused on bystander prevention (e.g., Berkowitz, 2001). This is in part because bystander intervention promotes an environment that does not support sexual assault. Bystander intervention has been heralded as one of the most effective means to prevent sexual assault (Berkowitz, 2001; Burn, 2009). The results from the present study suggest that these prevention efforts should focus on decreasing beliefs in accepting rape myths, increasing individuals' perceptions that their peers will intervene, and increasing confidence in their abilities to intervene in a sexual assault situation.

The integrative model of behavioral predication also identifies that exposure to media plays a role in behavioral intentions, although it primarily focuses on media's influence on attitudes and beliefs that subsequently influence behavior. A number of existing studies have shown the media can contribute uniquely to behavioral intentions (e.g., Nabi & Sullivan, 2001; Valente, Murphy, Huang, Gusek, & Beck, 2007; Whittier, Kennedy, St. Lawrence, & Beck, 2005). To further explore media's role in affecting behavioral intentions, this study questioned whether exposure to primetime crime dramas would be uniquely associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault, even after controlling for the other predictors. After accounting for the influence of the three primary determinants, this study indicates exposure to crime dramas was positively associated with intentions to intervene. Exposure to primetime crime dramas explained .7% more variance after considering all previous predictors.

These results are not particularly surprising given the content of some crime drama programs, although the results do suggest more research needs to be conducted in this area. Crime dramas often portray rape (Cuklanz & Moorti, 2006), and when doing so they tend to depict the severity of its impact on victims. Thus, these

programs establish sexual assault as an important and valid issue, which may influence perceptions of the victims' distress and intentions to intervene. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine whether crime drama viewership is associated with perceptions of victims' distress and perceived severity of the crime.

The results of this study, in addition to the findings of previous research, have demonstrated the negative influence of rape myth acceptance on intentions to intervene in a sexual assault situation. Content analyses of crime dramas indicate that in recent years they have directly debunked some common rape myths (Cuklanz & Moorti, 2006). It is possible that exposure to crime dramas could be positively associated with decreased acceptance of rape myths, which may increase intentions to intervene. Future research should be conducted to test these potential effects of crime drama viewing.

Although the frequency of depictions of bystander intervention in crime dramas has not been established, it is clear that at least some crime drama episodes portray bystander intervention. Exposure to such portrayals may increase viewers' intentions to intervene by increasing their confidence to do so. Future research should examine this possible outcome of exposure to crime dramas.

These results also have a practical application. Lee and her colleagues (2011) identified that experimental exposure to sexually violent clips from crime dramas was associated with lower acceptance of rape myths and female objectification. The authors posited that crime dramas may be a useful venue for sexual assault prevention messaging. Sexual assault prevention messages embedded in crime dramas can potentially reach a large and diverse audience that actively seeks exposure. The results from the present study expand this body of knowledge. This study's results indicate that simply watching crime dramas was positively associated with intentions to intervene in a sexual assault.

Although the relation between crime drama viewership and intentions to intervene was small in magnitude, these findings are significant and meaningful given the prevalence and severity of sexual assault and the popularity and prevalence of crime dramas in primetime television. Further, it is possible that larger effect sizes may be generated by exposure to crime dramas that have a greater focus on sexual violence (e.g., *Law and Order: SVU*). Future research should examine the influence of individual crime drama series on attitudes related to bystander intervention and sexual assault. In addition, future research should test these relations among regular viewers or fans of crime dramas to determine whether the relation is greater within these populations.

Limitations

The limitations of this study should be considered. The results lend support to the argument that the media play a role in influencing intentions to intervene in a sexual assault, but direct causality cannot be inferred. The cross-sectional nature of this study constrains the findings to associations as the direct order of effects cannot be determined. Longitudinal research is needed to establish whether exposure to crime dramas can directly predict intentions to intervene in a sexual assault.

Further, this study focused solely on explaining intentions to intervene in a sexual assault. It is posited that intentions to intervene will likely translate into actual intervention behaviors, but research has yet to establish this. Thus, it is possible that actual intervention behaviors will not be explained by the media's effects. Future

research should extend the present study to include the effects of crime drama exposure on actual intervention behaviors.

This study also considers crime drama exposure at the aggregate level, and it is possible that specific programs may have greater or lesser effects on this outcome measure. Future research, for example, should determine whether exposure to crime dramas that primarily focus on sexual assault (e.g., *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*) has a greater effect on intentions to intervene in sexual assaults than exposure to other crime dramas in which sexual assault portrayals are less common (e.g., *NCIS*). These results, however, do indicate that exposure to crime dramas, in general, is positively associated with intentions to intervene in sexual assaults.

This study is also based on a college student population, so it is uncertain whether these findings will generalize to a more general population. Although a strong rationale can be made for studying college students, given that they are at greater risk for sexual assault than other populations, it is important to establish whether these findings can be replicated among other demographic groups. Future studies should undertake such investigations.

These results lend support for the integrative model of behavioral prediction in that instrumentality, rape myth acceptance, perceived social norms, perceived efficacy related to intervening, and exposure to primetime crime dramas were associated with participants' intentions to intervene in a sexual assault. Further, the results suggest that crime dramas may be a useful venue for prevention messages. If the entertainment education strategy, which is the purposeful use of entertainment media to disseminate prosocial messages (Singhal & Rogers, 1999), is applied to crime dramas, it is possible that the genre could play an even greater role in the prevention of sexual assault. Organizations that aim to stop sexual assault may want to consider working with script writers of crime dramas to purposefully develop storylines that model and reward bystander intervention in sexual assault situations.

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