Meeting Them Where We Were...

(and moving beyond the choir)

Jonathan Grove
Pacific Lutheran University
Men Against Violence
Overview and Goals:
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  • Why is that? What can we do to change that?
  • Are there commonalities among men or their experiences who do join that we can replicate?
Engaging Men Study – Dr Erin Casey, UWT

• To examine the factors associated with recent initiation into anti-violence work or activities

• To identify current engagement strategies, and assess participants’ perception of their effectiveness

• To identify factors that may contribute to the sustainability of men’s anti-violence efforts.
Men’s Pathways: A Model

SENSITIZING EXPERIENCE
- Disclosure / witness
- Social justice consciousness
- Learning opportunity
- Influenced by women
- Hearing stories

OPPORTUNITY EXPERIENCE
- Personal invitation / nomination
- Personal / community connections
- Looking for community
- Job/volunteer-position seeking

MAKING MEANING
- Compelled to action
- Shift in world view
- Joining with others

ANTI- VIOLENCE INVOLVEMENT

SUSTAINED INVOLVEMENT
- Action
- Inspiration
- Support

Thursday, January 14, 2010
# Meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Compelled to action</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charged with a mandate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seeing an addressable need</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifying own strengths</td>
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<tr>
<th>Shift in world view</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awareness of vulnerability of women</td>
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<td>Using a structural analysis</td>
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<td>Reassessing the past</td>
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<th>Joining with others</th>
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<td>Feeling connected</td>
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<td>Doing masculinity differently</td>
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### Sustaining Men’s Efforts

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Inspiration</th>
<th>Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting things done</td>
<td>Having mentors</td>
<td>Having a safe space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being needed</td>
<td>Hearing survivor stories</td>
<td>Support from women</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td></td>
<td>Being in a compelling community</td>
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Barriers to Gaining Access

- Non-personal approaches (media, large events, presentations)
- Male privilege / “This doesn’t apply to me”
- Men not identifying with the messenger
- Structural barriers
Some Observations...

- About 60% of men framed their involvement, or the issue of violence against women in terms of anti-sexism or social justice work.

- Few participants spoke about their own behavior, or possible complicity in sexism – they tended to talk about “other” men.

- Although many men spoke of inclusiveness, few framed this in terms of race/ethnicity or sexual orientation.

- Many of the reasons for involvement cited here mirror long-term activists. These participants may not, therefore, represent “typical” men outside the current circles of engagement.
Assumptions:
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1. Cultural Shift
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2. Men (as a group) need to start being part of the solution and not the problem.
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2. Men (as a group) need to start being part of the solution and not the problem.

3. We need to balance involving men, while continuing to confront Patriarchy.
Further Assumptions:

4. We are not going to recruit perpetrators.
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   a) “Fixing” them after they’ve perpetrated is a different process than educating majority men who disdain male domination/violence.
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   b) Rather, we’re trying to recruit men who probably are guilty of some level of dominance and support sexism/sexist violence, through ignorance not malice.
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5. Men have empathy and are just as
Final Assumption:

6. If we expect “Average Joes” to join us, we need to be willing to go there – meet them where they are and balance our values with negotiating the ideas they live with and support. By doing so, we aren’t selling out, but rather finally reaching a huge population who can (and will) help us achieve social change.
Where Are We?

• What are your goals around engaging men?

• How do you reach men?
  – Do you have a guiding framework or model?

• What do you do to reach men?

• Are you successful?
  – What would you like to be different?
What’s Our Recruitment
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Challenges/Baggage
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• Men’s violence against women is “their issue”
• History
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  – Women’s Movement has done AMAZING things, (not always egalitarian – racism, classism, homophobia), but has had baggage tied to Feminism.

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• Men who are highly involved tend to come from some type of privilege, or contrarily, have had direct experience
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• What we are asking
Where Are We?

Strategies used by Casey’s participants to engage men they have access to:

- Meeting men where they are
- Use of Self
- Positive approach to men
- Survivor stories
- Embedded in broader conversations about relationships, sex
- Creating compelling communities

- What are your barriers?

- Observations about engaged men
Some Observations...  Dr. Erin Casey

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• Aspiring Ally for Self-Interest
  • Motivation: for people I know and love (must be present)
  • Ally to: A person
  • Victims are: my sister, mother, friend
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- Privilege: Does not see privilege – wants to maintain status quo
Ally Status  Dr. Keith Edwards

- Aspiring Ally for Altruism
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Edwards, Keith; Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development: A Conceptual Model

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Edwards, Keith; Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development: A Conceptual Model

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Edwards, Keith; Aspiring Social Justice Ally Identity Development: A Conceptual Model

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  - Avoiding barriers
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  - Opportunities to teach

- **“Activist Joe”**
  - Opportunities to teach and further grow
  - Support & connection to peers/mentors
  - Opportunities to further the “cause”
A Framework...

Framework created by Jonathan Grove, brain-child of Bobbi Hughes, and drawn from the work of Dr Erin Casey, Rus Funk and Dr. Keith Edwards.

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Most college men underestimate the extent to which other men feel uncomfortable with language or behavior which objectifies and/or degrades women.

(Berkowitz, 1994 & Kilmartin, 1999)
Positions of Strength:
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- has pain associated with rigid gender roles
- is frustrated that women fear them
Strategies For Delivering The Message

Strategies used by Erin’s participants to engage men they have access to:

- Meeting men where they are
  - Tailoring conversations
  - Using masculinity
  - Men see themselves reflected

- Use of Self

- Positive approach to men

- Survivor stories

- Embedded in broader conversations about relationships, sex

- Creating compelling communities
Beyond the Choir:
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The “Average Joe” population is huge and we need them.
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Ground work:
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- We need to do our own work...we have LOTS of assumptions and fears that do not allow them an opportunity to engage.
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Ground work:

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- Set realistic goals and benchmarks.

- Ask… Be honest and genuine, appeal to what is relevant for them, and ask for their help. You’ll be surprised!
Beyond the Choir:
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The “Aware Joe” population will be huge and we need them.
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A Process:
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- Make stepping stones part of their engagement process, but have patience (SO hard to do!).
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- Create opportunities for mentoring/modeling.

- Challenge them to ask the hard questions of themselves, friends, family, etc.
Beyond the Choir:

“Internalized and Activist Joe” populations will be huge and we need them.
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Sustainability:
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Sustainability:

- Continue stepping stones as part of their engagement, but focus on broadening their understanding, increasing leadership and activism opportunities and skills.
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- They need tangible “wins” both at the individual
"We aren't about judging men from wherever they are coming to this conversation -- lord knows it was only a few short weeks/months/years since any of us were sitting in very similar places -- really NOT wanting to hear whatever it is that "those feminists" have to say about these issues. And yet, here we are."
Thank you!
Thank you all for the work you do, get paid far too little for, and receive even less thanks. You **ARE** helping to make the world a better place!

Additional thanks to:
Erin Casey, Keith Edwards, Rus Funk, Bobbi Hughes, Jennifer Warwick, Caitlin Back, Joshua O’Donnell, Dorothy Edwards, Ben Atherton-Zeman, Kim Eby, Rebecca Walter, Connie Kirkland, Christine Mathias, Advocates around the country, and countless women and men who have come before, taught and inspired me, and made this presentation possible.