

Men Preventing Violence?

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Part 1: The 'engaging men' field

- A growing emphasis on 'engaging men', in violence prevention and in other gender-related fields.
- Rationale: We must address boys and men because:
 1. It is largely boys and men who perpetrate this violence.
 2. Constructions of masculinity play a crucial role in shaping boys' and men's violence against women and girls.
 3. Boys and men have a positive role to play in helping to stop violence against women.

Violence prevention: Multiple levels of intervention

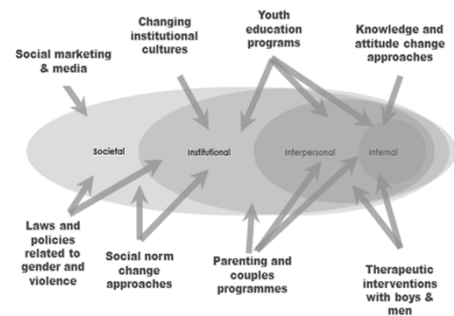
- Men's violence against women is the outcome of a complex interplay of individual, relationship, community, institutional, and societal factors.



Figure 1 - Ecological model proposed by the World Health Organization

- *Primary* prevention: Aims to prevent initial perpetration or victimisation
- Six levels of intervention – a spectrum of prevention.

The field: Transforming masculinities through combined changes across the social ecology



Level 1: Strengthening Individual Knowledge and Skills

- To increase individuals' capacity to prevent or avoid violence.
- Including;
 - Programs for boys who have witnessed or experienced violence in families.
 - Interventions in parenting and family relations
 - E.g., MenCare campaign



Level 2: Promoting Community Education

- Face-to-face educational groups and programs
 - E.g., 'healthy relationships' education or 'respectful relationships' education in schools
- Other strategies take place outside school and university settings.
 - Including peer education and mentoring.

Discussion groups fostering gender equality:
On US college campuses



Discussion groups fostering gender equality: Men's
Resources International training, Liberia



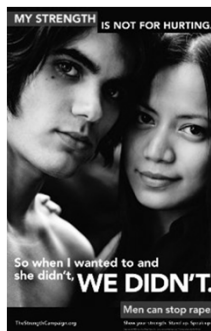
Community Education *continued*

- Communication and social marketing
- Other creative strategies: film, street theatre, comics, radio and TV, song, etc.
- Local educational strategies:
 - 'Social norms' campaigns
 - 'Bystander intervention' campaigns
- Other media strategies

Building men's support for non-violence:
Men Can Stop Rape campaign (USA)



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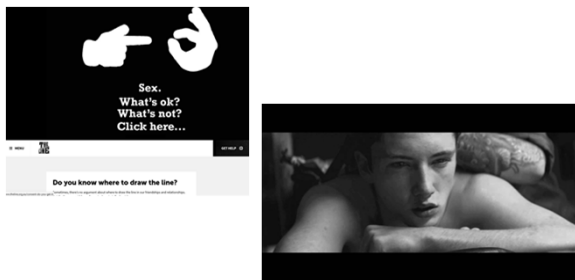
Violence Against Women — It's Against All the Rules (NSW, 2000 – 2003)



Contemporary Australian campaigns



The Line (Australia, 2015-2016)

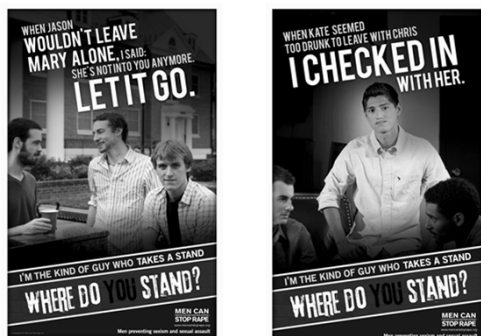


Social norms campaigns



E.g., closing the gap between men's perceptions of other men's agreement with violence-supportive and sexist norms and the actual extent of this agreement

Bystander intervention campaigns



Mobilising particular groups of men: fathers

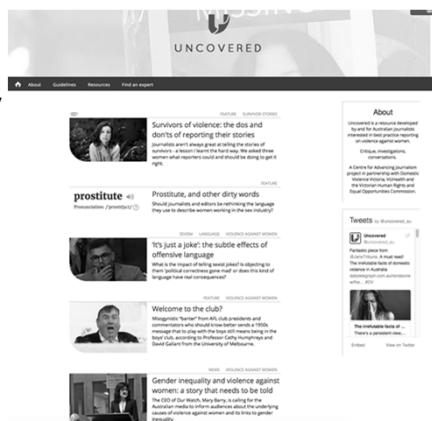


Community Education *continued*

- Local educational strategies:
 - 'Social norms' campaigns: closing the gap between actual and perceived agreement with violence-supportive norms
 - 'Bystander intervention' campaigns
- Other media strategies
 - Better news reporting
 - 'Uncovered' project
 - Media literacy
 - 'It's Time We Talked' project
 - Media regulation



Media advocacy: 'Uncovered' project



Pornography education: 'It's time we talked'



Level 3: Educating providers and other professionals

- Educating professionals
 - Often involve working with men in male-dominated institutions.
 - Examples: with coaches, police, military forces, and faith-based leaders



Level 4: Engaging, Strengthening, and Mobilising Communities

- Need to change the social norms, gender roles, and power relations which feed into violence against women.
- Promising strategies of community engagement and strengthening...

Level 4 *continued*: Mobilising Communities

- Other important strategies, particularly with women:
 - Economic empowerment
 - Social empowerment interventions with vulnerable groups
 - E.g., among sex workers

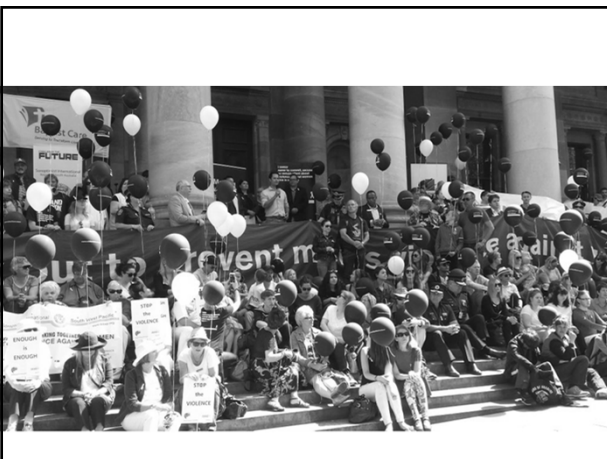
Level 4 *continued*: Mobilising Communities

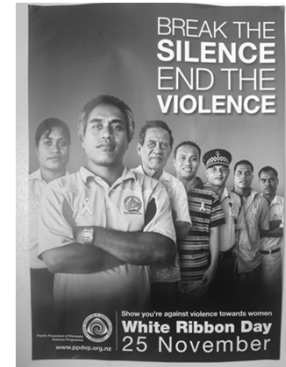
- Mobilise communities through events, networks, and campaigns.
- Build grassroots men's groups and networks.
 - White Ribbon Campaign
 - Men As Partners program
 - Many other groups...

Men Against Sexual Assault (grassroots profeminist activism, early 1990s)



White Ribbon Campaign in Australia





Mobilizing men for gender justice:
South African Men as Partners Network



'Walk a Mile in Her Shoes' campaign (Los Angeles, 2007)



'Walk a Mile in Her Shoes' campaign (Perth, 2014)



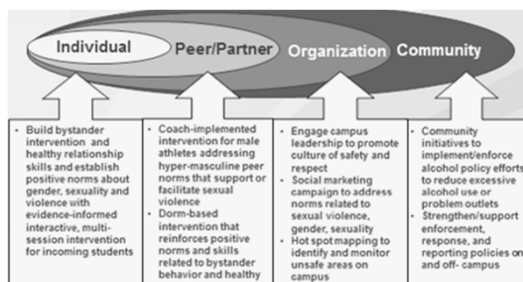
'Walk a Mile Koori Style', 2016



Level 5: Changing Organizational Practices

- Changing organisational and institutional cultures and systems
 - Example: whole-of-school violence prevention
- Intervening in male-dominated and homosocial contexts
 - Example: a sporting institution taking systematic action to address sexual assault: the Australian Football League.
 - Example: the Australian military

On campus? A comprehensive strategy is needed...



Level 6: Influencing Policies and Legislation

- Law and policy are crucial tools of prevention. They:
 - have a wide-reaching effect;
 - can shift social norms;
 - help establish particular strategies of prevention; and
 - enable violence prevention work



Men's anti-violence work: Achievements

- Is well established, through significant national and international groups and networks
- Shows evidence of effectiveness
 - 3 reviews of published studies...
- Has increasing support through both international commitments and state and national government policies
- Is growing in scale and sophistication
- Is based on feminist frameworks and done generally in collaboration with women

Limitations

- Most of the work isn't done by men.
- The growing focus on engaging men and boys in prevention is politically delicate. It has:
 - diminished the legitimacy of women-only and women-focused programmes and services; and
 - fuelled the invalidation and marginalisation of the expertise of women and the women's sector.
- Much of the work engaging men and boys in violence prevention is conceptually simplistic and thus ineffective.
- There is much which is unknown about effective practice.

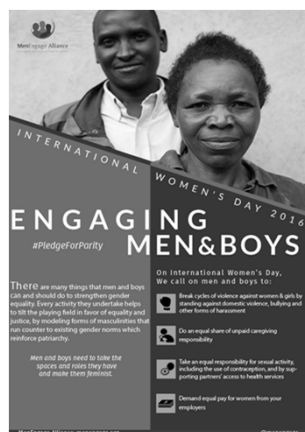
Understandings of men, gender, violence, and social change

- A focus on individual attitudes – Neglect of collective, institutional, and structural factors.
- Boys and men as an homogenous group:
 - Neglect of the intersections of multiple forms of social difference and inequality.
 - Challenges in mobilising disadvantaged men.
 - Neglect of men's sexual and gender diversity.

Part 2: The 'turn to men'

- Historical precedents: Early feminists called on men to help end gender injustices.
- Elements:
 - Increased programming and policy attention to men's roles, from the 1990s
 - In such fields as sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health, violence against women, fatherhood and parenting, and HIV/AIDS.
 - Popular discourses of male feminism, 2000s
 - High-profile, men-focused campaigns

Wider context for the 'turn to men': Profound shifts in gender, 'men in crisis', 'the end of men', etc.



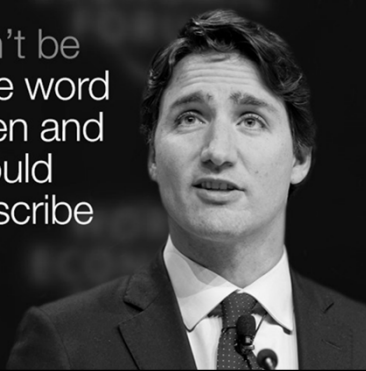
Memes about feminist men (e.g., US actor Ryan Gosling)



Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

We shouldn't be afraid of the word feminist. Men and women should use it to describe themselves

Justin Trudeau
Prime Minister of Canada



The 'turn to men' is good because it:

- Correctly locates responsibility for gender injustice with the group who benefit from it.
- Generates practical programs and policies.
- Gives men practical steps for change – for doing feminism in their everyday lives.
- Names men's everyday sexist practices

Popular language regarding men's sexist practices: 'mansplaining'



Popular language regarding men's sexist practices: 'manspreading'

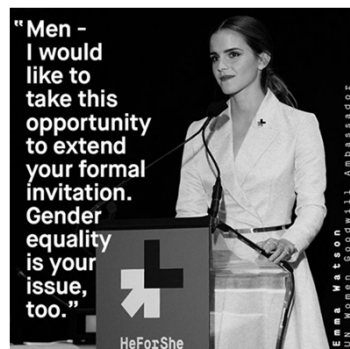


Source: <http://www.citymetric.com/transport/new-yorks-transit-authority-has-launched-campaign-against-manspreading-432>



Danger
Men at work

Case study: HeForShe



Emma Watson,
United Nations,
September 21, 2014

Case study: HeForShe

- A very limited vision of men's roles in relation to gender equality
- Protectionist and individualist discourse
- Appeases men

(More) Feminist critiques

- A 'softly softly' approach to men is ineffective, and does not lead to change.
- Too much deferring to men, treating them with undeserved reverence and authority, and reassuring them.
- Feminist anger at men is legitimate.
- "I am tired of talking about feminism to men."

The 'turn to men' and pop / marketplace feminism

- Feminist critiques of 'pop feminism', 'feminism lite', 'marketplace feminism', or 'cupcake feminism'
- Is the 'turn to men' related to this?

Pop / marketplace feminism

- 1) Feminism has become popular.



Beyoncé performs in front of a Feminist sign at the MTV Video Music Awards, 2014

Pop / marketplace feminism

- 2) Feminism has been stripped of its political and ideological force.
 - Feminism has come to mean everything, and, thus, nothing.
 - 'Anyone can be a feminist'.
 - Feminism as personal identity, not social movement
 - Feminism has been co-opted and de-fanged

Part 3: How to inspire men's commitment and involvement

- What stops men from participating in everyday actions which interrupt or challenge violence and violence-supportive behaviours?
- What stops men from participating in collective advocacy or activism?
- What stops men from being part of the solution?



Barriers to men's involvement

- A vested interest in the status quo
- Violence against women as a 'women's issue'
- Support for sexist and violence-supportive attitudes and norms
- Overestimation of *other* men's comfort with violence and their unwillingness to intervene
- Fears of others' reactions to intervention
- Loyalty to other men
- Negative reactions to violence prevention efforts
- Lack of knowledge of or skills in intervention
- Lack of opportunity or invitation

Making the case to men

- How then do we reach and engage men?
- There has been little empirical evaluation of the effectiveness of different strategies.
- Most literature is based on advocates' perceptions of effective strategies.
- But here's what we know about what will work...

Personalise the issue

- Make it personal:
 - Invite men's awareness of violence or the threat of violence against the women and girls they know and care about.
- And go beyond this:
 - Invite men's care for all women and girls.



Show that men will benefit

- *Personal*/well-being: Freedom from narrow constructions of gender
- *Relational* interests: Improvements in the lives of the women and children with whom men share their lives
- *Collective and community* interests: Benefits to the community in terms of violence, labour, health, etc.

Regarding benefits and losses

- Men will gain from progress in ending VAW. And there are some things men will lose.
- Men who use VAW benefit from this. Men in general benefit from some men's VAW.
- Thus:
 - Men who use VAW will lose the benefits associated with this.
 - Men in general will lose unfair privileges and unearned advantages.

Start where men are

- Start with men *wherever they are*.
- Approach men in a tailored and individualised way
- Use relevant messengers and role models
- Risks:
 - Failing to challenge male privilege
 - Further marginalising particular groups

Build on strengths

- Begin with the positive. E.g., that most men don't use violence.
 - (Although it's not necessarily that simple...)
- Work to minimise hostility and defensiveness. (These can incite backlash and negative impact.)
- And continue to:
 - Center a feminist critique of men's violence and men's power
 - Address men as potential perpetrators

Start with small steps and build to bigger things

- Offer both a desired end state and small steps and mini-goals.
- Acknowledge 'well-meaning' as a launching pad for men's involvement ('good blokes' and 'nice guys').
- And challenge men to reach further.

Show that other men agree

- Show men speaking up and taking action (Bystander intervention).



- Close the gap between men's perceptions of other men's agreement with violence-supportive and sexist norms and the actual extent of this agreement. (Social norms campaigns)

Popularise violence prevention and feminism

- Counter negative perceptions of feminism in general and (feminist) violence prevention in particular.
- Work with men to:
 - Reclaim the F-word.
 - Develop a language of support for feminist ideals.



Diminish fears of others' reactions

- Appeal directly to men's investments in masculinity. 'Real men don't use violence.' (??)
 - Problem: 'Real' men *do* use violence. They're the men most likely to use violence.
 - Problem: Intensifying men's investment in masculinity.
- Encourage men to disinvest in masculinity and heterosexism.
- Foster men's sense that they have a responsibility, even a duty, to take action.

Provide knowledge of and skills in intervention

- Build men's skills in the everyday practices associated with violence prevention
- Three forms of action:
 - Behave non-violently ourselves. (Put your own house in order.)
 - Take action among other men and women. (Be an active bystander.)
 - Take wider collective action. (Join the movement. Become an activist. Change the world.)

Provide opportunities and invitations for involvement

- Find settings through which to recruit men.
- Go to where men are. Reach them particularly through personal networks.
 - Using tailored, individual conversations with men in their existing social, family or professional networks.
- But also reach out past existing networks.

Build communities of support

- Create new kinds of social networks or peer groups for men, different from men's traditional male-male networks.
- Create 'compelling communities' which others will want to join.
 - In both informal friendship groups and formal organisations and networks
 - Both face-to-face and online.
- Also provide safe and supportive spaces for critical reflection.

Take-home messages

1. 'Engaging men' is firmly established as a field of practice within violence prevention and gender justice efforts.
2. This field shows both promise and danger.
3. There are effective ways to engage and mobilise men in projects of personal and collective change.

Resources

- Online resources on men's roles in ending violence against women:
 - <http://www.xyonline.net/category/article-content/violence>
- Dr Michael Flood's publications:
 - <http://www.xyonline.net/category/authors/michael-flood>
- Contact:
 - mflood@uow.edu.au
 - @MichaelGLFlood