BUILDING ON WHAT WE KNOW (AND DON'T!): USING SCHOLARSHIP TO ENGAGE IN PRIMARY PREVENTION OF DATING AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract

In this manuscript, we use Reason and Kimball's (2012) Theory to Practice Model to illustrate our experience building a Center dedicated to addressing dating and sexual violence among college students. We provide details of the context in which we work, highlight the processes we engaged in to recruit a broad swath of campus community members to engage in our collective work, and describe some initial outcomes of our work. We conclude with recommendations for campus leaders wishing to explore theory to practice in the context of addressing dating and sexual violence among college students.

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Rates of sexual violence against women on college campuses have not budged since the first documented study of sexual assault in 1957 (Cantor et al., 2020; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957). More recently, scholars have begun to document how sexual violence impacts all students, not just cisgender, heterosexual, white women, who are frequently centered in research and practice related to dating and sexual violence (DSV). Emerging scholarship suggests perpetrators target queer and trans students, students with disabilities, and students of color at even higher rates than their peers (Cantor et al., 2020). Given the perpetual high rates of sexual violence among college students, our strategies for addressing violence must change. Better addressing power and oppression as the root cause of violence and slowing down and more intentionally integrating scholarship about violence in our practice may contribute to eliminating DSV among college students.

Scholarship and practice exist in silos in many aspects of higher education, including as it relates to addressing DSV among college students (Hurtado, 2021). Most scholarship about DSV among college students exists in the psychological literature, focused on individual-level risk factors, and primarily addresses risk factors among potential victims (Harris et al., 2020; Linder et al., 2020). Further, most strategies for addressing DSV focus on responding to violence after it happens (Silbaugh, 2015), teaching people how to reduce their risk of violence (Badera & Nordmeyer, 2015; Linder et al., 2020) or teaching people to intervene as bystanders (Reid & Dundes, 2017). Rarely do scholars and practitioners come together with students to develop more comprehensive strategies to eradicate sexual violence. To address these challenges, faculty, staff, and students engaged with the McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention at the University of Utah are working to more effectively integrate formal theory and scholarship in our work, illuminate informal theory with which students and educators approach their work, and push educators to engage in reflection to improve their strategies for addressing DSV. We do this within the institutional context in which we exist, highlighting the many factors at play in eradicating DSV among college students.

In this manuscript, we will highlight the use of interdisciplinary scholarship to engage the campus community in efforts to eliminate DSV among college students. Specifically, we use Reason and Kimball's (2012) model of theory-to-practice (TtP) to consider the roles of formal and informal theory and institutional context to organize and lead four working groups focused on various aspects of preventing DSV. Specifically, we highlight our strategies for shifting campus culture through education and research. The efforts we describe here do not look like typical student affairs programs in that they do not focus on awareness-raising or reaching a significant number of people at once. Instead, we focus on shifting culture by providing scholarship to interested campus community members and creating space for them to make sense of it, shifting their perspectives about DSV, and returning to their communities to create change.

Throughout the manuscript, we use the terms "we" and "our" when we describe our own experiences engaging in the efforts of the Center. As described here, each of us participates in integral ways in both the Center and the larger campus community. Chris serves as the founder and inaugural director of the Center and a faculty member in the College of Education who studies dating and sexual violence among college students and student activism. Prior to becoming faculty, Chris worked as a victim-survivor advocate for 10 years, much of that time on a college campus. Jessie is an Assistant Professor/Lecturer in the Eccles School of Business. She is on the Advisory Board of the Center and runs a non-profit dedicated to helping domestic abuse victim/survivors access safe and stable housing. Matthew serves as the Assistant Director of Fraternity and Sorority Life (FSL), primarily advising the Interfraternity Council, the governing body for men's fraternities. He also

serves as co-chair for the Engaging Men's working group and a member of the Shifting the Culture through Education working group. Brittany is the Director of the Center for Student Wellness which provides prevention and wellness education for a variety of collegiate wellness concerns (e.g., violence prevention, sexual health, mental wellness, authentic masculinity) and is also the home for the campus' confidential Victim-Survivor Advocacy program. She also serves on the Advisory Board for the Center. Brian has served as the Associate Dean of Students and Director of Student Accountability and Support within the Office of the Dean of Students for the past five years. He also co-chaired the Preventing Harm working group and serves on the Advisory Board for the Center.

Background

In the 2018-19 academic year, three different men murdered three women affiliated with the University of Utah. Although each situation was unique, the relationships between the perpetrator and victim of the crimes include some sort of dating or intimate partner relationship. One of these situations garnered national media attention and has remained at the forefront of news related to our institution for the past three years.

As one of several initiatives designed to improve campus safety, President Ruth Watkins supported the initiation and development of the McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention (MCVP), whose mission is to eliminate DSV among college students through a primary prevention lens. Prevention strategies typically fall within three categories: primary, secondary, or tertiary prevention. Primary prevention efforts aim to prevent violence from occurring in the first place and seek to reduce the overall likelihood that someone would experience violence or perpetrate harm in general. Secondary prevention aims to intervene when early warning signs appear to reduce the impact of violence on a person or a community. Tertiary measures focus specifically on managing or mitigating the impact once violence has already occurred for survivors, those who have caused harm, and others who may identify as secondary survivors (McMahon, 2000). The Center specifically focuses on primary prevention work as secondary and tertiary prevention efforts are already well-established on the campus. We have worked to integrate TtP in every aspect of the Center, including the development of five working groups charged with designing programming to implement the strategic plan of the Center (McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention, n.d.).

In the summer of 2020, Chris identified an advisory board, consisting of student affairs professionals, students, and faculty, to direct the work of the MCVP. Members of the advisory board wrote a strategic plan that included six overarching goals, each with several objectives. The overarching goals aim to shift the campus culture to focus on preventing violence from happening in the first place, rather than primarily focusing on responding to violence after it occurs. Specifically, we aim to address DSV among college students by focusing on better understanding and intervening with perpetrators of violence and addressing peer cultures that allow violence to thrive.

In Fall 2020, members of the advisory board identified four working groups, including co-chairs for each group, to implement the strategic plan. Working groups included Preventing Harm, Affinity Group Education, Shifting the Culture through Education, and Engaging Men. Co-chairs included student affairs educators, students, and faculty. We sent a call to the campus community inviting anyone affiliated with the institution to join one of the working groups. We received over 150 responses, indicating that campus community members were interested in addressing DSV issues more effectively. Members of the working groups included faculty, staff, and students from various campus entities, including university marketing and communications, the college of fine arts, college of public health, campus safety, the health sciences campus, and the division of student affairs. Working groups began meeting in January

2021, and members of working groups began their work by reading scholarly articles related to their group's topic and engaging in reflection about the assumptions they bring to addressing DSV among college students. Reason and Kimball's (2012) TtP model provides a foundation to guide the processes of the working groups.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Student affairs educators often implicitly use theory to guide their practice (Bensimon, 2007; Boss et al., 2018). Specifically, student affairs educators who attended graduate school or other professional development training have been exposed to several theories and frameworks that may guide their practice. However, many educators do not realize they consistently use these theories to guide their work because the theories become such an implicit part of their thinking (Boss et al., 2018). Without conscious reflection and self-awareness, these implicit theories may result in harmful student affairs practice. When people rely on implicit theories they have developed without understanding their associated assumptions, they risk perpetuating harmful stereotypes and engaging in behavior that causes harm to students (Bensimon, 2007). A TtP model that includes intentional reflection and self-awareness allows for a more deliberate integration of formal and informal theories to develop strategies for more effectively addressing persistent problems in higher education and beyond.

Reason and Kimball's (2012) TtP model provides a way to make the implicit explicit and structure thinking about employing theory in student affairs practice. First, student affairs educators must assess what we know about students, student development, and other related research through formal theories or scholarship. In our case, we relied heavily on the scholarship addressing DSV among college students, with a particular emphasis on centering students with minoritized identities. Historically, research and practice related to DSV have centered cisgender, heterosexual white women (Harris et al., 2020; Linder et al., 2020), so we intentionally work to interrupt the dominant narrative by re-centering queer and trans students, women of color, and students with disabilities in our work.

Second, the model suggests that student affairs educators should consider the institutional context in which they practice their work. Specifically, this includes understanding the demographics of the students on the campus, the unique characteristics of the context in which the institution exists, and any additional factors contributing to the culture of the campus (Reason & Kimball, 2012). In our case, recognizing the impact of violence on our campus community due to the highly publicized murders in 2018-19 is a significant part of our institutional context.

Third, student affairs educators use informal theory to guide their work. Informal theory consists of the many ways student affairs educators make sense of their environments and notice trends and patterns in their work with students (Reason & Kimball, 2012). Student affairs educators may use formal theory or scholarship, institutional context, and informal theory to lead them to make decisions about engaging in their student affairs practice. In the TtP model, student affairs educators then reflect on their practice, which results in feedback loops that inform their future work (Reason & Kimball, 2012). For example, student affairs educators may recognize they attempted to employ a student development theory created in the 1970s in their current work, but the theory may need to be adapted to account for the contemporary contexts in which they exist.

The co-chairs led the working group members in ongoing TtP strategies, including assigning relevant readings, inviting scholars to present information at working group meetings, processing trends and patterns that working group members note, and engaging in ongoing reflection. Further, the co-chairs met regularly to discuss their experiences with the working groups and strategize about moving the work forward.

Reflection-in-Action

We employed a reflection-in-action methodology (Daley, 2010) to better understand the role of TtP in the strategies of the working groups affiliated with the MCVP. Because the work of the MCVP is long-term, we may not recognize any immediate declines in DSV because of the strategies employed by the working groups; however, we can begin to track the influence of TtP in the working group strategies and, in the long term, may identify specific strategies that to assist in future efforts to address DSV among college students.

To assess and track our progress, working group co-chairs and members engaged in reflection and discussion to better understand how theory informed their work related to ending DSV among college students. Specifically, co-chairs met regularly throughout the spring semester to discuss and reflect on their experiences with the working groups. In summer 2021, we, the authors of this manuscript, met to discuss the TtP model and reflect on the role of scholarship in the working groups in spring 2021. We recorded two meetings where we reflected on our experiences leading the working groups. Consistent with the Reason and Kimball (2012) TtP model, we discussed the roles of formal and informal theory in our work, the influence of institutional context, outcomes from our engagement with TtP in the working groups, and how ongoing feedback influenced our work.

Formal Theory

Formal theory adheres to the norms of scholarly rigor and is designed to eliminate untested and potentially problematic assumptions from practice. Although informal theory may assist practitioners in bridging the gap between formal theory and practice, these programmatic efforts must be grounded in scholarship and formal theory (Evans & Guido, 2012). Additionally, Reason and Kimball (2012) argued that the absence of clear connections between scholarly theory and its application to practice compromises practitioners' ability to engage in the reflection necessary to create theory-informed programs or adjust existing practices. Ideally, program development and adjustment should be guided by TtP models, which produce both the rigor and the flexibility needed by student affairs practitioners via the critical examination of both formal and informal theory (Reason & Kimball, 2012). We reflected on formal theories and scholarship that informed our work and identified several bodies of research discussed in the following paragraphs.

The first and perhaps most obvious area of scholarship that has informed our work included articles and publications about DSV. Of note, one of the most frequently cited sources of scholarship referenced across the working groups has been Hirsch and Khan's (2020) *Sexual Citizens*, which we anticipate will continue to shape our efforts in significant ways. In addition to this emerging scholarship, each of the five working group co-chairs asked members to read and reflect on several scholarly articles. For example, members of the Preventing Harm Working Group reviewed scholarship about holistic prevention strategies that consider those who have been harmed, those who have caused harm, those at risk to cause harm, and the broader community impact. Additionally, the group examined scholarship on the role of empathy and systemic barriers that exist when addressing DSV on a college campus. System justification theory (Joseph et al., 2013) was a specific theory that provided helpful context for the group to understand that changes in preventing DSV are unlikely to occur unless an alternative yet equally appealing method of relief is presented. This theory provided the groundwork for exploring alternatives to the current reactive approaches of addressing DSV.

As we reflected on how formal theory has informed working groups' efforts, scholarship and theories outside the DSV arena also emerged. Jessie suggested that organizational theories of change and organizational behavior management theories have provided a helpful framework to approach the multilayered and complex task of shift-

ing organizational values, beliefs, behaviors, and systems. Relatedly, members of the Engaging Men Working Group reflected on how Bronfenbrenner's (1977) ecological systems theory informed their conversations – specifically, that the socialization of their surroundings heavily influences men's identities. This reflection was furthered by exploring several theories related to the intersectional nature of men's salient identities (Davis et al., 2011; Harper et al., 2011).

Similarly, we noted that social norms theory (Perkins & Berkowitz, 1986) has been useful to help group members identify the social and societal norms that perpetuate DSV and understand the environment and interpersonal influences connected with DSV to change behavior. We also reflected on the boomerang effect and its connection to prevention and education efforts on a college campus. Specifically, when institutions engage students at high risk for perpetrating harm, they might contribute to problematic behavior rather than prevent it (Malamuth et al., 2018).

A final area in which scholarship and formal theory have contributed to our efforts suggests a direct and tangible benefit related to advocating for staff resources on campus. Brittany reflected that centering their educational efforts and programs on theory (e.g., a power-conscious framework, Linder, 2018) allowed them to successfully advocate for new positions within their office backed by a "strong theoretical background." Specifically, the Center for Student Wellness recently added a full-time position to promote men's engagement initiatives within the campus community.

Informal Theory

In addition to the formal theory, we engaged in developing and implementing a strategic plan to address DSV on our campus; we also noted the ways our values, beliefs, and assumptions influenced our process, which Reason and Kimball (2012) highlighted as part of informal theory. One of our guiding philosophies at the Center is that people are the experts on their own experiences. We know that people with minoritized identities have been historically and systematically excluded from knowledge production processes (Dotson, 2011), resulting in incomplete and ineffective research and scholarship about many topics, including DSV. In recruiting members for our working groups, we emphasized expanding the definition of expert to ensure that we welcomed a diversity of perspectives and ideas to address DSV on campus. We sought to engage these diverse perspectives to develop new and innovative strategies to more effectively and completely address DSV.

In several working groups' initial meetings, we started by asking members to participate in an "I believe…" exercise where they identified and shared their core beliefs and values about DSV. We asked members to write five "I believe…" statements to elucidate the perspectives they brought to our collective work. Further, we asked members to keep journals exploring thoughts and ideas they had related to addressing DSV among college students. We did not ask to review those journals, but we did provide time at working group meetings for members to engage in small group discussions about what they were learning and thinking about.

Several assumptions, values, and beliefs emerged throughout these discussions, including recognizing how personal experiences with DSV influenced members' commitment to this work and wanting to "play a role" in ending violence. Specifically, several people in the Preventing Harm Working Group shared that they chose to participate in the working group to continue healing from their own experiences with violence. Similarly, some participants in the Engaging Men Working Group shared that they chose to participate because they had sons and wanted to better support them in their own growth and development. Members of the Education Working Group, perhaps our most diverse working group in terms of academic discipline, shared their values around raising awareness and education with students in their specific college or department.

We also noted that people initially come to the

work of ending DSV among college students with a heavy focus on response rather than prevention. Over time, people affiliated with the Center have identified they have begun to shift their perspectives to focus more on stopping violence from happening in the first place rather than focusing on responding after it happens. In our reflection discussion, Jessie shared, "I've been surprised myself at how many of my assumptions are based in thinking about response and not prevention, and I think that I'm thinking about prevention, when really what I'm thinking about is premeditated response."

Another way that informal theory influenced the work of our teams was through examining best practices. Even though many critical scholars have critiqued the concept of best practices (Lange & Stewart, 2019), some people in higher education and student affairs still rely on looking around to see what other people have done to address a particular problem. In particular, best practices represent one of the challenges with using informal theory in our work – certainly, we do not want to wait until empirical research (i.e., formal theory) catches up to practice to try new things; however, when we over-rely on what other people have called best practices without enough research to support what makes them "best," we may end up recreating harmful practices based in our assumptions and beliefs, rather than practices informed by research or scholarship. In each working group, members asked questions and sought resources on how other campuses have addressed DSV, and one experience resulted in us re-thinking this approach. We invited a presenter to come and share an overview of a nationally recognized program as a strategy to develop some of our own strategies, and the presentation illustrated many of the challenges of working in our field. The presenter relied on outdated assumptions about DSV perpetuating heterosexist ideas and perpetuating harmful ideas. As Brian described, "The response from our subgroup to the information that was shared and the way that it was shared, I think, in some ways, was quite problematic and actually caused more harm, but it really underscored the importance of this work that we're doing. I think that that was a big shift for me…it really challenged the assumption that everybody else must be doing something right or something else has already existed."

Exploring informal theory as part of our theory-to-practice strategy for the Center working groups illustrates the complicated both/and of informal theory. Certainly, our own collective wisdom and experiences are relevant to developing new strategies for addressing DSV, yet relying on those experiences without considering scholarship or the experiences of people not present in the space may result in harmful behaviors (Bensimon, 2007).

Context

The University of Utah is a Research 1 institution in Salt Lake City, Utah, with an undergraduate enrollment of approximately 24,485 students in 2020 (Office of Budget and Institutional Analysis, 2021). In 2018-2019, three highly publicized, relationship-related murders occurred and are now a substantial part of our institutional context. Of the three homicides, the on-campus murder of Lauren McCluskey in September of 2018 has been and continues to be, at the forefront of discussions around dating violence and campus safety. Lauren's murder heavily influences our institutional context—indeed, the University Police Department's mishandling of evidence and her entire case before, during, and after her relationship with her murderer has significantly impacted our entire campus community (Tanner, 2020). Students, especially, felt distrustful of University leadership, staff, faculty, and police.

As part of our reflection-in-action methodology (Daley, 2010), we reflected specifically on the complexities surrounding this context. The Center for Violence Prevention became the McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention (MCVP) as part of a monetary settlement reached with Lauren's family. At $13.5 million, the settlement is "one of the

largest legal settlements in Utah history" (Tanner, 2021, para 2). Our team discussed how the naming of the Center after Lauren keeps her case ever-present in conversations about the Center.

Lauren's murder and the university's admitted mishandling of her case is the primary context within which our work takes place. In our meeting, in real-time, our team discussed the fraught symbology of Lauren as the named flagbearer of dating violence for our campus community. We wrestled with what it means to have an attractive, cisgender, wealthy, white woman consistently at the forefront of conversations around the Center and its work. We discussed the difficulty (and perceived hypocrisy) of doing intersectional work in the Center where Lauren and her memory are foregrounded and ever-present.

Moreover, Utah, and the University of Utah campus, is historically and predominantly white. In Fall 2020, 65% of enrolled students at the U identified as white (Office of Budgeting and Institutional Analysis, 2021), and 90.6% of Utahns identified as white (United States Census Bureau, n.d.). Against this backdrop, we discussed how whiteness is an unavoidable context wherein the Black man with a felony record who murdered Lauren became a convenient (and racist) emblem for those wanting to see Lauren's death, and dating violence more broadly, as a unique occurrence. Playing into stereotypes and age-old racist tropes about Black masculine aggression and white feminine innocence, Lauren's tragic death reified society's worst misunderstandings about who perpetuates and who receives violence (Crenshaw, 2012). In our meetings, we discussed how this context impacts our goals for the Center; specifically, how most dating relationships that are also unhealthy or even harmful do not look like Lauren's, nor do they always end in murder (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Foregrounding her death and the accompanying ineptitude of the campus police department obfuscates the more mundane, but harmful, relationship behaviors that occur in everyday dating relationships and further centers the experiences of Utah's white majority.

The current climate at the University has been tense, although, as a group, we agree that the university is incrementally regaining trust with the student body. The impact of Lauren's murder is felt at nearly every conversation with students, faculty, and staff when discussing campus safety and dating violence, but efforts to increase education are consistent. As Brian noted in our discussion, it might take several years, as the current study body moves on before the University community trusts again in this work.

Outcomes

Exploring outcomes is an essential part of the TtP model. The creation of the Center has allowed for a space that brings practitioners, scholars, and students together to critically examine current practices and beliefs regarding DSV and prevention efforts. The intentionality of including varied experiences, expertise, and roles has been essential for breaking down silos and inviting the many stakeholders to contribute to the conversation more fully. While eradicating DSV is the overarching goal of this work, we acknowledge that measurable behavioral and cultural change takes time. Notable outcomes, including rethinking perpetration and justification for change, have emerged in employing the TtP model.

Rethinking Perpetration

Most programs, resources, and DSV efforts focus on risk reduction for those who are most likely to experience harm, support for those who have been victimized, and empowering bystanders to intervene (Linder et al., 2020). While each of these programs is necessary and important, we propose that efforts to provide support and resources for those who have or are showing a higher risk of causing harm also warrant attention. In our discussion, Chris highlighted how many people who engage with this work initially struggle

with the idea of intervening with and educating people who cause harm because these strategies do not appear to be victim-centered. However, we believe that by providing support to people who cause harm, we move towards being even more victim-centered by reducing or even ending the harm that someone causes to others in the future. Further, some practitioners shared experiences working with survivors of DSV who have conveyed a desire for the person who caused them harm to not "get in trouble" but to learn how to stop hurting people. Effectively addressing DSV requires us to challenge long-held views that those who perpetrate harm cannot change and that utilizing a solely punitive approach is best practice.

We have noticed a shift in how responsive colleagues have been with the encouraged reflection of how current programs can evolve to better support those who have caused harm and why it is important within DSV prevention work. Brian shared that many Preventing Harm Working Group participants had not considered the importance of seeing perpetration through a more humanistic lens. Members of this working group discussed restorative justice, and many participants shared they had not considered the importance of these ideas related to DSV before participating in the working group. Furthermore, centralizing empathy both in support and response efforts for those that cause harm came to the forefront as working group members discussed opportunities for change. Especially in working with young adults, we have an opportunity to disrupt harmful behaviors earlier and support students in changing DSV attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors at a time in their lives when they could be more receptive to change.

Justification for Change

Many practitioners have limited opportunities to continually assess and apply the literature regarding DSV. The Center has provided an important platform for members to come together to have TtP discussions and explore how scholarship can inform actionable strategies for change. Brittany and Jessie both shared how these DSV scholarship discussions have been leveraged to spur conversations for programmatic changes.

Brittany shared how these scholarly conversations have often been utilized to justify changes made with her office's programs that traditionally may not have had broad support. For example, bystander intervention trainings are commonplace across the country on college campuses and heavily focus on disrupting DSV, typically right at the moments leading up to an assault. However, research shows utilizing this approach as an intervention method has serious flaws regarding its effectiveness with its current delivery (Reid & Dundes, 2017). Using theory that emerged from these discussions made it much easier to justify sweeping changes made to the U's Bystander Intervention program (now titled Check on U-Tah) and garnered much more support than it would have otherwise.

Further, Jessie shared how scholarship has helped her in convincing colleagues and her academic department at large of the importance of this work and how to integrate DSV education within her school. She noted that her department would typically not be as supportive of integrating DSV education within the curriculum, but leveraging scholarship provides the credibility she needs to do so.

Feedback Loop

Reason and Kimball (2012) argued practitioner assessment of their programs and practices should center student feedback while also holding space for their own critical reflection on their outcomes in relation to formal theory. The TtP model provides a structured guide for gathering formal feedback through two feedback loops. Designed to ensure critical reflection on how well practitioner assumptions guided their work, these feedback loops assess ongoing and often fluctuating impact of their institutional context on those assumptions. These feedback loops can be incorporated into daily practice, staff meetings, and professional de-

velopment, to ensure that when practitioners are adapting formal theory in tandem with the needs of students, they are also limiting problematic or harmful outcomes and thinking beyond short-term goals, thus creating strategies and practices for long-term, systemic changes.

We utilized several approaches to gathering feedback and listening to the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, though these strategies were certainly not all-encompassing nor without their limitations. These strategies included surveys shared following working group meetings to gather feedback on how members felt about the group's direction, to better understand their perspective on their role in the space, and what content or populations were missing – attempting to identify stakeholders not at the table. Similarly, we sent an end-of-the-year survey to those involved in the working groups and the Center to seek feedback regarding areas of strength, areas of improvement, and suggestions for next steps. Members of working groups also sent working group chairs articles and texts that could be utilized in the future, suggestions on future discussion topics, and populations missing from the dialogue. This direct outreach indicated these individuals felt an investment in the content discussed in the working groups and in the Center and held a stake in their own learning.

While Reason and Kimball's (2012) challenge to practitioners to engage in critical reflection and feedback feels commonsensical, practitioners must problematize their thinking as to whether this approach is truly, regularly being incorporated into practice. This practice of action bound with reflection is not a recent concept outside the field of higher education; educator and philosopher Paulo Freire (1972) referred to praxis, a process of individuals critically reflecting on the outcomes of their efforts before taking further action, as the only means to achieve authentic and holistic change or transformation in their lives and work. As our team discussed, feedback is often impacted by positionality and identity. For example, faculty, senior-level administrators, and those in positions of power, particularly those with privileged identities, most often provided feedback to the Center. Those who continue to raise their voices perpetuate a feedback echo chamber of current research and best practices, leading to an ongoing cycle of the same strategies and approaches, without critical reflection on the outcomes these practices have on the populations they are designed to serve. In turn, those populations whose feedback would give critical insight into the effectiveness of our practice may not be heard.

We received minimal engagement and feedback from students during the first year of the Center's work. We believe that several factors limited student engagement, including our completely virtual environment for the 20-21 academic year. Further, we anticipate that students may distrust what will be done with feedback or how those in power will perceive it: "even if I shared feedback, what is going to change?" likely remains a common sentiment among students, especially those from minoritized communities. To move forward with effective strategies to reduce harm, we must gather feedback from all people, not just those with formal positions of power. We must also recognize students are using "non-traditional" means of providing feedback, including student newspapers, social media, and student-led activities and events. We must be transparent about how feedback is utilized and implemented and critically reflect on making equitable adaptions, grounded in scholarship.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

As we reflect on the lessons learned from our experience thus far, we noted strategies or recommendations we might share with other educators attempting to embark on engaging TtP as it relates to DSV among students. We recommend four interrelated strategies: bring researchers and practitioners together and practice humility, expand our

definitions of the term expert, communicate widely and regularly, and invest a significant amount of time.

Bring Researchers and Practitioners Together and Practice Humility

Intentionally bringing together researchers and practitioners to discuss issues of DSV tops our list of recommendations for integrating theory and practice. As Brittany noted in our discussion, humility plays an important role in building relationships between researchers and practitioners. Neoliberal structures in higher education may contribute to researchers and practitioners resisting each other's expertise or simply not making the time to engage with each other. Neoliberalism, the transfer of economic control from the public to the private sector, stems from the progressive reduction of state support for higher education (Slaughter & Leslie, 2001). As a result, institutions seek to generate revenue and replenish losses through compelling faculty towards federal programs that support and fund academic research (Torres, 2011). Given this significant pressure to fund and publish their research, faculty may fail to meaningfully engage practitioners in their research projects. This neoliberal shift has also significantly influenced student affairs, requiring practitioners to deliver efficient and streamlined programs and services while maintaining care and proficiency (Manning et al., 2014), causing them to be constantly asked to do more with less, limiting time to engage with research or scholarship. Further, given hierarchies in higher education institutions, some practitioners may resist well-meaning researchers' attempts at sharing scholarship or research as "telling us how to do our jobs." If both parties approach the partnership with humility, significant strides may be made around both research and practice.

For example, as Brittany noted, the intentional space to discuss theory-to-practice has been a game-changer for her office. She and Brian noted how student affairs practitioners are trained to look for best practices at other campuses but rarely have the time, energy, or expertise to really dig into what the literature says about addressing DSV. Brittany shared the example that her staff had been wrestling with the effectiveness of bystander intervention training as mandated by the state, but they felt as though their hands were tied until a faculty member on their campus (Chris) started challenging the effectiveness of bystander intervention as currently practiced, highlighting research that illustrates some of the challenges of bystander intervention. As a result, Brittany's staff felt as though they could begin to change the bystander training to more closely align with their goals of harm reduction related to oppression broadly, not just DSV.

Similarly, as a researcher, Chris described involving practitioners on her research team to help design research studies and, most importantly, to help interpret the findings of the studies. People explicitly engaging with survivors and students through advocacy and educational programs daily certainly have a different perspective on the data collected in a research study than does a researcher with good intentions but limited interaction with the day-to-day realities of navigating the political landscape of an institution of higher education as it relates to advocating for survivors and educating the student body about issues of DSV.

Expand the Definition of Expert

Closely related to the idea of bringing researchers and practitioners together with humility, we also advocate that educators challenge and expand our collective definition of expert. So often, educators and administrators think of the experts on issues of DSV as the people tasked with advocating for survivors, engaging in education with the student body, or scholars who study this topic. While those people all have important expertise to lend the movement, other people have significant expertise to lend as well. One of our philosophies at the Center is that people are the experts on their own experiences. We work to engage people from

many perspectives, experiences, and departments on campus. Our call for working group members resulted in over 100 people from across campus signing up for one or more of our four working groups.

Expanding our definition of expert to include people from across campus resulted in richer and more creative idea generation; it also allowed us to harness different kinds of expertise to contribute to shifting the culture. For example, a member of the school of music faculty identified some of the unique issues that students in the school of music manage and requested specific programming for the students related to DSV. If the faculty member had not been present at the working group meetings, it is unlikely that the collaboration to develop programming specific to this group would have been developed. Similarly, an English faculty member highlighted the ways literature contributes to some people developing a greater awareness of human experiences – something that is rarely explored in strategies to educate campus community members about DSV. As a result of her expertise around literature and a librarian's pre-existing book club structure, we established a monthly book club for members of the campus community to come together and read books about DSV among college students. This required minimal investment of staff's time in the Center as the English professor and the librarian both wanted to contribute their skills and expertise to addressing DSV.

Communicate Widely and Regularly

Another recommendation we propose is to communicate widely and regularly with campus constituents. Specifically, we discussed the importance of gathering feedback from people who are not often asked for feedback. As explored above, we discussed the importance of gathering feedback from places where students are already sharing it rather than constantly creating new formal feedback loops like surveys. Paying attention to what students say on Twitter, in their classes, and in the campus newspaper provides insight into students' needs without directly asking them. This also helps to gather the perspectives of people who do not think that campus climate surveys are "for them."

In addition to gathering feedback, communicating often with campus community members about the intentions and progress of the groups is also important. Although many of our campus constituents want us to fix issues of DSV overnight, the reality is that that cannot happen. Communicating the philosophies, intentions, and goals of the working groups; inviting new members; and describing how the working groups incorporate feedback from campus constituents may help keep people engaged and illustrate the challenges associated with changing a culture related to DSV.

Invest Time and Resources

Finally, we note the importance of investing significant time in addressing issues of DSV. As with many problems in higher education, many of us look for a quick fix or an answer to the problem. The problem of DSV is deep-seated in both our campuses and the larger culture of our society in the U.S. (Deer, 2016; McGuire, 2010). Further, much of the work of DSV on campuses is reactive rather than proactive. As a result of the policies in place (e.g., Title IX), educators spend an inordinate amount of time scrambling to respond to violence after it happens and often fail to invest a similar amount of time and resources in preventing violence from happening in the first place (Tani, 2017). Addressing DSV requires a significant investment of time, energy, expertise, and money by institutions of higher education, including making time for staff in a variety of roles to invest in participating in ongoing professional development and opportunities to participate in initiatives such as working groups and task forces to address issues of DSV.

As Brian noted in our discussion, "To talk about this and take time to dream about what could be is not just energizing from a personal stand-

point, but I think we can actually get some things done." We have spent an entire year (a pandemic year at that!) working to establish a baseline understanding of issues of DSV, inviting more people to the table, and exploring avenues for reaching campus community members. We have read articles, shared stories, and listened to each other. At the end of the first academic year, we invited a facilitator to campus to help us develop a curricular approach to our work moving forward. We have not done much in programming or other initiatives that typically count in an end-of-year report. Yet, we believe we have accomplished much in this first year by making space to bring together new voices and wrestle with the issues that make our campus unique and how we want to move forward in our work intentionally.

Conclusion

An important outcome of the Center's development has been to allow practitioners to critically reflect on current practices in partnership with researchers to determine opportunities for change, innovation, and redirection. Additionally, researchers share that the common findings regarding DSV trends found in the literature (e.g., gendered perpetration patterns) are challenged as they hear anecdotes from practitioners who share stories of working with victims and/or perpetrators who do not fit the dominant narrative of DSV. Through the work of the Center, we strive to create space for support and encouragement to reflect on what we think we know about how to best address DSV and, with humility, consciously take steps to change, disrupt, and dismantle old ways of thinking.

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