Welcome to RHI’s 2012 Webinar Author Series

Kathryn Graham Ph.D, Psychology
Senior Scientist and Head of Social and Community Prevention Research
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
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Responsible Hospitality Institute
www.RHIweb.org/webinar
831.469.3396

Kathryn Graham 2012

Preventing Violence and Assaults in and around Licensed Premises

Kathryn Graham, Ph.D
Social & Community Interventions and Policy Research,
Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario
Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto
National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, AU

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- Existing Interventions and Policies: Overview of what works well, what has limited effectiveness and some potential next steps.
- Hotspots for Fights: Learn the highest-risk locations in a venue for aggression to escalate.
- Motives and Aggression Severity: Learn how to identify motives and implications for staff intervention.
- Motives for Sexual Aggression: Explore reasons why persistent and aggressive unwanted sexual overtures occur in bars.
- Why people are aggressive in bars and clubs: A closer look at evidence and theory
Enforcement
Police recorded place of last drink of the offender for every crime they attended. Establishments mentioned frequently received a “friendly” visit from police and offer of assistance.

Community Action
Community project in Stockholm primarily focused on alcohol service but also on training staff to prevent violence.

Risk Assessment Workbook (Updated 2008)

PART 1
ASSESSING YOUR BAR

A Entering the Bar 2
B A Safe and Friendly Atmosphere 4
C Layout 6
D Physical Comfort and Safety of Customers 8
E Setting Rules and Keeping Order 10
F Servers and Bartenders 12
G Security Staff (including door staff) 14
H Minimizing Problems 16
I Closing Time 18
J Other Aspects of a Safe Environment 20
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Safer Bars Training

- intervening early
- using effective tactics and body language
- planning ahead and working as a team
- not losing their temper
- dealing with intoxicated patrons
- knowing their legal responsibilities

Evaluation of the Safer Bars Program

A randomized control trial conducted in large capacity bars and clubs in Toronto in which over 100 observers were hired to monitor aggression during over 1000 nights of observation found that:

- bars and clubs participating in the program showed a significant reduction in physical aggression
- aggression in the control establishments increased during the same period.

New research on bar violence

- Where in the bar does aggression tend to occur? ("hotspots")
- How do motives for aggression lead to escalation?
- Why does sexual harassment and sexual aggression occur in bars and clubs?

The Safer Bars dataset

- 118 large capacity bars and clubs in Toronto, Canada
- 1334 nights of observation
- 1057 incidents of aggression
- 2700 patrons
- 806 staff involved in incidents
Hotspots

Location
Location of each incident was coded from the narrative descriptions and from markings on floorplan

Percent of aggressive incidents occurring in each location

Dance club hotspots

- On or near dance floor
  - dancing and traffic
- Near serving bar
  - service and traffic
- Areas of movement
  - bumping
- At entrance/queue to enter
  - security staff and dealing with line-ups
Bar/tavern hotspots

• At tables
  – Intoxication
  – Rowdiness/permisiveness
  – Professional boundaries

• In pool playing area
  – Staff coordination, monitoring and boundaries

Motives

Types of motives

1. Compliance (forcing others to comply with what the aggressor wants in order for the aggressor to obtain some benefit or desired outcome)

2. Grievance (expressing a grievance, demanding justice or punishing someone who is seen by the aggressor as having been offensive or done something wrong)

3. Social identity (asserting or defending one’s social identity, e.g., bullying to show power over others, responding aggressively in order to save face)

4. Excitement (aggression done for excitement, fun, pleasure or the thrill that it brings to the aggressor)

Examples of compliance motivated acts

• Forcing unwanted sexual contact on someone
• Stopping unwanted sexual contact
• Trying to get someone to do something
• Stopping someone from doing something
• Butting ahead of others in line
• Stopping or preventing invasion of personal space
• Stopping people from fighting

Examples of grievance motivated acts – responding to...

- perceived insults directed toward self or a friend
- perceived injustice
- perceived violations of personal space
- feeling wronged by a friend
- jealousy
- aggressive acts toward self or other
- invasive sexual overtures

Examples where the motive is to assert or defend social identity

- dominating physical space/territoriality
- attitude, body language, verbal challenges or physical acts done to demonstrate how tough the person is
- excessive reaction to perceived offensive behavior of others
- bullying, belittling or demeaning someone
- responding to public pressure from others to become aggressive
- (staff) responding aggressively to being disobeyed
- patrons challenging staff

Examples of excitement aggression

- mean teasing
- horseplay that harms others
- harassment including sexual harassment
- joining into a fight for fun

The most important predictor of aggression escalation and severity:

social identity motive
Preventing grievance-related aggression

- Reduce or eliminate common sources of grievances in the environment, e.g.,
  - avoid bottlenecks
  - have a well-designed dance floor which minimizes likelihood of invading space of nondancers and allows ease of traffic to and from dance floor
  - minimize line-ups
  - make line-ups more pleasant
  - operate lines fairly
- Have house policies to address grievances that occur naturally in the environment
- Have reasonable and consistent rules that are enforced fairly
- Train staff how to enforce rules and intervene in conflicts in ways that do not provoke grievance and identity motives

Preventing identity-related aggression

- Reduce cues that provoke identity concerns
- Hire staff who do not have identity concerns
- Train staff in effective responses to aggression motivated by identity concerns, e.g., allow people to save face
- Help staff and managers understand their own identity motives and how these affect the behavior of patrons

Preventing compliance-related aggression

- Stop predatory opportunistic aggression
- Prevent compliance motives from developing into or eliciting grievance and identity motives
- Train staff to obtain compliance with a minimum of aggression and without invoking their own identity concerns

Preventing excitement-related aggression

- Stop opportunistic aggression done for fun
- Recognize the potential for excitement-motivated aggression to escalate and address it early
- Prevent bystanders from making a situation worse
Aggression related to sexual contact or overtures

Incidents documented in *Safer Bars* study

- **90.1%** male initiator-female target
- **4.2%** male initiator-male target
- **3.4%** female initiator-male target
- **2.3%** female initiator-female target

- **81.1%** initiator & target were strangers
- **11.6%** initiator & target were friends or acquaintances
- **7.3%** initiator or target was staff member

Anonymous sexual assault

A man approached a woman from behind, rubbed up against her with his groin and then moved away. She looked around annoyed but could not identify the man who had rubbed against her.

Sexual aggression on the dance floor

- A woman was dancing by herself in the dance area. A man approached her from behind and put the front of his body in full contact with her backside, moving his hands over her side, her hips and bum.
- The woman tried several times to push his hands off her and move away from him, but every time she tried he would slide his hands down her hips and bum, then move them back to her waist and move closer to her.
- Finally, the woman forcefully pushed his hands away and left the dance area. The man then went back to stand with his friends.
Invasive scoping

A group of about 16 very intoxicated men were “scoping” women on the dance floor. There appeared to be a formula to their approach – one of the men would approach a woman, stand within arms length and stare very intently at her. If she did not notice him, the man would move close behind her, looking her up and down. Typically, female targets would notice and move away.

One man was the most obvious, licking his lips as he looked over the woman. One time he reached and touched a woman’s hair without her knowing.

Another man was trying to talk to a woman who apparently wanted to be left alone, as evidenced by her angry facial expression. When she yelled at him, the man reacted by saying, “I’m sorry! I’m sorry!” in a joking tone, after which he walked away laughing. His friends who had been watching patted him on the back and laughed along with him.

Staff did not intervene although the observers felt that staff must have noticed the antics of these males because so many were involved.

Initiators’ aggression

47.0% unwanted sexually invasive acts
16.5% sexually suggestive or threatening comments/gestures
63.5%
19.8% persistence
16.8% other

Targets’ aggression

- Most targets responded by trying to move away with about 25% forced to leave the area completely
- Only 7.3% of targets responded aggressively

Type of harms experienced by targets
Conclusions

Why are people aggressive in bars?

- Alcohol
- Young adults, especially young men
- Social norms
- Opportunistic offenders
- Social environment and activities
- Physical environment

New findings

- Hotspots: aggression is linked to what is going on in the bar
- Motives: motives provide insight into barroom aggression
  - social identity motives pose the greatest danger
- Most sexual aggression does not arise from the process of hooking up

Three most important lessons

1. Focus on activities in hotspots to find ways to reduce aggression in those locations
2. Staff and management need to:
   - Use different strategies for addressing different motives
   - Focus especially on reducing identity motives by:
     - knowing how to lower patrons' identity concerns
     - not provoking identity concerns
3. Having an exciting and sexy atmosphere at the bar does not mean that sexual harassment and aggression has to be tolerated
Thank you

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Raising the Bar can be purchased for $59.60 for non-members and $54.60 for members of the Sociable City Network:

http://rhiweb.org/resource/books.html