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FEM MEDIA MATTERS: AN INQUEERY INTO CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

by

Andrew Kennedy Garber
B.A. August 2010, University of Richmond

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY
May 2018

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ABSTRACT

FEM MEDIA MATTERS: AN INQUEERY INTO CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

Andrew Kennedy Garber
Old Dominion University, 2018
Director: Dr. Peter Schulman

Queer victimization as a topic is often marginalized within research due to hegemonic ideologies within society. When it comes to campus sexual assault research and resources, the focus is primarily on female victimization constructed within a heteronormative framework. Little research and theorization has been done on male victimization or the specificities of LGBTQ victimization of campus sexual assault. The problem this research has identified is that the female-victim-male-perpetrator metanarrative of campus sexual assault portrayed through media exemplifies the heterosexist culture at various levels of analysis within the United States. Further, it has led to an invisibility of LGBT and male victimization while simultaneously contributing to the oppression of women and sexual minorities. The purpose of this research is to identify specific gaps within campus culture and infrastructure through analyzing forms of media that have aided in leaving queer male victims of sexual assault marginalized within college campuses. The objective is to demonstrate the extent to which the heteronormative campus culture can theoretically marginalize non-conforming members, namely sexual minorities. By critically examining these specific media, the focus of the research will theorize as to why these gaps exist and where institutions of higher learning need to go in order to address the unmet needs of these marginalized sexual assault victims.

This thesis is dedicated to my parents who have always reminded me that I can persevere throughout all life's ebbs and flows. Also to my Baba who exemplifies an indomitable spirit and courage as a woman, immigrant, and grandmother. I cannot thank you enough for your unwavering love and support.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my Thesis Committee members for their patience, support, and commitment during my research which was vital in the completion of this Thesis.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It is undeniable that media matters more than ever and in unprecedented ways. Movements like the #MeToo movement have changed our cultural landscape, bringing to light previously ignored social issues, such as sexual assault and harassment that for too long gone unnoticed and have for too long silenced countless victims. The overwhelming success of these movements can be attributed to the incredible bravery of the once silent voices that came forward to provide their testimonies. In addition to this bravery, it is unquestionable that the means through which these narratives were voiced were of utmost importance and were key to the success of the movement—primarily social media and by effect news media. Social media platforms like Instagram and Twitter were the vehicles through which the narratives of the #MeToo movement gained momentum. In a matter of weeks every news media outlet was covering the movement and exposing increasing assault allegations against the high-profile Hollywood mogul Harvey Weinstein and Louis C.K. Suddenly, public discourse was abuzz with topics of sexual assault and harassment as if such topics had never been of interest to the public before. The media's appetite for such salacious Hollywood scandals only continued to grow as allegations against new famous perpetrators actor Kevin Spacey and news anchor Matt Lauer came to light.

The public's readiness for engagement with the #MeToo movement could arguably be partially attributed to Obama era initiatives, the 2015 *Hunting Ground* documentary, and the subsequent media attention surrounding campus sexual assault. Almost identical to the media coverage of the #MeToo campaign, the narrative promoted by the media throughout its coverage of campus sexual assault within the past five years was rooted in a gendered heterosexist

framework with a female victim and a male perpetrator. What does that mean for queer victims—specifically within the context of this research on queer male victims—of sexual assault who do not fit that paradigm?

The problem this research has identified is the female-victim-male-perpetrator metanarrative of campus sexual assault portrayed through media exemplifies the heterosexist culture at various levels of analysis within the United States. Further, it has led to an invisibility of LGBT and male victimization while simultaneously contributing to the oppression of women and sexual minorities. The purpose of this research is to identify specific gaps within campus culture and infrastructure through analyzing forms of media that have aided in leaving queer male victims of sexual assault marginalized within college campuses.

The second chapter will look at the college campus as a site of investigation for examining the heteronormative culture reified through social norms as it intersects with non-conforming gender identities and sexualities. The objective is to demonstrate the extent to which the heteronormative campus culture can theoretically marginalize non-conforming members, namely sexual minorities. The second chapter's theoretical analysis is presented through a geographical lens informed by the subfield of geographies of sexualities and queer theory. Upon establishing the extent to which the geographic space of the campus and the culture existing within that space marginalizes sexual minorities, the third chapter will examine the feminist paradigm's conception of sex and gender to uncover the ways in which such theorizations can better inform queer victimization yet simultaneously become a barrier to its visibility.

The fourth chapter will shift the level of analysis to a national focus with the first media analysis which investigates the heterosexist media coverage of campus sexual assault and the discursive practices at play. The fifth chapter builds upon the preceding chapter's national focus

by examining the interrelation between the national and local levels. First, a content analysis of the 2015 *Hunting Ground* documentary and its perpetuation of the popular gendered victimization narrative will be presented. Analysis will then shift towards Lady Gaga's music video and performance of her single "Till it Happens to You" for the documentary at the 2016 Academy Awards. Both analyses will serve as the foundation for understanding *The Hunting Ground*—the documentary and subsequent media campaign—as a feminist media event that drew attention to a gender inclusive perspective on victimization.

By critically examining these specific media, the research will theorize as to why campus sexual assault is framed within a static gendered framework and how feminist activism can better inform future research and expand future activism. This research is informed by feminist theory, cultural theory, geographies of sexualities and queer theory. To conclude the introduction and position the research, the next section will provide an overview of data concerning LGBTQ victimization of campus.

OVERVIEW OF DATA FOR LGBTQ VICTIMIZATION ON CAMPUS

Queer victimization as a topic is often marginalized within mainstream public discourse and academic research issues due to hegemonic ideologies within the current heteronormative society. When it comes to campus sexual assault research and resources, the focus is primarily on female victimization constructed within a heteronormative framework. Little research and theorization has been done on male victimization or the specificities of LGBTQ victimization in campus sexual assault.

The data that have been collected on queer victimization are primarily research surveys of sexual victimization and the overall social climate on campus. Aside from preliminary theorizations on queer victimization and statistics derived from limited data sets, further research

must be conducted that incorporates a mixed methods approach in order to evaluate the specificities of LGBTQ experiences on campus.

In 2014, the Association of American Universities (AAU) and research firm Westat began working together with a team of university researchers and administrators to create and administer a scientific survey designed to assess campus sexual victimization and the overall campus climate for the 27 participating institutions of higher education (IHEs). The survey sought to examine the extent to which incidents of campus sexual assault and misconduct occurred. It also sought to provide empirical data on the victims by asking the following questions: (1) Who are the victims? and (2) What resources do these victims utilize in reporting or talking about their assaults?

This report is the most up-to-date and expansive study on campus sexual assault and misconduct in the United States. The implications of the survey reached beyond the simple provision of empirical data. With the primary goal that such data would be utilized to inform the participating universities' policies in the prevention and response to campus sexual assault and misconduct, the survey produced statistically reliable estimates for each IHE so that the aforementioned policies respective to each IHE could be tailored to adequately address campus sexual assault by the specificities of each campus.

In September of 2015, the AAU published "Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct." The report concluded overall that rates of sexual assault were "highest among undergraduate females and those identifying as transgender, genderqueer, non-conforming, questioning, and as something not listed on the survey (TGQN)" (AAU, 2015: p. IV). The AAU report is distinct from previous studies in its attention to measuring gender identity. Since data are primarily reported by gender and enrollment status,

measuring gender identity in the survey enabled the data to better account for variations in gender identity and its relation to sexual orientation. The survey asked the respondents which of the following options listed best describes their gender identity: woman, man, transgender woman, transgender man, genderqueer or gender non-conforming, question, not listed, decline to state. From these eight options, the groups were then collapsed into the following four gender categories: (1) female, (2) male, (3) transgender, genderqueer or gender nonconforming, questioning, or not listed (TGQN), and (4) decline to state. The question that immediately followed the gender identity question on the survey asked the respondent to select which of the following options they consider themselves to be: heterosexual or straight, gay or lesbian, bisexual, asexual, questioning, not listed, decline to state. The reports overall findings are as follows:

According to the AAU Survey, 16.5 percent of seniors experienced sexual contact involving penetration or sexual touching as a result of physical force or incapacitation. Senior females (26.1%) and those identifying as TGQN (29.5%) are, by far, the most likely to experience this type of victimization. Senior males are subject to much smaller risk (6.3%). Senior females and those identifying as TGQN reported being a victim of nonconsensual penetration involving physical force or incapacitation 11.3 percent and 12.6 percent, respectively, since first enrolling at the university or college. (AAU, xiii)

However, by admission of the report, this overall rate masks large differences by gender and enrollment status. Females and students identifying as TGQN (transgender, genderqueer, non-conforming, questioning and as something not listed on the survey) have significantly higher rates of both types of victimization listed above than heterosexual males. What's striking about the data is the high percentage rates for both women and TGQN students. With campus resources, such as women's centers, that have programming for the education and prevention of sexual assault, the focus has always been on female victimization. This is problematic when considering the above data. If both women and TGQN students experience high rates of sexual

victimization, campus programming and resources are not adequately addressing campus sexual assault by failing to support all student populations that are disproportionately affected by it.

As such, at a college campus, sexual minority students need adequate resources on campus that help to educate and prevent sexual victimization while also support student victims in ways that account for the multiplicities within their identities as sexual minorities. Currently, most universities have women's centers, student health centers, and counseling service centers that can provide somewhat of a safe place and resources for LGBTQ sexual assault victims. However, according to the AAU report, about half of TGQN respondents do not feel like their institutions would take their reports seriously:

When asked what might happen when a student reports an incident of sexual assault or misconduct to a university official, about half say that it is very or extremely likely that the university will conduct a fair investigation. The percentage is lower for those groups that are most likely to report victimization (i.e. females and those identifying as TGQN). Similar percentages are evident for opinions about other types of reactions by the university. (AAU iv-v)

The aforementioned findings from the AAU report indicate a clear issue with sexual minority students—the university cannot be trusted to take their claims of sexual assault or misconduct seriously. Female and TGQN students experience the highest rates of victimization and yet report the highest levels of distrust in their university to secure their safety and conduct a fair investigation. Thus, it is imperative at the campus level for universities to include this framework in conceptualizing a more inclusive campus that provides adequate resources for all affected by assault. The biggest barrier to adequately addressing campus sexual assault is the paucity in data because the majority of sexual assault incidents are not reported. In fact, the AAU report states that 28% or less of even the most serious of assaults are reported which is especially alarming when considering the students most affected by sexual assault are least likely to believe their institution will conduct a fair investigation (iv). If student perception points to an overall

lack of confidence in the university, there is a clear indication here that universities must make restoring their students' trust a priority, particularly female and sexual minority students.

Moreover, the AAU report's findings and methodology are significant in challenging the acceptance of national representative statistics concerning campus sexual assault and most importantly demonstrate how "rates vary greatly across institutions" (AAU, xv).

The AAU report (2015) will be examined further in my research and will form the foundation for my study. The biggest takeaway from the report is its emphasis on the data being representative of specific campuses of the participating universities. Therefore, the main recommendation is for each university to conduct its own campus climate survey and utilize the collected data to tailor the resources provided to students.

A COMPARISON OF CAMPUS CLIMATE SURVEYS

The LGBTQ community is both underrepresented and marginalized within campus climate research. To further demonstrate the variance in data among campuses and overall marginalization of LGBTQ students within research, other campus climate surveys and research will be examined in comparison with the AAU study. The following literature review spans over 25 years with only a handful of studies focusing on sexual minority students which to an obvious gap in research. The few studies that do center on sexual minority students consistently call for more research focused on this student demographic.

The AAU and other reports focus primarily on sexual victimization and misconduct. However, to fully understand the LGBTQ experience on campus, I will examine research that focuses on specific aspects of experience on campus. Rankin's (2005) "Campus Climates for Sexual Minorities" provides one such study that sought to examine campus climates for sexual

minorities and gives a brief literature review on previous research to date regarding perceptions of campus climate for LGBT students.

Studies conducted before Rankin's primarily focused on only one or two institutions. For example, Norris' (1991) study, "Liberal Attitudes and Homophobic Acts: The Paradoxes of Homosexual Experience in a Liberal Institution," looks at the rates of reported victimization of LGB students at one national liberal arts college in addition to attitudes towards sexual minorities. The study provides data on the degree of exclusion, isolation and harassment that LGB students report experiencing including the need to deny their sexual orientation within a heteronormative climate. Although data is specific to one university, the strength of this article is that it is set within a liberal arts institution which the study assumes would be more inclusive of sexual minorities based on the majority of students and university officials having liberal attitudes.

D'Augelli's study (1992), "Lesbian and Gay Male Undergraduates' Experiences of Harassment and Fear on Campus," looked at harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation by surveying 121 undergraduate students between 19 and 22 years of age at the University Park campus of Pennsylvania State University. Over three-fourths of the respondents reported having experienced verbal abuse and over one-fourth reported having been threatened with violence. This study provides another source of research that demonstrates the hostile campus climate and the victimization experienced by LGBTQ college students. Although it does not provide data on sexual assault, it still provides insight on the hostile climate and the extent to which LGBTQ victimization is varied in forms. However, this study was limited in providing data that is generalizable since it had such a small sample size and only focused on one campus compared to the Rankin and AAU studies which focused on multiple campuses, 14 and 27

respectively, and had respondent sample sizes of 1,669 and 150,072 respectively. D’Augelli, Hesson McInnis, and Waldo (1998) build on this research indicating LGBTQ victimization is common and that the LGBTQ community is very vulnerable. The results of the study indicated that regardless of the setting, sexual orientation based victimization had similar correlates. What is striking about these studies is the fact they were conducted during the 1990s. Despite their limitations in sample size, their findings clearly pointed to a problem concerning victimization of sexual minorities on college campuses which deserved further research. Yet, government surveys and even academic research continued to focus on female victimization. The “So, what?” question that research seeks to answer fell on societal deaf ears with these studies which certainly evokes a societal sense of internalized homophobia.

These aforementioned studies prior to Rankin’s study all echo similar findings regardless of sample and scope: campus climates are hostile towards sexual minorities. So, what are the implications of these findings? If campus climates are hostile towards sexual minorities, how does that affect the overall vulnerability of sexual minorities with respect to sexual assault and harassment? DeBord (1998) examines the substance-use patterns of college students throughout four years of their undergraduate studies. The results indicated a higher use of alcohol for the LGB students. This study’s results are key to this discussion on the vulnerability of the LGBTQ community in college primarily because of the role ‘incapacitation due to drugs or alcohol’ plays as a contributing factor to campus sexual assault. The AAU report found that “nonconsensual sexual contact involving drugs and alcohol constitute a significant percentage of the incidents” (AAU, iv). The results of DeBord’s study further support the notion that sexual minorities are more vulnerable to sexual assault for multiple factors. One primary factor is susceptibility to

alcohol and drug use being higher for sexual minorities as compared to their heterosexual counterparts.

Returning to Rankin's study, it tries to provide data at the national level from fourteen participating universities. The results of the study are especially interesting in finding similarities in campus climate perception among the student populations and the faculty/staff populations. The results of the study indicate that over a third (36 percent) of LGBT undergraduate students experienced harassment in some form in the previous year, with seventy-nine percent of those incidents of harassment being perpetrated by another student in order to avoid harassment.

Rankin's findings are comparable to the AAU report's findings:

If all four tactics are included in an overall prevalence measure, the AAU Survey estimates that 39.1 percent of seniors identifying as TGQN report being a victim of nonconsensual sexual contact at least once. (AAU, xiv)

However, Rankin's study is unique in collecting data focused solely on sexual minorities by surveying only LGB students and faculty/staff. However, her study differs from the AAU report by focusing on harassment broadly by measuring the sexual minority students' perceptions of campus climate. The AAU report is much more detailed and expansive in focusing on sexual assault and misconduct, grouping the data in multiple ways to distinguish the types of assault and misconduct. Despite Rankin's limited research scope, her findings complement the AAU report in supporting the notion that campus climates are not especially inclusive of sexual minorities. Further, Rankin's report not only focused on students' perceptions but also faculty/staff which the AAU report did not include.

Additionally, the Rankin study utilized open-ended portions in her survey in order to uncover further knowledge. The open-ended portions of the survey revealed further complexities when gender identity or sexual orientation intersects with race. The results uncovered a higher

rate of concealment of sexual orientation or gender identity in LGBT students of color versus their white counterparts. Further, the LGBT students of color “commented...that they did not feel comfortable being ‘out’ in venues where straight people of color were predominant and felt out of place in predominantly white LGBT settings” (Rankin, 20). What this finding points to is how oppression or marginalization of LGBT students becomes even more complex and layered when taking into account the intersection of sexual identities with race. When considering the inclusion of programming and resources on campus catered to supporting students who identify as a sexual minority, universities must ensure that their institutional support does not operate from a place of white privilege. Rather, the institutional support for sexual minorities must include a full embracement of the racial diversity within the umbrella of LGBTQ.

Rankin argues that the implications of her study’s findings “point to the need for intervention strategies aimed at student populations on campus” (Rankin, 18). Yet, ten years after publishing the results, the AAU report indicated the same need which points to the scarcity of these types of surveys/data collection. Rarely, have institutions sought to further this research despite the clear indication there continues to be a need for it. Although the study was conducted over a decade ago, it provides for a great comparison to the AAU survey in its methodological use of open-ended surveys.

One year after the influential AAU study, Sylaska and Edwards (2015) contributed to our understanding of reporting differences between sexual minorities and non-minorities. Their study focused on intimate partner violence of sexual minority college students in comparison to previous studies focused on heterosexual students. Only one-third of the participants reported their experiences to another person, the majority of whom were friends. This finding means the vast majority of respondents were either not reporting incidents or reporting them to friends

rather than authorities, leaving most incidents out of official reports and skewing the representation of minorities in campus safety reports. If intimate partner violence (IPV) comprises a major form of sexual assault, then the group most affected by IPV should be of further interest.

The AAU report substantiates the claim finding that those data that are reporting still find that TGQN students still report higher rates of IPV, and the Sylaska and Edwards finding probably indicates that even these high numbers are underestimated. Since date rape and interpersonal violence are two major forms of campus sexual assault, this study provides data that supports the notion that sexual minorities are highly vulnerable to accepting IPV as normal and not reporting sexual assault. The Sylaska and Edwards' (2015) study further demonstrates a higher level of vulnerability among LGBTQ students and the need for structured institutional support from campus administration.

The AAU report compares its data results to previous nationally recognized studies. After comparing data, the AAU report indicates,

These comparisons illustrate that estimates such as “1 in 5” or “1 in 4” as a global rate, across all IHEs is at least oversimplistic, if not misleading. None of the studies that generate estimates for specific IHEs are nationally representative. (AAU, xv)

The AAU report (2015) boldly calls into question the “1 in 5” estimate concerning campus sexual assault. According to previous studies, “1 in 5” women will experience sexual assault in college. This estimate has become *the* defining data point surrounding the issue of campus sexual assault. Many campus sexual assault resource centers, such as women’s centers, use this estimate as part of their educational literature and media. Foremost, this estimate is only representative of female victims which in and of itself is “misleading” and “oversimplistic” when comparing this estimate with the data results in the AAU report. Another primary concern with the estimate is its

broad definition of what constitutes sexual assault without discerning between misconduct involving no touching and completed or attempted rape. The estimate is based on data that defines sexual assault in ways that are not concurrent with previous studies. It is indeed “oversimplistic” in that it fails to parse out the various forms of sexual assault and instead lumps all data under one ambiguous sexual assault umbrella.

In failing to clearly define what constitutes sexual assault, the “1 in 5” estimate misleads viewers. Are “1 in 5” women raped on campus? Rape and sexual assault are used synonymously with each other especially in the media which can skew the public’s perception of the “1 in 5” estimate.¹ Primarily, this estimate tells the viewer nothing about what types of sexual assault are most common. Which females are most affected by campus sexual assault—white female students or female students of color? Is there a correlate with victimization and socioeconomic background? The estimate fails to account for how the intersection of race and class might affect our understanding of campus sexual assault. The “1 in 5” slogan has become the cornerstone for activism on campus sexual assault often being cited in campus sexual assault research, government initiatives and legislation. In providing such an alarming estimate and promoting it as representative of campus sexual assault, this estimate not only promotes investigative illiteracy but also misinforms the public’s understanding and perception of campus sexual assault. I provided an overview of literature on LGBTQ victimization and comparison on campus

¹ The term sexual assault is much more palatable for mainstream audiences than the term rape. It is also less invasive of a victim’s privacy by ambiguously describing an incident. To have a victim’s incident constantly be reiterated as rape can be too revealing for the victim depending on the situation.

climate data in order to position this research within the wider mainstream discourse. Now that these foundations have been laid, in the next chapter I will examine the campus as a level of analysis theorizing the ways in which the campus climate and culture directly contribute to the oppression of sexual minorities.

CHAPTER II

A CULTURAL GEOGRAPHIC PERSPECTIVE OF THE CAMPUS SPACE: HETERONORMATIVITY, MARGINALIZATION, AND BELONGING

The LGBTQ community is marginalized within society and as a result, the members of the LGBTQ community experience a myriad of varying forms of assault more so than the heterosexual community. John H. Neisen asserts this notion by framing it within the concept of cultural victimization positing that sexual minorities are currently living in a heteronormative society and are consequently doubly victimized—both in a cultural sense and through direct victimization (1993). If LGBTQ persons experience a double victimization versus the heterosexual mainstream community, the cause and effects of that double victimization are of interest for further investigation. It is evident from the data presented in the previous section that a gap in research exists which fails to provide concurrent data concerning LGBTQ victimization and campus sexual assault. This chapter advocates for the inclusion of a queer theoretical framework for policymaking regarding campus sexual assault. Through the aforementioned theoretical framework, this chapter aims to demonstrate the extent to which the hegemonic power of heteronormative society is perpetuated, transposed systematically, and spatially produced through campus life.

To further examine the issue of assault on college campuses, a theoretical analysis through the lens of geographies of sexualities will be used to examine the university, specifically within the United States, as a site of and scale for investigation. The analysis will examine the university as a site of oppression for LGBTQ students focusing on the campus' perpetuation of a hegemonic heteronormative culture. The different norms that reify this heteronormativity in a general way and that I focus on include the social separation of sexes in Greek life and unisex

dormitories. Because the focus of this paper is the issue of campus assault victimization of LGBTQ students, the analysis will further examine the ways in which the heteronormativity is not only assisting in further LGBTQ student marginalization but also helps to perpetuate rape culture. Additionally, the resources allocated on campus for rape victims, specifically concentrating on the counseling services and the women's center as resources and possible sites of oppression, inclusion and/or exclusion for male rape victims will be examined.

This study calls for the inclusion of queer theory because of its deconstruction of heteronormativity, homonormativity, and the gender binary, allowing for a fluid understanding of sexualities. Queer theory is also a more inclusive theoretical framework for policymaking in addressing campus sexual assault. First, I will clarify the way in which the term "queer" is being applied in this study. The term comes from queer theory, which is the study and critique of normative assumptions about sex, gender, and sexuality. The theory rejects the idea that biological sex determines gender identity, and that desire and sexuality would be predictable from either (Browne et al, 2007). The term will be applied using the queer geographies of sexualities perspective, which considers "queer to question the supposedly stable relationship between sex, gender, sexual desire, and sexual practice" (Browne et al, 2007: 8). Geographies of sexualities is a sub-field of geography that has provided the platform for analyzing the relationships between sexualities, space, and place.

Because campus sexual assault deals with the intersection of these three concepts, it is most appropriate to employ this paradigm as it addresses the institutionalization of spaces structured by sexuality which can be demonstrated through the intersection of these everyday spaces with various other spatial scales such as the national, international, and transnational. Geographies of sexualities also looks at how, in various ways, everyday spaces like college

campuses are produced through embodied social practices. These practices produce the social norms that regulate spaces “and the sexualized relations between bodies, selves and others that constitute these spaces” (Browne et al, 2007: 1).

Social norms standardize acceptable sexual behavior within the public space, which in turn is “governed by unspoken understandings, enforceable by both official authority, i.e. policy, and by the banal everyday actions or verbal interventions or looks of passers-by,” and thus can by effect “constrain displays of sexual desire” (Browne et al, 2007: 3). This conceptualization falls under the paradigm of geographies of sexualities which enables the reader to develop a “deeper understanding of the ways in which individuals, communities, and nations simultaneously engage in various mutually constituted sexual power relations in different places and at different times” (Johnston and Longhurst, 2010: ix). Vital to the understanding of this paradigm is that “sexed bodies are mapped, connected, and threaded not just through bars, casinos, and sites where statues are erected but through all spaces [wherein] the body’s differential construction, its regulation, and the way it is represented have become crucial to understanding sexual relations at every spatial scale” (Johnston and Longhurst, 2010: viii). The main point of the argument is that sexual politics permeate all spaces, and the concepts of sex and space are inextricably intertwined.

Building upon this notion, Johnston and Longhurst argue further that “place and sexuality are mutually constituted” since sexuality affects the ways in which “people live in, and interact with, space and place,” and therefore space and place would have an effect on people’s sexuality (2010: 3). David Bell and Gill Valentine’s provide the following example of how place and sexuality are mutually constituted:

Spatial Visibility (e.g., in terms of the establishment of so-called gay ghettos or various forms of street protest or Mardi Gras) has been important to the

development of lesbian and gay rights. In turn, these performances of sexual dissidents' identities (re)produce these spaces as lesbian and gay spaces in which sexual identities can be, and are forged (Johnston and Longhurst, 2010:4).

Further, a focus on scale as a category of practice is important, since upon being utilized “as a form of containment and empowerment... [because] the scales used—the body, home, community, city, rural, nation, and globe—are not discrete but formed out of many and varied sexed and gendered performances” (Johnston and Longhurst, 2010:6-8). Most important, a new understanding of the relationship between sexualities and places in which the two are not mutually exclusive but rather mutually constitutive enables for a clearer understanding of the construction of social norms as applied to college culture.

Johnston and Longhurst examine the relationship between sex, sexuality, and home. They argue the home is not solely a site where conversations about sex and sexuality occur, reiterating hegemonic heteronormativity, but the “design, structure, and layout of homes can also be seen to reflect and reinforce notions of hegemonic heterosexuality, nuclear families, and men’s, women’s and children’s gendered roles and relations” (43). Thus, the home has been designed for the heterosexual nuclear family which subsequently can become a site of oppression for the Others who do not fit the hegemonic heterosexual nuclear familial mold. Additionally, the home can be a site of fear and oppression for victims of sexual abuse.

Brown, et al, provide a more illustrative way the home can be a contested site within the confines of this research. Generally, for heterosexuals, the home is a place of comfort wherein an individual can be oneself. However, for many in the LGBT community, the home can become a site of oppression structured by heterosexual assumptions reified by social relations with family and neighbors. The idea of ‘coming out’ in itself is predicated on the heteronormative assumption within society that an individual is understood to be, by default, heterosexual until

that said individual ‘comes out’ and proclaims to be homosexual, or different. The process of ‘coming out’ inherently becomes a process of ‘auto-Othering’ which can turn the space of the home into a site of oppression and alienation. Further, the extent to which the LGBT individual’s family is heteronormative can often be the difference between the home as a place where an LGBT individual can be oneself and the home as a space of violence. The underlying and important take-away from this example is that regardless of the extent to which the LGBT individual’s family is accepting, the heteronormativity through which the home is founded will regulate everyday normal behavior wherein “identity and practice may still have to be negotiated” (Browne et al, 2007: 3).

This regulation can take direct form through political and social policies and restrictions or it can take indirect form through society’s assumptions of ‘normal’ sexuality and the consequent ramifications. Examining this within the context of a college campus, society’s assumptions of ‘normal sexuality’ are transposed to the public space, exemplified on the college campus, and can be demonstrated in countless ways such as “the structure of conversation” (Browne et al, 2007: 3). Thus, LGBTQ students are regulated from the moment they enter the university beginning with the way in which they socialize and structure conversation with heterosexual students. Browne, et al, discuss other forms of structured conversation that marginalize LGBTQ students such as “disparaging comments about ‘gays’ and jokes that presume all present share a common distaste for those who do not conform to the heterosexual norm” (2007: 3). Everyday use of the derogatory term ‘fag’ or referring to something—be it an individual, action, situation, or even homework assignment—as ‘gay’ are social norms reified through everyday practices, such as conversation, that generate a continued process of othering

wherein the sexual minority becomes the ‘Other’ to the heterosexual. This process of othering sexual minorities further constitutes the space as heterosexual and heterosexuality as hegemonic.

Moreover, the queer perspective, which is embodied and experienced by the queer individual, can shed light on rethinking “place, placelessness and movement” since the lived queer experience can comprehend these terms completely different to the non-queer lived experience. For example, Knopp posits that with placement comes visibility which inherently “makes [queers] vulnerable to violence as well as facilitate [their own] marginalization and exclusion” from security and pleasures privy to the non-queer groups (Browne et al, 2007: 23). As a result, many queers are weary of a static understanding of place to such an extent that “many queers find a certain amount of solace, safety and pleasure being in motion or nowhere at all” (Browne et al, 2007: 23). As contested as this initial assertion may be—especially in presenting queers as almost anti-social—the underlying reconceptualization of ‘placelessness’ as “an embodied and material practice” (Browne et al, 2007: 23). Understanding placelessness as a means through which one may find pleasure, solace, and security is significant in “rethinking spatial ontologies in ways that address [queers] emotional and sentimental meaning and significance, not just their materiality or abstract intellectual utility” (Browne et al, 2007: 24).

Further, reconceptualizations of spatial ontologies within queer geography are useful in understanding the space of campus as a site for investigation. Knopp provides the notion of spatialities of gender and in particular “the understandings of spatialities of resistance to gender regimes” (Browne et al, 2007: 24). Queer geographies can also contribute to a better understanding of homophobias and heterosexisms, which then provide a path to resistance and social change. Thus, Knopp calls for the elimination of the materialist-discursive divide in social and spatial theory in order to adequately queer the concepts of ‘homophobia’ and ‘heterosexism’

(Browne et al, 2007: 25). The understanding here is that both notions embody material and discursive simultaneously and can be appropriately employed using Thrift's non-representational theory wherein "meanings and materiality are inseparable" (Browne et al, 2007: 25). To sum, Knopp is calling for the complete queer-ification of the geographical imagination in order to study objects "more relationally and topologically than autonomously and discrete, more reflexively than objectively, and more humbly than ambitiously" (Browne et al, 2007: 27).

Applying Knopp's conceptualization of placelessness to the example from earlier regarding the structured conversation, the derogatory utilization of the words "gay" and "fag" as part of daily conversational vernacular can further perpetuate the marginalization of the LGBTQ students. This conversational style is homophobic and signifies through its application in daily interactions among heterosexual students the heterosexist culture of campus. It signifies that homophobia is embedded to the extent that homophobic language occurs without regulation and is a perceived social norm. Thus, a student who may feel adapted to campus and unoppressed could suddenly feel 'Other-ed' when standing in line in the cafeteria and overhearing such verbal exchange (Abes, 2012).

Woodford et al (2012) did an investigation on heterosexist language as a means of communicating homophobic sentiment to LGBTQ people. Heterosexist language is one of a plethora of tools through which heterosexism is perpetuated. In their preliminary research, they found a correlation with heterosexism and poor health outcomes for sexual minorities (Woodford et al, 2012). As such, their objective was investigating to what extent heterosexist language affects the well-being of LGBT persons. Focusing their study on LGBT college students, they examined "the health and well-being correlates of hearing the popular phrase "that's so gay" among gay, lesbian, and bisexual (GLB) emerging adults" (Woodford et al, 2012: 429). The

extent to which heterosexist language is prevalent on college settings is illustrated in the follow quote from Woodford et al,

‘That’s so gay’ has become so ubiquitous that it has been described as “low-level, tolerated background noise” across educational settings, including college. (2012: 429)

Although many other studies had previously found correlations between overt heterosexism and poor health outcomes for LGBT individuals, no prior studies had focused on LGBT students and youth (Woodford et al, 2012: 429). Minority stress theory proposes that minorities, including sexual minorities such as LGBTQ, are “vulnerable to experiencing chronic psychosocial stress as a result of experiencing stigma and rejection related to membership in a stigmatized group” (Woodford et al, 2012: 429). The resulting stress can lead to poor psychological and physical health outcomes. From their study, results showed that upon hearing that phrase, the LGBT student participants’ social and physical well-being was negatively affected (Woodford et al, 2012). This negativity caused students to feel isolation and even experience physical side effects such as headaches, poor appetite, or eating problems (Woodford et al, 2012).

Given the findings of their study, Woodford et al prescribe the implementation of programming and policies within the university or college setting wherein the phrase is acknowledged as a form of heterosexist harassment and should no longer be considered normalized. Further, the policies implemented should address diversity and harassment aimed at reducing the normalized practice of heterosexist language (Woodford et al, 2012: 429). Woodford, et al’s study proved useful in providing important contributions to the study of heterosexism particularly in its focus on LGBT college students and the effect of subtle discrimination. As most research and studies have focused on overt violence and assault, this

study provides insight on the negative effects that heterosexism can generate through banal social norms and subtleties.

In a more recent study conducted by Woodford and Hong, the pair investigated the role of blatant victimization and microaggressions, both together and separately, on psychological distress and the mediating role of self-acceptance (2014: 519). Microaggressions is understood as outlined by Sue who defined it as,

the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership (2010b: 3).

In order to examine the effects of heterosexism and distinguishing between blatant heterosexism and microaggressions, the study measured heterosexism as blatant victimization, interpersonal microaggressions, and environmental microaggressions (Woodford and Hong, 2014:519). Woodford and Hong were interested in testing whether the mediating role of self-acceptance holds when considering multiple forms of heterosexist discrimination (2014: 521). The results proved even more enlightening than the first study on the effects of overall heterosexism on campus.

From the study, Thirty-seven percent of the sample reported sexual orientation victimization, with 96% indicating having experienced LGBQ interpersonal microaggressions and 98% having experienced LGBQ environmental microaggressions (Woodford and Hung, 2014: 523). The study found that both types of microaggressions were equally dominant, occurring more often than overt victimization (523). Further, they did not find a correlation between victimization and psychological distress or self-acceptance (525). However, the study also found a significant negative association between the path to self-acceptance and psychological distress, which suggests that more self-acceptance results in less distress (525).

Specifically, the results found that more exposure to microaggressions was associated with higher psychological distress, which was mediated by self-acceptance; wherein the path from LGBTQ microaggressions to self-acceptance suggests that greater exposure to microaggressions was associated with lower self-acceptance (525).

The implications of the results show that students who display non-heteronormative forms of gender expression experience, greater overall heterosexism and victimization (Woodford and Hung, 2014:527). The researchers concluded that microaggressions, particularly environmental micro- aggressions, were greater purveyors of heterosexism than blatant victimization (527). These findings advance minority stress theory research contributing vital conclusions on the powerful effects that microaggressions, more so than blatant heterosexism, have on the perpetuation of heterosexism and marginalization of sexual minorities (527). Equally as important, the study found the profound mediating effects that self-acceptance has on discrimination-psychological distress relationship (527). This study shed light for institutions on the areas of focus for creating and implementing an inclusive environment for LGBTQ students. Although campus assault may result in greater physically harm, the main perpetrators are microaggressions. As such, a focus on creating policies surrounding appropriate culturally competent language is of utmost importance in eradicating heterosexism on campus.

These examples illustrate a distinct feature of and a distinct reason for utilizing geographies of sexualities for the purpose of this analysis. It is the paradigm's innovative engagement with social relations and banal practices which leads to insightful results that are "materialistic, spatialized, and affective" (Browne et al, 2007: 1). These three resulting attributes in their research make sexual geographers substantive contributors to "broader thinking on sexual difference, relations, and desires" (Browne et al, 2007: 1). The relationship between

sexualities, space and place is a central theme of this field being predicated on “questions about the ways in which sexualities are geographical, or the question of how spaces and places are sexualized” (Browne et al, 2007: 2).

In examining “how, in various ways, everyday spaces are produced through embodied social practices”, i.e. analyzing bodies and what they do, demonstrates how these practices produce the social norms that regulate spaces “and the sexualized relations between bodies, selves and others that constitute these spaces” (Browne et al, 2007: 2). For example, social norms within the public space, which in turn are “governed by unspoken understandings, enforceable by both official authority and by the verbal interventions or looks of passers-by”, can by effect “constrain displays of sexual desire” (Browne et al, 2007: 3). Another example of this would be a homosexual couple engaging in public displays of affection such as holding hands or embracing, even kissing uninhibitedly when they are free from constraint within a ‘queer’ space, such as a gay bar. The same could be exemplified in the same couple refraining from kissing on campus amidst heterosexual students in an attempt to avoid eliciting “verbal interventions or looks of passers-by” (Browne et al, 2007: 3).

Most informative especially within the context of this paper, is Brown et al’s reference to the institutionalization of sexualized imagined geographies which positions heterosexuality within the ‘center’ of society which pushes queer-ity to the social periphery as a ‘moral threat’ (Browne et al, 2007: 4). This concept of the institutionalization of sexuality is key to understanding the politico-social norms and the power relations at stake which in turn clearly define “who belongs and to define what bodies are allowed to do, when and where” (Browne et al, 2007: 4). Thus, the social norms which generate marginalization and oppression can be

renegotiated through one's sense of agency and the importance of repeatedly doing something different to effect social change and redefine the normative.

What we do makes the spaces and places we inhabit, just as the spaces we inhabit provide an active and constitutive context that shapes our actions, interactions and identities. A consequence of this set of ideas is that we can never take a given space or set of practices for granted or assume they are fixed. (Browne et al, 2007: 4)

The main argument here is not whether LGBTQ couples can or cannot openly display affection to their partner, the main take-away is that these norms can be challenged and through reiterated challenging may eventually change. As this ever-changing, unfixed conceptualization of space, norms, and identities is mainstreamed as the theoretical framework underlying the book, its treatment of 'queer' directly adheres to such fluidity as an "appellation for sexual positionalities that contest not just heteronormativity, but also homonormativity" (Browne et al, 2007: 12). As such, both of the latter terms have varying definitions and applications within and outside of queer theories and geographies of sexualities.

Now that the theoretical framework for this paper has been examined, it seems necessary that a clear explanation for opting for queer theory in lieu of feminist framework be given. As the target population of analysis in this paper is the LGBTQ, superficially, it would almost require no explanation as queer theory is understood as synonymous with the LGBTQ community. However, there are epistemological differences in theory and praxis between the two theoretical frameworks. Yet, the two are interrelated as well. Thus, the next section will entail a critique of feminism from a queer perspective specifically focusing on two primary grievances: 1) The paradigms conceptualization of gender and 2) Feminist agenda's perpetuation of heteronormative rape as the rape meta-narrative through which assault cases that do not adhere to that narrative are marginalized and made invisible.

CHAPTER III

**INTERSECTING OPPRESSIONS: PROBLEMATIZING FEMINISM, SEX AND
GENDER ON CAMPUS**

**RAPE CULTURE AND THE INTERRELATION BETWEEN OPPRESSIVE BELIEF
SYSTEMS**

This section will be reviewing literature that connects rape myth acceptance with other oppressive belief systems. What this inevitably infers is that rape culture is more complex and needs more than a gendered approach. There are specific ties to other oppressive beliefs. The resources allocated on campus towards eradicating these other oppressive beliefs such as sexism or racism, deal with issues that intersect with each other. Therefore, it is imperative the resources allocated for campus sexual assault prevention and education are designed and implemented with these intersections in mind.

Aosved and Long's (2006) research study "Co- Occurrence of Rape Myth Acceptance, Sexism, Racism, Homophobia, Ageism, Classism, and Religious Intolerance" sought to expand upon previous studies focused on rape myth acceptance. The focus for this specific study was the relationship of rape myth acceptance to other oppressive belief systems such as sexism, racism, homophobia, ageism, classism and religious intolerance. The study's findings suggest a correlation between rape myth acceptance and racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism, classism, and religious intolerance. Specifically, the findings suggest that the greater oppressive beliefs were associated with greater rape myth acceptance.

The sample population for the study comprised of 492 male and 506 female college students who completed the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (short form), the Neosexism Scale, the Modern and Old Fashioned Racism Scale, the

Modern Homophobia Scale, a modified version of the Economic Belief Scale, the Fraboni Scale of Ageism, and the Marlowe–Crowne Social Desirability Scale (short form). A Religious Intolerance Scale was created for the study as well and was completed by the participants.

The study was limited by the small sample size and the fact that the participants were chosen from a research participant pool. 83.7% of the participants identified as European Americans, which, from an intersectional perspective, lacks diversity. The study does not further examine if their findings were racially correlated. Still, despite the limitations, the study is pertinent to LGBTQ victimization in that it finds a correlation between rape myth acceptance and homophobia. Therefore, it provides insight into rape culture on university campuses and homophobia.

Similarly, building upon previous research that suggested college campuses maintained a rape culture that normalized sexual assault, Burnett, et al. (2009) focus on rape culture on college campuses. Through focus groups at a Midwestern University, the study found that attitudes and beliefs about rape were perpetuated on multiple levels: culturally, socially, and individually. Their findings suggest that a byproduct of this climate muted students, especially women, which suggests a potential contributing factor to rape culture. A major limitation in quantitative research on sexual assault is the paucity of data due to low rates of reporting. Therefore, if rape culture is reified and perpetuated on multiple levels resulting in a silencing of community members, then rape culture itself helps to maintain the problematic low rates of reporting and concealing of the extent to which sexual assault is a problem. The AAU report indicated the following with respect to reporting:

Overall, the rates of reporting were quite low. The highest was for stalking (28%) and physically forced penetration (25.5%). The rates are lowest for sexual touching involving both physical force (7%) and incapacitation (5%). (AAU, xxi)

In providing further evidence of rape culture from a co-cultural theoretical perspective incorporating standpoint theory and muted group theory, Burnett et al build upon theorizations concerning the effects of rape culture on marginalized groups. In understanding the crucial role of communication, their work demonstrates how dominant rape culture is reified and maintained through a culture of silence.

Burt and DeMello (2002) examined the varying perceptions of the level of blame and responsibility across three victims of rape—a homosexual man, heterosexual man and a woman. One hundred and sixty-eight university students were participants in the study and completed questionnaires. The study examines the participants' perceived level of blame and responsibility for each victim as a function of (1) feelings towards homosexuality and (2) the respondents' perceived likeness to the victim. The results of the study suggest that homophobia was related to blaming male victims more than the female victim. This study looks at male victimization and the societal attitudes and perceptions around it indicating a correlation between increased blaming with homophobia.

Mitchell, Hirschman, and Hall (1999) complement the later findings of Burt and DeMello's study in looking at how sexual orientation plays a key role in perceptions of victim responsibility. The study included 396 college students who read a brief report on a male-on-male sexual assault case with the victim described as either homosexual or heterosexual. Afterwards, they completed a questionnaire about the victim's level of responsibility and the level of pleasure and trauma the victim experienced. The results indicated that more blame, pleasure and less trauma were attributed to the homosexual victim. Further, the male participants attributed more responsibility to the victim versus the female participants. This article is different than Burt and DeMello's study in that it focuses solely on male victimization aimed at examining

the impact of sexual orientation of the victim. By examining the impact of sexual assault as it intersects with sexual orientation through the experiences of the often marginalized male victimization, this research provides insight into the effect of sexual minority status on victimization experiences.

Filston and Rogers (2012) provide findings from a psychological study regarding the interconnectedness between sentiments of male rape, female rape, victim blaming, homophobia, gender roles, and sexism. The most significant finding from this study was that “male rape myth acceptance significantly related to female rape myth acceptance, negative attitudes about gay men, gender role attitudes, and victim blame” (Davies, et. Al: 2012: p. 1). This study complements Aosved and Long’s study on rape myth acceptance and the correlation with other oppressive beliefs. If oppressive belief systems regarding sexism and rape myth acceptance are correlated to homophobia, then the hostile campus climate towards sexual minorities and its phenomenon of rape culture are intertwined. Theoretically, if these oppressions are interrelated, then resolution to these oppressions must follow suite in an interrelated manner. An institution that provides programming and initiatives aimed at eliminating sexism and promoting gender equality cannot operate in a vacuum. It would have to account for the interrelation of other oppressive belief systems.

Feminism, despite focusing on female victimization, provides an invaluable framework from which to begin theorizing male victimization. Javaid (2014) argues feminism coupled with the concept of hegemonic masculinity are necessary tools for understanding male rape. Javaid (2014) posits that neglecting male rape “functions to support, maintain and reinforce patriarchal power relations and hegemonic masculinity,” both of which are primary challenges to feminism (1). Therefore, male rape dispels normative conceptions of sexual assault rooted in a gendered

theoretical framework. Most notable is his argument is that feminism can better inform male victimization.

In a later study, Javaid (2015) provides a critical review of literature on male rape to examine how societal attitudes and responses to male victimization are heavily influenced by male rape myths. However, much of Javaid's sources focus on the United Kingdom. Since the focus for my research is specifically within the United States, Javaid's work does not provide an understanding of how the cultural context in the US may shape societal attitudes and reactions to male victimization. This context is especially significant and necessary when considering the intersection of sexual orientation and the extra social stigma placed upon LGBT victims of sexual assault. Therefore, there are cultural differences to be accounted for.

In this chapter, I will build upon Javaid's argument by critically examining how feminist activism and theorization can better inform research on male sexual victimization and campus sexual assault. By examining male sexual victimization on university campuses through a pluralistic theoretical lens, male victimization is not only made 'visible' in a sense, but more importantly, other power structures and systems of domination, such as hetero-patriarchy, can be explored and seen functioning in ways that would be of further interest for feminist research. This chapter will further demonstrate how feminist theory, particularly in its methodological approaches to research (e.g. personal narratives, standpoint theory) and theorizations of sex and gender, can overall better inform research on campus sexual assault. Specifically, I will examine how feminist conceptualizations of sex and gender can better explain how male victimization becomes marginalized. Conversely, this chapter will further investigate and theorize the role feminism has played in marginalization of male sexual victimization. Through such an examination, this chapter will uncover how feminist activism on campus through academic

research and student resource centers such as women's centers has created spaces of bipolarity on campus where inclusion and exclusion intersect.

By integrating concepts from feminism, the shortcomings of both a gendered approach and a gender-neutral approach are more adequately addressed. It is the purpose of this research overall to demonstrate that addressing campus sexual assault requires a decentering of gender as the singular variable of primary focus. An intersectional approach to campus sexual assault must instead be utilized with gender being a variable among others such as race, class, sexuality, etc.² The next section will provide an overview of feminist perspectives on gender before beginning analysis.

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER

Feminist activism brought visibility to the issue of sexual violence which ultimately led to the creation of campus resources for sexual assault (e.g. women's centers and women's studies which educate the student body on sexual violence). However, given the results from the latter aforementioned study, it is clear that campus resources for male sexual assault victims are in need of revision. In order to better understand male rape within the context of campus sexual assault, and the ways in which feminism would find its theorization to be of interest, a brief overview of feminist perspectives on gender will be provided.

Liberal feminists attribute the differences between the binary sexes "as socio-economic and cultural constructs rather than the outcome of an eternal biology" (Barker, 291). Difference

² For Dill and Zambrana, intersectionality is "an analytical strategy—a systemic approach to understanding human life and behavior that is rooted in the experiences and struggles of marginalized people"—which is employed through the utilization of multiple variables (4).

feminism posits there are inherent “essential distinctions between men and women” which are “cultural, psychic, and/or biological” (Barker, 292). The problematic nature of difference feminism is its promotion of a universal oppressed condition of woman. It essentializes women as one undifferentiated category, thus failing to take into account the differences in experiential oppression depending on factors such as race, class, and citizenship.

Post-structural feminism takes on an anti-essentialist approach in arguing that “sex and gender are social and cultural constructions that are not to be explained in terms of biology or to be reduced to functions of capitalism” (Barker, 292). The constructs of femininity and masculinity are not static universal categories, but rather, they should be seen as “discursive constructions...with a range of possible masculinities and femininities” (Barker, 292).

Postfeminism contextualizes the fundamental argument of feminism in acknowledging that “the central tenets of feminism have been absorbed into [Western] culture and surpassed” (Barker, 293).

Radical feminists, who consider patriarchy to be the root of sexism, view rape as another tool in which patriarchy maintains female oppression. Female sexual victimization is theorized as an exercise of power and domination within a system of patriarchy. Thus, through feminist’s mainstreaming of the sexual victimization of women, larger issues of societal power relations and domination, such as patriarchy, became a part of public and academic discourse. Women’s centers across universities have evolved as a resource for sexual assault through education, counseling, and empowerment of all genders and sexual identities.

However, critics such as Stanko (1990), argue that male victimization perpetrated by other men is done so for the same reasons as it is for female victimization; it is an exercise of power and control. Therefore, this commonality between male and female rape as a discourse of

power is of interest for further investigation because it provides a helpful insight into how to address victimization on campus despite gender differences. Consequently, to only consider female victimization is to adhere to heterosexist gender roles. The previous claim will be further discussed in the section that follows.

Beginning with an examination of Judith Butler's theory on gender and its function within 'the heterosexual matrix,' in the following section I will problematize gender in relation to the issue of campus sexual assault demonstrating how feminism can better inform male victimization. In doing so, I seek to uncover the ways in which the feminist paradigm has generated activism that is contrary to its core tenets and directly contributes to the veiling of male victimization.

GENDER PERFORMATIVITY AND THE HETEROSEXUAL MATRIX

Overall, feminist theorizations on gender understand it as a socially constructed phenomenon, claiming women are not born into their gender, but rather they "become" it. Judith Butler (1988) builds upon this research unpacking gender as an identity constructed by (1) "a stylized repetition of acts" and (2) "the stylization of the body" (519). It is not a "substantial model of identity" nor is it static or fixed, and as such it must be understood as an embodied form of "*social temporality*" (Butler, 1988; p. 520).

"Gender acts" are specific gestures and movements which have been attributed to specific bodies by society. They are the ways in which gender becomes performative and are to be understood as behaviors and actions that "constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self" (Butler, 1988; p. 519). Because these acts are "internally discontinuous," the external culmination of these acts becomes "a performative accomplishment" achieved by all people within a society who through such accomplishment "come to believe and to perform in the mode

of belief” (Butler, 1988; p. 520). Through the process of repetition, these acts form not only the individual’s gender identity but also constitute it as a “compelling illusion, an object of *belief*” (Butler, 1988, 520). By making the compelling claim that gender identity is not an inherency but rather a “performative accomplishment compelled by social sanction and taboo”, Butler is not seeking to erase gender as a categorical identity or devalue the shared experiences attributed to specific gender identities. Rather, Butler’s aim is to deconstruct gender, positioning it as a “performative accomplishment” wherein the performativity of its character lies “the possibility of contesting its reified status” (Butler, 1988: p. 520). Hence, Butler points to the “arbitrary relation” between gender acts and the attributed gender identity as being the locus from which the “possibilities of gender transformation [exists]...in the breaking or subversive repetition of that style” (Butler, 1988; p. 520).

The implications of Butler’s theorization on gender as signifies a possibility for change. Gender inequality is maintained through the strict bifurcation of gender and their respective roles. To open up the confines of the gender binary is to weaken the power structures that systematically promote sexism. The performativity of gender and subsequent naturalized perception of acts attributed to specific genders means that women and men do not behave in specific ways that are tied ontologically to their sex. Therefore, recognizing these gender acts and subverting them can change systems of oppression since these acts establish and maintain a heterosexist culture:

In other words, acts and gestures, articulated and enacted desires create the illusion of an interior and organizing gender core, an illusion discursively maintained for the purposes of the regulation of sexuality within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality. (Butler, 1990: p. 173).

Moreover, according to Butler, the critical task for feminism is the following:

to locate strategies of subversive repetition enabled by [constructed gender identities], to affirm the local possibilities of intervention through participating in precisely those practices of repetition that constitute identity and, therefore, present the immanent possibility of contesting them. (Butler, 1990: p. 188)

It is not a simple matter of whether to repeat or not repeat certain gender acts, but rather it is a question of “how to repeat or, indeed, to repeat and, through a radical proliferation of gender, to displace the very gender norms that enable the repetition itself” (Butler, 1990: p. 189). These acts are paramount to understanding the relation between gender and the oppression of women. If bodies become gendered, as Butler explains, “through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time”, then gender is denaturalized:

Gender is not passively scripted on the body, and neither is it determined by nature, language, the symbolic, or the overwhelming history of patriarchy. Gender is what is put on, invariably, under constraint, daily and incessantly, with anxiety and pleasure, but if this continuous act is mistaken for a natural or linguistic given, power is relinquished to expand the cultural field bodily through subversive performances of various kinds. (Butler, 1988: p. 531)

Therefore, Butler cautions feminism against finding solidarity and collective action based upon the category of woman for its adherence to a naturalized difference between sexes:

I have tried to suggest that the identity categories often presumed to be foundational to feminist politics, that is, deemed necessary in order to mobilize feminism as an identity politics, simultaneously work to limit and constrain in advance the very cultural possibilities that feminism is supposed to open up. The tacit constraints that produce culturally intelligible “sex” ought to be understood as generative political structures rather than naturalized foundations. (Butler, 1990: p. 187)

Feminism mobilized as a movement of identity politics with solidarity founded upon the category of woman. The promotion of sexual difference became paramount to solidarity. However, promoting sexual difference reifies a bifurcated understanding of gender formed within a heterosexual framework that dictates how society understands sex, gender identity, and sexuality. As such, an obligatory heterosexual framework inherently perpetuates sexism and homophobia. Therefore, by promoting sexual differences feminism has been complicit in

perpetuating a framework that inherently generates systemic sexism and homophobia.

The univocal category of woman laid the foundations for feminist solidarity. But, again the reproduction of such gender identities sustains the gender binary which in turn generate specific “conditions of oppression” (Butler, 1988: p. 523). Feminist’s adhering to a binary logic creates a serious problem of exclusion that becomes masked by “a denial of subjectivity due to pseudodualistic self/Other dichotomies” (Goldenberg; 2007, p. 139). The oppositional binary relations of gender—feminine and masculine—are produced within “[t]he cultural matrix” (Butler, 1990: p.23). These gender identities are formed and regulated by a “heterosexualization of desire” (1990: p.23). This discourse on exclusionary practices deriving from binary logic within feminism speaks to a larger issue involving feminism--sexual violence. Sexual assault resources like Women’s Centers on campuses are problematic for male rape victims in that their feminist foundations produce an essentialized sexual assault victim, founded upon the gender binary wherein women are violable and men are impenetrable, which has resulted in the production of exclusion. These practices all occur within “heterosexual matrix,” understood as the “grid of cultural intelligibility through which bodies, genders, and desire are naturalized” (1990: p. 194). The heterosexual matrix allows for an understanding beyond the myopia of patriarchy being the singular source of oppression. It complicates noncompliant gender acts and sexual desires as cultural intelligibilities that are functioning within

“a hegemonic discursive/epistemic model of gender intelligibility that assumes that for bodies to cohere and make sense there must be a stable sex expressed through a stable gender (masculine expresses male, feminine expresses female) that is oppositionally and hierarchically defined through the compulsory practice of heterosexuality.” (Butler, 1990: p. 194).

Gender, sex, and sexuality are cultural productions constructed by and within society for the purpose of maintaining a particular power asymmetry framework from which the

heterosexual world is framed and purported as natural. Returning to the focus of this chapter, the following questions arise: How can Butler's theory on gender and its relation to the "heterosexual matrix" better inform male victimization of campus sexual assault? Moreover, how can Butler's assertions better inform feminist activism surrounding campus sexual assault?

To address the former question, we must begin by deconstructing gender discourses. Gender as performative exposes the fallacies behind the naturalist presuppositions about the gender/sex dichotomy, intuitively creating the possibility for changing those constructs and by effect subsequent inequalities. Within the context of campus sexual assault and male victimization, Butler's post-modern feminist perspective on gender understands male victimization as "unintelligible" within the cultural matrix because the act itself deviates from gender roles. As a postmodernist, Butler denounces biological determinism using psychoanalytic theory to call for the 'intelligibility' of multiple identifications as key:

multiple and coexisting identifications produce conflicts, convergences, and innovative dissonances within gender configurations which contest the fixity of masculine and feminine placements with respect to the paternal law. In effect, the possibility of multiple identifications (which are not finally reducible to primary or founding identifications that are fixed within masculine and feminine positions) suggests that the Law is not deterministic and that "the" law may not even be singular. (Butler, 1990: p. 86)

These multiple identifications, which serve as subversions to phallogocentrism and compulsory heterosexuality, are not fully articulated within Butler's work. Hawkesworthe's (1997) critique of Butler's theory reflects this notion in asserting that Butler's theory does "nothing to dispel the ideology of reproduction that sustains the natural attitude...[nor does it] provide a conception of gender that breaks definitively from the problematic presuppositions" rooted in heterosexism (669). Hawkesworthe admits to the "virtuosity" of Butler's theory, but is in the end quite critical. I find Hawkesworthe's critique of Butler to be informative, but

ultimately overly critical. It is Butler's general questioning of the '*how*' gender is configured and her assertion that multiple identifications can lead to subversion. It is precisely those core assertions from Butler that are particularly useful within the context of campus sexual assault especially as a point from which to begin theorizing.

GENDER HEGEMONY ON CAMPUS

College campuses, as I will argue in further detail later on, are exemplary sites of gender hegemony wherein male victimization becomes marginalized within a gendered theoretical framework which permits female victimization as comprehensible and male victimization as either invisible or deplorable. Deviations from gender norms such as male victimization and the subsequent societal response can inform further theorizations on sexual victimization of the marginalized 'other', such as sexual minorities. The key to understanding the link is a deviation from gender roles.

In discussing and applying the concept of gender hegemony, it is best to address Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity. Institutions largely governed by men have produced and recreated norms and practices associated with masculinity and heterosexuality. Although not explicitly expressed, in some of these institutions hegemonic masculinity has become the norm. Hegemonic masculinity refers to a particular set of masculine norms and practices that have become dominant in specific institutions of social control. To become hegemonic, cultural norms must be supported by institutional power. Hence, hegemonic masculinity is a set of norms and practices associated with men in powerful social institutions (Connell 1995).

Connell's theory further expounds upon the notion of multiple masculinities and femininities all of which are subordinate to hegemonic masculinity. However, he makes clear in

his original theorization, of which he later reconfigures, that there could be no hegemonic femininity. Critics of Connell, such as Schippers (2007), argue that Connell's theory falls short of accounting for the hierarchies within masculinities and femininities. However, Schippers (2007), does credit Connell as contributing to an understanding of how gender hegemony operates, "through the subordination of femininity to hegemonic masculinity...[and] through the subordination and marginalization of other masculinities" (p. 87). Schippers critique is most valuable in its theorization of gender relationality and the ways in which femininities help to maintain it.

Schippers focuses on the institutionalizing of gender difference and gender relationality (2007: p. 91) which is predicated on "heterosexuality...normatively constituted as a naturalized relation of male *active* dominance and female *passive* receptivity" (Budgeon, 2014: p. 323). Budgeon (2014), further develops the aforementioned concepts by Connell through an examination of his work. In her critique, Budgeon (2014) sees one primary shortcoming of Connell's work being a need for further development on theorizing on femininities and how they operate within gender hegemony to sustain it. Budgeon (2014) finds that further theorization on gender ideals and femininities needs to be done to further examine "how these ideals are also implicated in the repetition of hegemonic logic, particularly in sites where individuals undertake identity work and in so doing consent to dominant constructions of gender relations" (p. 331).

In the case of male rape, the male rape victim becomes feminized by having been violable. It is a direct challenge to the gender ideals Budgeon discusses. If gender hegemony necessitates an active male dominance over a passive female receptivity which presupposes male impenetrability and female vulnerability, then the male rape victim becomes an embodied loss of masculine ideal which is juxtaposed with a receptivity (violability) that is attributed to the ideal

femininity. So, how does male rape become further complicated within the confines of a university? I argue that the university is a site of gender hegemony. It is an institution whose framework is based on gender differences and seen through institutionalized separation of genders with dormitories, sports, Greek fraternities and sororities, etc.

THE UNIVERSITY AS A HETEROSEXIST MATRIX OF DOMINATION

Because IHL's are hetero-patriarchal institutions of gender hegemony, the male rape victim challenges hegemonic masculine gender norms and experiences a post-trauma feminization or emasculation – citing a similar sense of dehumanization that female victims experience. How could theory inform the ways in which this experience is constructed? Recall Butler's matrix of heterosexism, Black feminist Patricia Collin's builds upon the concept of matrices of domination and developed her "domains-of-power argument" (2000: p. 1). Borrowing from one of Collins' key conceptions of power, Collins calls for power to be understood as,

[an] intangible entity that circulates within a particular matrix of domination and to which individuals stand in varying relationships. These approaches emphasize how individual subjectivity frames human actions within a matrix of domination. (274)

Although Collin's developed her "domains-of-power argument" from the standpoint of U.S. Black women, she makes clear that the implications of her argument serve a wider purpose: (1) to understand "how intersecting oppressions of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation are organized in unique ways" and "to stimulate dialogues about empowerment" (276). Therefore, Collin's approach to understanding the ways in which oppressions are constructed is adaptable to any social minority. Using Collin's work can better demonstrate how such oppression towards male victimization is organized. The four interrelated domains of power are listed as (1) structural (2) disciplinary (3) hegemonic and (4) interpersonal, and each serves a specific

purpose (Collins, 2000: p. 275-276). A university which is structured on gender hegemony organizes oppression towards ‘gender pariahs’ and serves as the structural domain.

The disciplinary domain would be the regulations in practice to manage the oppression. Thus, resources allocated towards female victims, such as women’s centers, might appear as a progression for feminist activism. However, since Collin’s concept promotes individual subjectivity, a male rape victim could see women’s centers as a site for further emasculation given the nomenclature. Not to devalue such resources based on feminist activism, but the existence of women’s centers as sexual assault resources for all gender identities poses problematic. I do not mean to advocate for the eradication of women’s centers. I recognize them as fundamental to gender equality within higher education as a resource specifically purposed with serving women on campus. However, if funding for sexual assault education and resources is solely allocated to women’s centers or disproportionately allocated in favor of them, then it is arguable that we see an overlap between these four domains. The underlying message is that females are the sole or primary victims and need such a center as a resource which is problematic in the sense that victimization becomes hierarchical.

The interpersonal domain can be seen through the victimization experienced by a male victim that influences the “everyday lived experience and the individual consciousness that ensues” (Collins, 2000: p. 276). Similarly, from a Human Rights perspective, Clark offers a new victim-centered conceptualization of rape as an alternative to the mainstream power theorization of rape being an act of control or exercise of power over the victim. Clark offers a unique perspective focused on rape as “a crime of identity” wherein the male rape victim’s “very sense of self” is under attack leaving him void of “everything that he believes to be the essence of his male identity” (2014: pp 146).

FEMINIST ACTIVISM ON CAMPUS

Feminism has informed much of the research and activism surrounding campus sexual assault. However, as a theory which is founded on self-reflexive practices, it must be conscious of its own myopia, which Butler cautioned against. In “Toward a New Feminist Theory of Rape,” Carine M. Mardorossian (2002), identifies a problematic trend within current feminist theory—the relative absence of theoretical work focused on sexual violence. Specifically within the context of institutions of higher learning, Mardorossian asserts that sexual violence is only formally discussed within introductory women’s studies courses typically presented through “issue-oriented and experiential analyses [where discussion focuses on] identifying the source of violence (gendered power relations) and its effects (trauma)” (2002, p. 743). This article provides a feminist critique of feminism within academic discourse on the issue of sexual assault. In only discussing sexual assault in introductory courses in such a brief manner, the issue of sexual assault remains under discussed contributing to a culture of silence.

Although epistemological and pedagogical feminist researchers, like Kathleen Weiler in *Women Teaching for Change* (1988), have focused on education reform that better facilitates intellectual and personal growth through a feminist lens, combating ‘ism’s took precedence over the issue of sexual assault. Similarly, Jennifer Scanlon (1993) discusses an education gap within women’s studies where instruction has replaced activism within the “chilly climate” of academia (8). Scanlon (1993) argues that if feminist pedagogy advocates for the empowerment of students to foster future agents of social change, then as a feminist professor one must go beyond providing standard information. The professor must provide the tools for activism. Scanlon suggests engaged learning via the incorporation of non-conventional intentionally creative

assignments that “provide interested students the opportunity to take a political step and agitate social change” (1993, p. 9).

Kelli Zaytoun Byrne (2000) in her article, “The Roles of Campus-based Women’s Centers,” proposes the partnership between women’s centers and women’s studies:

Working together, women's centers and women's studies programs can serve as a collaborative model for institutional and community reformations and revolutions. (55)

Other feminist theorists, like Julie Parker and Janet Freedman (1999), have called for the collaboration between women’s centers and women’s studies programs to embed feminist activism on campus, specifically drawing attention to the importance of applying a reflective feminist process (121). Returning to Mardorossian, she too calls for a self-reflexive practice that “does not interpret social relations without making explicit the assumptions on which it itself relies to make sense of the social fabric” (p.745). Feminism has used their solidarity based on categorical logic, to justify allocation of resources, which has proven in many ways successful.

Feminist activism is alive and well on college campuses through women’s centers and women’s studies programs. These two actors are key in the fight for gender equality as the primary sources for educating the future generations. Women’s studies programs engage students in deconstructing social norms at the most personal level—gender. The concept of differentiating between gender and sex is rarely taught before higher education and even then often relegated to women’s studies and gender studies courses. Women’s centers provide programming and events that support female empowerment, promote gender equality, and sexual assault awareness. These campus resources are feminist activism alive today within higher education. They play an integral part of campus culture.

As much as feminism and feminist activism can inform theorization on male rape, I would not argue for replicating similar tactics when considering the issue of sexual minorities and campus sexual assault. This is primarily because the category of ‘woman’ with respect to feminist activism on campus has remained static. For one, to continually promote women’s centers as a primary resource for sexual assault victims only contributes to sexist ideals of female vulnerability. Current data indicate that female students on campus are less likely to experience assault versus non-student females of the same age. Therefore, although women’s centers were originally created as sexual assault prevention resources for female students, the potential for women’s centers remains untapped if the majority of their focuses on sexual assault. The need for such a gendered discourse on sexual assault again only promotes female vulnerability which confines femininity in a marginalized, secondary state. Instead, women’s centers should focus their programming on female empowerment and development in contemporary issues that women face. If higher education is purposed with preparing students for careers and adult life, then women’s centers, as a function of higher education, should focus on such programming but catered towards female students. For example, women’s centers could offer programming that cater to issues relating to gender wage gaps and negotiating salary.

Moreover, feminist activism must remain true to the main tenets of feminism which includes constantly undergoing a process of reflexivity. Reflexivity allows for a constant review process wherein tactics and ideals can change and adapt over time. The current data on campus sexual assault indicate that women are not the only demographic disproportionately affected by campus sexual assault. Recall the AAU report which clearly stated that in all areas of assault, sexual minority students experience the highest percentages of assault in comparison to other student groups. Therefore, the narrative has to change. Likewise, feminist activism has to adapt

to the changing narrative. Feminist activism can no longer provide data on solely female victimization. Rather, it must provide the most complete data inclusive of all gender identities and sexual orientations. To do so does not diminish or threaten the legitimacy of activism focused on female victimization. Feminist activism can still promote programming that caters to female victimization. However, to use data solely focused on female victimization which signals the idea that only females are victims or are the ‘most vulnerable’ is to undermine the activism itself and promote feminine vulnerability. If we look at who is statistically more vulnerable—meaning likely to experience victimization of any kind—sexual minorities are most vulnerable based on percentages. If we look at which group experience sexual assault based on number of incidents, then women are most vulnerable. However, the two demographics are not equal in size. Sexual minorities are minorities. Is it justifiable to ignore the needs of this demographic simply because they do not outnumber others?

This chapter examined feminist theorizations on gender and sex and problematized the intersection of those concepts with campus culture. By examining male rape on university campuses through a pluralistic feminist lens incorporating the concepts of hegemonic masculinity, gender hegemony, and the “domains-of-power” argument, this research advocates for a more inclusive and reflexive feminist consciousness by fully incorporating male victimization into their research and activism. The next chapter will look at the feminist paradigm’s influence on media and public discourse concerning sexual assault to better contextualize the argument.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEDIA'S HETEROSEXIST GAZE ON CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is to examine rape culture, specifically within the context of college campuses, on a national scale from an integrated theoretical. The chapter will first discuss the feminist origins of the public discourse on rape to provide a brief historical background to the reader. Then, current data concerning the prevalence of sexual victimization on campuses will be presented. A discussion on the limitations of those findings in their paucity of data concerning LGBTQ victimization on college campuses coupled with a qualitative analysis of the reports will follow. I argue that the paucity of LGBTQ victimization data in national surveys can be attributed to specific causal factors. This section builds upon the previous sections argument that feminist activism on sexual violence has contributed to the gendered sexual assault narrative.

First, from a cultural studies perspective, I argue that the paucity of data is a result of institutionalized heterosexism within society reified by social norms operating as a function of a heteronormative culture. Additionally, and equally significant, I argue the feminist agenda is another causal factor in the promotion of the female-victim-male-perpetrator metanarrative of campus sexual assault. The feminist movement's influence on society's understanding of sexual assault stems from the movement's second wave. During the second wave, sexual assault was placed within a single gendered framework which promoted women as the primary victims of campus sexual assault perpetrated by men. These causal factors, as I will demonstrate, led to an 'invisibility' of the disproportionate levels of LGBTQ student victimization on college campuses in comparison to other identity categories such as gender. Further, the feminist agenda informs

the third causal factor—the news media—through cultural capital accrued over space and time. The chapter will conclude by demonstrating said ‘invisibility’ with a qualitative visual analysis of images found by searching “campus sexual assault” on Google.

FEMINIST ACTIVISM AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE ON RAPE

In discussing the archaeological description of ‘sexuality,’ French philosopher Michel Foucault ponders the discursive practice at play when conceptualizing sexualities leading to the following Foucauldian discursive concept:

It would reveal, not of course as the ultimate truth of sexuality, but as one of the dimensions in accordance with which one can describe it, a certain ‘way of speaking’; and one would show how this way of speaking is invested not in scientific discourses, but in a system of prohibitions and values. (1972: pg. 193)

For Foucault, discourse is a means to analyze the way in which knowledge is produced. He sees discourse as a means through which a regime of truth inherent within any given society is practiced and through such discursive practice a certain level of power exists. The power referred to in the above statement is what is at play within the regime of truth in a society. These truths enact power relations within society, dictating what is selected as that which matters and that which does not. Through such discursive practices, cultural and societal value is assigned, and value equals power. Foucault posits this in his interview “Truth and Power” with Alessandro Fontana and Pasquale Pasquino:

the types of discourse which [society] accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault, 1979: pg. 73)

Further, ‘truth’ is produced by those in positions of power who in turn are perpetuating certain discourses. According to Foucault, truths are simply social constructs used as a means to organize society, “The ensemble of rules according to which the true and the false are separated

and specific effects of power attached to the true” (Foucault, 1979: pg. 74). Thus, the ‘ensemble’ is not merely a benign set of rules but rather the value attached to these constructed truths creates a myriad of power asymmetries within society.

Feminism was the movement through which public discourse on rape originated. In the context of rape jurisprudence, the historical background of sex crime laws within the United States is ridden with sexism. In fact, American jurisprudence was predicated on English common law. Under the law—wherein woman was considered property owned by her father until marriage when the property rights were then transferred to the husband—rape was a crime against property (Tracy et al, 2012). The logic underlying this law was “related to patriarchal inheritance rights and a female’s reproductive capacity” (Tracy et al, 2012: 1). Women’s grievances with the misogynistic legal logic was a driving force in the second wave of feminism as it was particularly concerned with a woman’s complete agency over her body and reproductive rights (Belknap, 2001).

The Model Penal Code was established in 1962 by the American Law Institute and provided state legislatures with a clear understanding of rape as “sexual intercourse with a female not his wife” with the use of force or threat and as such “perpetuated many of [the] historical sex crime provisions” (Tracy et al, 2012: 5). The insufficient legislation coupled with ‘female fear’ in everyday life were the primary reasons leading the second wave feminism’s platform for complete agency over their bodies ensured by legal protections. As Tracy et al. write:

Sweeping sex crime law reform began in the 1970s. Feminists rejected the notion that women are the property of men without independent legal status or rights and demanded changes in the laws. As a result of this activism, most states have expanded the definitions of sex crimes to eliminate disparities based on gender and marital status. They have also rescinded the requirements of resistance, corroboration, and reporting requirements and prohibited introduction of a

woman's past sexual history. It is now well-established that penetration of orifices other than the vagina is a felony. Issues of force and consent continue to change but clear trends in the evolution of the law are identifiable. The definition of force is broadening beyond overt physical force alone to include other modes of coercion. There is an increasing recognition that penetration without consent or any additional force beyond penetration is a serious sexual offense. (2012: 6)

According to Brownmiller, 'rape' is a tool utilized by men with the purpose of asserting dominance over women which generates an ever-present threat towards women. This ominous depiction of women's everyday reality within society being comprised of an ever present "fear of an open season of rape" graphically illustrates the gendered oppressions women endure (16). Brownmiller continues her social analysis of rape as a tool asserting that upon "Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of pre-historic times" (14-15) and was "probably the single causative factor in the original subjugation of women by man" (16). The major contribution of *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* is its social constructionist analysis of rape positioning it within a theoretical discourse on rape-as-violence rather than a sexually motivated crime. As Brownmiller states,

Our call to sex is in the head... Without a biologically determined mating season, a human male can evince sexual interest in a human female at any time he pleases, and his psychological urge is not dependent in the slightest on her biologic readiness or receptivity. What it all boils down to is that the human male can rape. (13)

Here she clearly distinguishes between the conceptualization of rape as an act stemming from a biological urge to mate and a psychological urge to assert dominance. In fact, much of her arguments focus on deconstructing the social misconceptions of women that were constructed and maintained through biological reasonings. In understanding rape as an act motivated by power dynamics and the need to assert dominance, Brownmiller is progressive in her pursuit of gender equity. However, there are inherent contradictions in her argument that reflect similar contradictions within the feminist paradigm regarding sexual violence which will be examined.

The general contradiction in and ramification of Brownmiller's definition of rape is that it has created a heteronormative conceptualization of rape within society and in doing so has essentialized men as a homogenous collective of perpetrators. This notion of rape perpetuates the gender binary that feminism aims to break wherein women are perpetual victims of the ever present threat of sexual violences of men.

Brownmiller was radically questioning gendered norms within society during her time, which created a public consciousness regarding rape. Laying the foundations for a conceptualization of rape as an act of violence, Brownmiller established a clear rhetoric surrounding the topic, which in turn enabled a public discourse on rape. Brownmiller's public consciousness raising and focus on female fear regarding sexuality and rape falls directly in line with the second wave of feminism of the time and its slogan "the personal is political" (Gordon, 2013). Feminists were predominantly white, middle-class Western women who themselves had typically been unconscious of their own oppressions within society. Most had accepted what Marxists would call 'false consciousness' predicated on the notion that the gender system and its subsequent gender expectations were 'natural' (Gordon, 2013). Therefore, for feminists, consciousness raising was a major tool utilized for their activism. Dominated by issues of sex and reproductive rights and making violence against women a central concern (Scanlon, 2009), the second wave of feminism was a phase focused on social and legal reform, such as the passage of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution which aimed at "affirming the equal application of the Constitution to all persons regardless of their sex".³

³ For the full text or more information on the Equal Rights Amendment, please see:

<http://www.equalrightsamendment.org/>.

Thus, second wave feminism redefined society's understanding of rape as a crime of power and control through Brownmiller's assertions in her work *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. Despite the limitations and contradictions which will be examined in the next section, the second wave of feminism was a key movement towards social and legislative progress.

As significant of an impact Brownmiller's piece had in generating social change in pursuit of gender equity, much of her work's homogenous treatment of men essentialized as rapists in pursuit of control and dominance over women, has been subjected to a myriad of criticism—even from fellow feminists. Her framing of rape as a heteronormative patriarchal meta-narrative can be contested as a reverse form of sexism which blatantly refutes any other narrative of rape—namely, the possibility that a man could be the victim of rape. In doing so, Brownmiller has rendered invisible all male victims of rape which, from its inception, created society's conviction of women as the sole victims of rape. Despite the fallacies in her argument and the plethora of critique on her assumptions of society and gender norms, Brownmiller's legacy continues to thrive today.

PREVALENCE OF CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT

Data concerning campus sexual assault against LGBTQ was not available on a global scale, which is why the focus of this research will be on the United States. In September 2015, The Association of American Universities published its "Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct" which included a range of gender identities finding the following data:

Overall, 11.7 percent of students across the 27 universities reported experiencing nonconsensual penetration or sexual touching by force or incapacitation since enrolling at the IHE. However, this overall rate masks large differences by gender and enrollment status. Females and students identifying as TGQN (transgender, genderqueer, non-conforming, questioning and as something not listed on the

survey) have significantly higher rates of this type of victimization than heterosexual males. (AAU, 2015: viii)

By admission of the report, the overall percentage listed above masks large differences when divided categorically by gender and enrollment status. Despite female students and students identifying as TGQN (transgender, genderqueer, non-conforming, questioning and as something not listed on the survey) having significantly higher rates of this type of victimization in comparison to heterosexual males, the report makes no distinction between TGQN respondents versus female respondents with regards to the most serious types of sexual assault.

As such, at a college campus, LGBTQ students need adequate resources for assault—this includes mental, verbal, physical, and sexual (Hotelling and Ottens, 2001). Currently, most universities have women's centers, student health centers, and counseling service centers that can provide somewhat of a safe place and resource for LGBTQ sexual assault victims (Hotelling and Ottens, 2001). However, according to the AAU report, about half of TGQN respondents do not feel like their institutions would take their reports seriously:

When asked what might happen when a student reports an incident of sexual assault or misconduct to a university official, about half say that it is very or extremely likely that the university will conduct a fair investigation. The percentage is lower for those groups that are most likely to report victimization (i.e. females and those identifying as TGQN). Similar percentages are evident for opinions about other types of reactions by the university. (AAU, 2015: iv-v)

Thus, not only is it imperative that governing bodies at the national and transnational scale include queer theoretical concepts within their own policy making and the research used to frame these policies, it is further imperative at the campus level for universities to include this framework in conceptualizing a more inclusive campus that provides adequate resources for all affected by assault (Fanucce and Taub, 2009). Before beginning the theoretical analysis, an examination of data resulting from the AAU survey will be presented in order to further

contextualize the disparity between public perception of campus assault and everyday reality as it pertains to LGBTQ students (Murphy, 2006).

The results from the AAU report indicate that assault victimization of LGBTQ students is disproportionately higher than heterosexual students collectively and compared to each gender. The data presented covers varying forms of assault and student perception of campus climate. The sequential order of the report's results and respective subject matter will be presented as follows: (1) overall sexual assault and misconduct with a comparison based on gender and sexual identity; (2) completed rape involving penetration; (3) rates of reporting; and (4) student perception of campus climate.

Overall, based on the report, 47.7 percent of students indicated that they have been the victims of sexual harassment with students identifying as TGQN and females as most likely to be victims of sexual harassment (AAU, 2015: 50). For example, students identifying as TGQN showed 75.2 percent for undergraduate and 69.4 percent for graduate/professional reported having been sexually harassed (AAU, 2015: xvi). For female students, more than half of female undergraduates (61.9%) report being sexually harassed. Further, non-heterosexual students report having experienced some form of assault significantly more than heterosexual students. For example, 60.4 percent of gays and lesbians report being sexually harassed compared to 45.9 percent of heterosexuals (AAU, 2015: xx).

With respect to completed rape involving penetration through the use of force or incapacitation are considered the most serious types of sexual assault and misconduct. Undergraduate students identifying as TGQN had the highest rates with 12.4 percent which a decrease though still significant 8.3 percent for graduate/professional students. Female undergraduate students reported the second highest rates of 10.8 percent. Although there was a

decrease in TGQN rates with graduate students, those rates were disproportionately higher compared to the rates for males and other graduate/professional students. For example, female graduate students had a rate of 3.9 percent. (AAU, 2015: viv)

Reporting or lack thereof is a serious point of concern with regards to obtaining data on rape that represents reality. Thus, the AAU report included questions on reporting to gain further insight on possible reasons for lack of reporting and ways to improve report rates. Across the board, reporting rates were significantly low. The highest was for stalking (28.0%) and physically forced penetration (25.5%). The lowest rates were for sexual touching involving both physical force (7%) and incapacitation (5. %). (AAU, 2015: xxi) Overall, more than 50 percent of the victims of even the most serious incidents (e.g., forced penetration), indicated the choice for not reporting was based on their perception that the assault was not “serious enough.” Additionally, showing significant results, were other reasons for not reporting such as feeling “embarrassed, ashamed or that it would be too emotionally difficult” and “did not think anything would be done about it” (AAU, 2015: 50).

The perception of the campus climate questions on the survey produced varying rates by gender and enrollment status. Students identifying as TGQN are more likely to say the climate is problematic or riskier than females. For example, 43.6 percent of TGQN undergraduate students thought sexual assault or misconduct was very or extremely problematic on their campus. This rate is much higher compared to undergraduate females (27.1%) and undergraduate males (16.1%) (AAU, 2015: 44).

Overall, with respect to the LGBTQ student body, the AAU report concluded that three out of every four LGBTQ students reported having experienced some form of sexual harassment. Nine percent of LGBTQ students said they experienced sexual assault involving penetration

which is higher than the seven percent attributed to female students. Most disturbing is that this classification of rape entails assault by use of either force or incapacitation and is considered the most serious type of sexual harassment. This data is alarming given the fact that rape within public consciousness is considered an act of sexual violence that disproportionately affects women.

Previous to AAU report, the statistics used in research and eventual policymaking within the United States were from The Campus Sexual Assault Study, a research project conducted by RTI International (Response to Intervention) and federally funded by the US Department of Justice. The study preceded the AAU report previously discussed by almost a decade and was published in December 2007. Alarming, the report focuses only on women as potential victims and men as potential perpetrators. This exemplifies the pervasive hetero-meta-narrative of rape. Fortunately, advances have been made since the publication of the CSA Study.

If you give a woman – or a man, for that matter – without his or her knowledge a drug and then have sex with that person without consent, that’s rape. I think this country, any civilized country, should have no tolerance for rape. –President Barack Obama⁴

The quote above is a recent statement President Obama made following a White House Press Conference. The statement was in response to a question posed to President Obama regarding Bill Cosby admitting to the use of drugs in order to have sex with women. President

⁴ Carroll, Kelsey. “President Obama’s Definition of Rape is a Sign of Progress.” July 17, 2015. <https://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2015/07/17/president-obamas-definition-of-rape-is-a-sign-of-progress/>

Obama's modern understanding of rape is a part of the Obama administration's initiative to end rape culture especially on college campuses. In 2010, President Obama made a call to action for all federal agencies to make domestic and sexual violence a top priority and signed the third reauthorization of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) on March 7, 2013.

In 2015, in response to President Obama's call to action in 2010, the Administration compiled the "Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call to Action" report detailing the problem and continued needs that must be addressed. As a result, in the last few years, rape culture has become a 'hot topic' in the media thanks to the Obama Administration's initiative. The evidence based on the data from the Campus Sexual Assault Report (2007) concludes that sexual assault is a problem that can no longer be ignored with nearly 1 in 5 women and 1 in 71 men falling victim to rape in their lifetimes according to the Obama Administration's "Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call to Action" report (White House Initiative, 2014). Especially vulnerable are college students (White House Initiative, 2014). Another group disproportionately affected by rape and sexual violence is the LGBTQ community according to the same report. However, the report fails to provide specific data about LGBTQ campus sexual assault rates.

Interestingly, the paucity in data on male and LGBTQ victimization is not confined to the United States. In Canada, the data is even more incomplete on sexual assault. The most recent data on sexual assault for Canadian universities comes from a CBC News investigation which resulted in over 700 cases being reported within the last five years with wide variations between institutions⁵. The data was compiled from 87 institutions and only requested the overall number

⁵ CBS News. "Interactive: Campus sexual assault reports." February 09, 2015.

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/multimedia/interactive-campus-sexual-assault-reports-1.2944538>.

of on-campus sexual assaults reported between the years of 2009 and 2013. The report unfortunately did not provide as much details, such as victimization data based on social groups. This is symptomatic of a deeply embedded rape culture within Canada where it is normalized due to biased societal attitudes regarding sexuality and gender.⁶ Given the paucity of data for both Western states which this research argues is attributed to the heterosexism embedded within both societies, it deems prudent to look at the shortcomings of feminism as a complete theoretical lens through which society must look in order to address the issue of campus sexual assault.

THE FEMININE CRITIQUE: REVISITING FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES

The first reason that a feminist framework was critically examined in this research is directly due to the paradigm's antiquated understanding of the term gender and its supposed effect on social inequality. To be clear, feminism was progressive in understanding the mechanisms through which patriarchy was perpetuated in society (Meyer, 2008). The paradigm's articulation of sexism being produced out of gender roles aided in the process of deconstructing societal norms in the pursuit of social change (West and Zimmerman, 1987).

Candace West and Don Zimmerman contributed a new conceptual understanding of gender as an accomplishment; something that is performed (West and Zimmerman, 1987). When understood as an accomplishment, the attention is shifted from "matters internal to the individual" thereby focusing on how gender is interactional and institutionalized (West and

⁶ Lalonde, Michelle. "Sexual harassment and assault on Canadian campuses." May 20, 2015.

<http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/sexual-harassment-and-assault-on-canadian-campuses>.

Zimmerman, 1987: 147). West and Zimmerman also make a clear distinction between sex, sex category, and gender. As progressive as West and Zimmerman's new take on gender was, the fallacy of their argument lies in the emphasis on the relationship between gender directly correlated to sex as the mechanism through which social inequalities generate.

The implication of this conceptualization of gender is a further perpetuation of a heteronormative gender binary. Indeed, the concept of gender is now considered a chosen performance wherein individuals may break out of the gender mold. According to West and Zimmerman, it is the social construct of gender and its relationship to sex category that perpetuates social inequality. In order to generate social change, West and Zimmerman call for "an understanding of how gender is produced in social situations" in order to clarify the "interactional scaffolding of social structure and the social control processes that sustain it" (1987: 147).

To make gender and its relation to sex category the culprit of social inequality fails to be inclusive of individuals who fall outside of the gender norms. The publication treats gender in a homogenous comprehension that fails to recognize sexual minorities. If the goal is to break the binary and create social change, the fact that heteronormativity and its relation to race relations and sexual minorities is problematic, to say the least, undermining the publication's innovative take on gender resulting in complete failure. To understand the world through a gendered lens makes society much easier to deconstruct but in effect continues the marginalization of sexual minorities and racial minorities. It is incomprehensible that a paradigm based on creating social equality by identifying mechanisms that generate inequality, is itself re-producing the inequality that the heteronormative patriarchy produces. The same force that maintains sexism is the same force that maintains heterosexism. The rose-colored gendered lens through which feminism

observes the world is more akin to looking through Sylvia Plath's bell jar⁷ than it is representative of reality.

As Silverstein demonstrates, under the paradigm of post structuralism, "an individual's identity and knowledge of the world are constructed on the basis of their social locations (i.e., class, race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation)" (2015: 147). Further, current research examining societal oppressions has resulted in the finding "that not all men have the same privileges as White, middle-class, heterosexual men," and as such feminism must "think beyond an essential man and a universal masculinity" recognizing homophobia as a shared issue between women and men, regardless of sexuality (Silverstein, 2015: 147). Thus, if feminists are in pursuit of gender equality, then they must understand that such a dynamic generates a mutually constitutive form of equality wherein each side's existence will depend on the existence of the other.

To begin, the following quote from Susan Brownmiller's, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, will assist in better contextualizing the discussion:

⁷ Plath, S., Ames, L., & McCullough, F. (2005). *The bell jar*. New York: Harper Perrenial, 2005. *The Bell Jar* was referenced to illustrate the extent to which feminism's view of the world is *insanely* skewed especially given the hypocrisy in its stance on social inequalities. The premise of this novel is a testimonial narrative of a woman who is suffering from mental illnesses. The name of the novel is metaphorical to illustrate how mental illness can skew one's view of the world, much like looking through a bell jar.

From pre-historic times to the present, I believe, rape has played a critical function. It is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear. (1975)

Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape is a courageous and groundbreaking (for its time) historiography and social analysis of rape theorizing its role in the origins and dissemination of sexism towards women. Brownmiller's quote is illustrative of second wave feminism's initial effort to combat sexual violence through consciousness-raising tactics. The movement was progressive in mainstreaming the issues of domestic and sexual violence, which eventually led to change in legislature. However, a deeper analysis of the quote above will further develop the critique on feminism.

According to Brownmiller's assertions from *Against Our Will*, 'rape' is a tool utilized by men with the purpose of asserting and maintaining dominance over women. The result is what Brownmiller terms as "feminine fear" wherein woman's everyday reality within society is the ever-present "fear of an open season of rape" (1975:16). Brownmiller continues her social analysis of rape as a tool asserting that upon "Man's discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear" (14) was "probably the single causative factor in the original subjugation of women by man" (16). The major contribution of *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape* is its social constructionist analysis of rape positioning it within a theoretical discourse on rape-as-violence rather than a sexually motivated crime. As Brownmiller states,

Our call to sex is in the head... Without a biologically determined mating season, a human male can evince sexual interest in a human female at any time he pleases, and his psychological urge is not dependent in the slightest on her biologic readiness or receptivity. What it all boils down to is that the human male can rape. (13)

Here she clearly distinguishes between the conceptualization of rape as an act stemming from a biological urge to mate and a psychological urge to assert dominance. In fact, much of her

arguments focus on deconstructing the social misconceptions of women that were constructed and maintained through supposed biological factors. In understanding rape as an act motivated by power dynamics and the need to assert dominance, Brownmiller is progressive in her pursuit of gender equity. However, there are contradictions inhering within her argument that reflect similar contradictions within the feminist paradigm regarding sexual violence. Primarily, Brownmiller is claiming that all men are perpetrators of sexual violence towards women. This is factually untrue as men experience rape perpetrated by a woman or a man. Problematic, is Brownmiller and feminism's overarching focus on women as the only victim and men as the only perpetrator.

By subscribing and mainstreaming such an inherently biased notion of rape, feminism has played a key role in the perpetuation of homophobia and the marginalization of sexual minorities—including lesbian or bisexual women! In effect, Brownmiller and feminism stole visibility for male and gender non-conforming sexual assault victims for generations. The hypocrisy of Brownmiller's definition of rape is that it has created a heteronormative conceptualization of rape within society and in doing so has essentialized men as a homogenous collective of perpetrators. This feminist notion of rape, just like the feminist notion of gender, perpetuates the heteronormative gender binary feminism aims to break.

Moreover, Brownmiller's concept of "feminine fear" should be discussed in more detail. Her notion that women function in a perpetual state of fear because of the ever-present possibility of being raped, speaks one truth—the possibility or fear of assault can be consuming. Yet, again as progressive as she was in illustrating the lack of agency women had over their bodies, Brownmiller has aided in establishing static gendered dynamics and promoting rape culture. In giving all men the role of perpetrator, she has empowered rapists. She has normalized

and watered the motivation behind rape down to a gendered need for dominance over the other lesser gender. Certainly, the ‘queer fear,’ illustrated in the responses from the AAU survey indicating LGBT students the risk for assault was extremely problematic, is rendered invisible in a world seen through Brownmiller’s gendered lens.

As Murphy so keenly points out, “Despite the progress made by the women’s movement in altering traditional gender roles, strict gender dichotomies remain puissant in society” (Murphy, 2006: 210). Yes, clearly feminism’s focus on women gaining full agency over their bodies garnered an increased interest in research on rape. Indeed, the feminist agenda did put rape and sexual violence on the political map but at what cost? And, specifically, who paid those costs? Murphy’s quote alludes to the ramifications and inhering ‘gender paradox’ within feminism. Yes, gendered roles are wrong and are a supposed tool utilized by the patriarchy to perpetuate sexism and thus retain gender dominance. However, the framing of the feminist agenda has done as much good—in pursuing gender equality and eradicating sexism—as it has bad—namely perpetuating rape culture and the gender binary. Gender roles are mutually constitutive with each part’s existence depending on the existence of the other. Thus if women assert agency over their ‘gender’ ‘performing’ it in ‘feminized’ ways they are subscribing to an understanding of biological distinctions between the sexes that manifest in gender performances. Thus, we have the gender paradox of feminism.

Further, Brownmiller’s analysis on the subject of the male body as impenetrable, prevailing and strong has significantly reified a socialized misconception that allows for men to imagine themselves as invulnerable – this misconception is dangerous to men as they perceive themselves as immune to the threat of rape—a notion constantly reinforced in society. The second wave of feminism and its praxis lead to the disproportionate amount of research on

female rape victims, leaving LGBTQ related research separate and absent. In perpetuating the heteronormative rape narrative, the paucity of research on male victims of rape and sexual assault ensued. However, it should be noted that sexual violence has been legally, politically, and theoretically—to the credit of feminism—constructed within a heterosexist frame to the extent that until the 1980s, most statutory rape laws excluded the potential of men as victims by specifically defining rape as a crime committed against women. Regardless, for more than 30 years, rape and sexual assault have been largely framed by feminist activists as a women’s issue stigmatizing men as rapists and security threats which has blinded society of a more complete, rather than gendered-rose-colored, lens.

To conclude this section critiquing feminism, a final quote from Whitlock and Kellogg in their 1977 publication seems fitting. The fact that these scholars understood the connection between the feminist agenda and LGBTQ movement in a time where the second wave of feminism was at its crest, illuminates the complete disregard for sexual minorities and possibly eludes to the existence of misandry within the movement. Studies have shown a clear link between homophobia and sexism (Murphy, 2006). However, the disparity in praxis is alarming, as Whitlock and Kellogg assert,

Feminists who do not see the connection between gay rights and rights for women suffer from a dangerous illusion – the illusion that equality for women can be gained while equality for others– including lesbians and gay men – is seen as expendable, or as a political liability. (Whitlock & Kellogg, 1977, p. 3)

In demonstrating her legacy, Brownmiller’s conception of rape as only inclusive of female victims and male perpetrators is still employed by many feminist research and publications. *Rape is Rape* (2013) by Jody Raphael is a valiant attempt to deconstruct the one ‘acquaintance rape’ scenario with the objective that “readers come to understand that there are many acquaintance rape scenarios” which society must address each situation as socially varied

way, careful not to subscribe to an ‘idea’ of rape (Raphael, 5). Raphael’s argument conflicts directly with her objective in so far as she subscribes to one idea of rape overall – involving a man perpetrating a female victim. As such, Raphael could be included as part of “those somehow needing to minimize and deny rape” (5).

Though Raphael presents a thorough comprehensive rape data analysis to support her aim in dispelling rape myths, she perpetuates a heteronormative view of rape marginalizing and devaluing men who have experienced rape. To further support her claims, Raphael traces the “seeds of today’s backlash against feminism” back to the 1975 book, *Against Our Will*, by Susan Brownmiller who established the heteronormative-feminist take on rape. According to Raphael, the purpose of Brownmiller’s framing of rape was to make it ‘a political crime’ with the understanding it as “one potent tool, created by anatomical difference, in man’s dominance of women” (19). As a feminist living in the much more globalized world than that of Brownmiller, with the LGBTQ community having gained considerable—albeit contested—visibility, it is quite unfortunate that in 2013 when she published *Rape is Rape*, her piece perpetuates LGBTQ invisibility. With the underlying argument being the rhetorical examination of rape and its inhering variations all deserving validity, the fallacies of her argument lie in her failure to see her own irony.

The second wave of feminism was centered on their slogan, “The personal is political” beginning in the 1960s and lasting until the 1990s. The agenda was based on issues of sexuality and reproductive rights. This phase of feminism was born in the context of a myriad of other social movements such as the anti-war movement and civil rights movement with the objective of raising public consciousness by mainstreaming their agenda through media. In an environment pregnant with minority groups pushing for social change with regard to societal oppressions

based on class and ethnicity, the women's liberation movement was disjointed by the intersections of multiple oppressions. Public reception was lukewarm and marginalizing, perceiving the group's activist objectives as less pressing amid a myriad of other social movements, namely the Black Power Movement. Further many female activists within other social movements experienced marginalization or suppression. In response to this marginalization, Rosenthal (1984) identifies three main political tendencies of feminism during the late 1960s and early 1970s, one of which—radical feminism—began forming small in size women-only 'consciousness-raising' groups. Radical feminists viewed consciousness raising as “an instrumental method of developing a collective understanding” and enables the full incorporation of the individual's reality “ensuring the revolutionary activity would not ignore [it]” (Rosenthal, 314).

Ardovini (2015) examines feminist methodology in the practice of consciousness-raising advocating for this practice as a tool for feminist praxis in research and granting voice. In the discussion, Ardovini proclaims feminist researchers as having led the way in “challenging mainstream, positivistic, quantitative approaches to research” by challenging “basic methodological assumptions of mainstream/traditional research” (Ardovini 2015). Feminist researchers view their work as a form of social activism wherein research is done in order to implement praxis (Ardovini, 2015). Ardovini employs consciousness-raising as defined by Stanley and Wise (1993), who argue:

Consciousness-raising is essentially a wider consciousness that results from; (1) exposing structural inequalities, (2) wriggling away from the notion that we have been free to become what we will, and (3) understanding the way our lives have been determined by our race, class and gender (1993: 121).

Feminist methodologies employ this unique research tool as it “embodies principles of enabling women and minorities to discuss and understand their experiences from their own

viewpoint” (Reinharz 1992: 220). Ardovini builds upon Reinharz’s better contextualizing it as a tool that “assists in uncovering the reality of those that are marginalized, rather than regurgitate a reality that is constructed for them [by dominant groups within society]” (54). Thus feminist praxis was concerned with giving voice to women and minority groups understanding the necessity for the discovery of multiple truths in lieu of just one truth vis-à-vis the examination of multiple social realities or perspectives existing in the present “because there are many women and cultures with many different points of view that were and are silenced by mainstream research methods and theories” (Ardovini, 2015: 53).

Building upon this understanding of mainstream methods and the ways in which they have silenced ‘Others’, Ardovini compels the notion that the sexist and racist societies currently existing remain dominant through utilizing institutions to structuralize discrimination and inequalities between women and men, minority and majority groups (2015). To remedy this, feminists use research as a form of activism with the objective “transform[ing] social institutions in order to generate liberating social change on behalf of women and minorities (Andersen 1997: 6, 7).

This feminist methodology calls for Social Sciences valorization of the interests, ideas, and realities of women and minorities, which, upon validation social change can occur. If modern feminist ideology was founded on these principles valorizing the realities and interests of not just women but minority groups as well, then why were the consciousness-raising groups solely comprised of women? Certainly, if the objective was to mainstream feminist pedagogy to effect social change, they excluded men in the process of social change. If men were the perpetrator of patriarchy and sexism, why did women choose to exclude men from

consciousness-raising? Why has feminism by and large marginalized the LGBTQ community in its research on rape?

Maynard and Purvis claim feminist methods are exemplary means to analyze “phenomena centered on the creation of knowledge about women and minorities through research that includes women and minorities” with the understanding of societal power relations and their ability to marginalize and make the interests of women and minorities invisible (1994: 29). Then why, when it comes to research on rape, have feminists predominantly framed rape as sexual violence between women and men wherein women can be the only victim?

Famous feminist scholar, bell hooks, addresses the exclusionary aspects of feminist scholarship framing it as an “insider-outsider” issue (1989). In discussing the consciousness-raising groups, hooks stresses the importance of diversity within inter-group dialogue and exchange in creating the ideal situation for learning, “where there would be women and men from various groups (1989: 47).” hooks expounds upon this assertion, stating that

certainly it is important and necessary for people from any ethnic/racial group to play a significant role in the creation and dissemination of material about their particular experiences. It is equally important for all of us to work at learning more about one another, and such learning is often best expressed in concentrated work and study on another group (hooks 1989: 46).

Given feminism has been criticized as being founded on the ideals of White-Western middle class heterosexual women, it comes as no surprise that the statement above comes from a black feminist. Developing this discussion further, I use another piece from bell hooks. In her article “Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression,” hooks is concerned with what she sees as a central problem within feminist discourse: the lack of consensus of understanding what exactly feminism is.

The absence of a clear unified definition of feminism is a hindrance to the movement in making enduring social progress and change. hooks finds problematic the general understanding of feminism as a movement aimed at making women socially equal to men positing that this general understanding generates a blanket dismissal of the effects of race and class. It is the combination of race, class, and sexism that determines the extent to which an individual experiences discrimination, exploitation, and oppression. Further, the focus on the social equalization of women with men fails to recognize the specific mechanisms within society that generate sexism. Thus, the general apolitical definition should be politicized taking into account not solely the collective but the individual experience with a focus on being a movement that aims to eradicate sexist oppression.

In hooks' emphasis on the importance of identifying the specific social mechanisms that generate sexism coupled with her assertions regarding diversity within a learned space, there are a few theoretical points to discuss regarding the inclusion of men. Theoretically hooks calls to the inclusion of all people within the process of consciousness-raising, as it should be a societal goal to learn about one another and exist as a collective free from oppression. Therefore according to hooks, even as a marginalized collective who face multiple oppressions, women must seek to learn more about their perspective 'Others'⁸ and that collective's oppressions. As such, the disparity between theory and practice within feminist praxis is confounding.

⁸ Derrida, Jacques, Peggy Kamuf, and Elizabeth Rottenberg. *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2007. Print. The use of this term is employed loosely in the tradition through which Jacques Derrida defined.

Although bell hooks' article focuses on the redefining of feminism for the purpose of unification among women, the concept of unification to progress as a collective in pursuit of social change can be universally applied. hooks' argued that the general apolitical understanding of feminism was majorly beneficial towards the middle and upper classed white women while marginally benefiting working class, poor, and nonwhite women. This has created multiple divides among women within the feminist movement. Thus, it is necessary the new politicized definition of feminism "centralizes the experiences of all women" (hooks, 240). Here again, even within the theoretical work of one feminist, there are inherent fallacies. It is logical that women seek to form as a unified collective with a clear agenda to centralize the experiences of all women. However, if the ultimate goal of feminism is to eradicate sexist oppression then the mechanisms that generate it must be further examined.

Where hooks alleviates the earlier critiques of feminism being constructed through a white upper class Western female lens, De Lauretis argues that feminist theory is

a developing theory of the female-sexed or female-embodied social subject, whose constitution and whose modes of social and subjective existence include most obviously sex and gender, but also race, class, and any other significant socio-cultural divisions and representations (During, 370).

De Lauretis builds upon hooks' argument for 'critical consciousness' going beyond the oversimplification of race, class, and gender by calling for the inclusion of "significant socio-cultural divisions and representations." De Lauretis and Butler both describe the multitude of ways in which bodies are constructed by society wherein "we (in the West?) inscribe or imagine the body as a discrete, tightly bordered thing, and that this has consequences for the kinds of sex acts that are deemed normal, proper, legal" (Butler, 371). Although feminism has been progressive in providing the theoretical foundations for deconstructing societal norms and

discourse on the social constructions of sex, gender, identity, and sexuality, it has essentially failed to include sexual minorities as an analytical referent.

FEMINISM AND FOUCAULT: LITERATURE CASE STUDIES

Building upon the arguments in the previous section, another feminist, Hengehold, claims rape as a “structural symptom of gender inequality” since rape victims are disproportionately female (1994:93). In her critique of Michele Foucault’s advocating for rape to be treated as a crime of violence, Hengehold argues that under that paradigm Foucault elides the psychological and physical trauma that rape imposes on the victim (1994: 94).

Hengehold continues her discussion on rape shifting to the notion of law functioning as a form of power and knowledge where the legal understanding of rape permits a specific narrative wherein cases of rape that do not fit the narrative become “disqualified stories”—for example, “the homosexual rape of men and male children” (1994). Hengehold’s critique of law is as socially regressive as it is progressive. Her acknowledgement of ‘homosexual rape of men’ is assumingly eluding to a rape dynamic wherein there is a male perpetrator and male sexual victimization. However, the manner in which she frames male-on-male rape teeters on homophobic. Hengehold claims rape is a ‘structural system of gender inequality’ making no reference to sexuality when framing the rape of a woman. However, she specifically structures male-on-male rape as contingent upon sexual desire by attaching the term ‘homosexual’ to it.

Further, abhorrent is Hengehold’s coupling of male-on-male rape and the rape of male children under the umbrella paradigm of homosexual rape. Under this paradigm, Hengehold is not only equating the two positioned as interrelated and in doing so connecting homosexuality to the rape of male children. Are all rapists of male children homosexual? Are all men who rape other men homosexual? Further, if the implications of rape are to be understood “as a

practice...on the communicative structures of a male-dominated society” (Hengehold, 1994: 94), then why does she employ the term homosexuality to frame male-on-male rape? Clearly, for Hengehold, when it comes to women, rape is a gender issue that quickly becomes replaced by sexuality when addressing male sexual victimization. The homophobic bigotry impregnating her rhetoric on rape is an unfortunate consequence of her shortsighted focus on women as rape victims.

Even more disturbing is Hengehold’s commentary that “men are seldom *in* these circumstances” referring to rape (1994: 98). Such a blanketed statement is indicative of the limitations within her theoretical knowledge. She made these assertions in 1994 wherein the feminist concept of “intersectionality” (Crenshaw: 1994) was recently introduced yet absent within her research. In borrowing further from Hengehold’s homophobic paradigm of rape, she uses the concept “second rape” to further develop her discourse on society’s treatment of a female rape victim as “hysterical” (1994). The “second rape” is the ensuing social skepticism and self-distrust a rape victim experiences post-trauma. In her deconstruction of “second rape” Hengehold has continued the eliding of the damaging effects male-on-male rape has on the male victim. In her marginalization and hierarchical de-valorization of male sexual victimization, Hengehold has effectively employed a ‘third rape’ of all male rape victims. To conclude, Hengehold’s critique hypocritically neglects to acknowledge the *certain failures* inhering of the regime of knowledge to which she subscribes (1994:104.)

The feminist perspectives previously examined display a contradictory theoretical framework speaking to equal rights for *all*. However, if feminist paradigm is concerned with the subjectivity of women *and* minority groups, then herein lies the disparity between theory and practice. Theoretically, feminism calls for equal rights concerning all citizens. Certainly, it does

not seek to marginalize any collective within society at the least, with the exception of eradicating sexism and as such modifying sexist norms within society. From the perspectives listed above, in the process of pursuing the eradication of sexism, feminism has haphazardly failed to err on the side of caution and in doing so has marginalized fellow victims of patriarchal heteronormative oppressions.

Research and the examination of discriminations have revealed “that not all men have the same privileges as White, middle-class, heterosexual men,” and as such feminism must “think beyond an essential man and a universal masculinity” recognizing homophobia as a shared issue between women and men, regardless of sexuality (Silverstein, 2015). Thus, if feminists are in pursuit of gender equality, then they must understand that such a dynamic generates a mutually constitutive form of equality wherein each side’s existence will depend on the existence of the other. Silverstein (2015) enlists three roles that men are expected to fulfill across all national and ethnic contexts: procreation, providing, and protection.⁹ With equity and gender role expectations in mind, are feminists prepared to reify or redefine gender roles?

Rape, specifically within the context of campus sexual assault, has received burgeoning coverage, in the news media especially within the past few years in North America, drawing national attentions to detailed incidents of rape occurring on college campuses. The media coverage has been socially progressive in mainstreaming the concept of ‘rape culture’ in a newly

⁹ These three roles resulted from research conducted by D. Gilmore in 1990. Please refer to the following citation for further information:

Gilmore, D. D. (1990). *Manhood in the making: Cultural concepts of masculinity*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

risen public awareness and the necessity for policy change regarding sexual violence—be it at all scales whether it is within a given university, regional, or national. As powerful a force for generating social change, the media has the ability to instantaneously distribute information to the masses, but also significant drawbacks.

Primarily, the media has adopted Brownmiller's conceptualization of rape, choosing to spotlight cases predominantly involving a white female victim of sexual assault perpetrated by a man. The media's color spectrum for the perpetrating man, however, is much less stringent. For example, the recent Vanderbilt University case involving four black and white football players charged with the rape and cover up of a white female student while she was unconscious in June 2013¹⁰. The media coverage of the horrific events of the night graphically detail the four men filming part of the attack wherein one of the men allegedly anally rapes the victim with a water bottle, at which point the main perpetrator can be overheard encouraging the other to "squeeze that shit," referring to the water bottle.¹¹ This unfortunately paints an overly sensationalized monolithic portrait of campus sexual assault as an issue of violence involving the hyper sexualized, extremely violent ravaging of a white female with males as the perpetrator. The

¹⁰ SI Wire. "Retrial in Vanderbilt rape case scheduled for April." October 29,

2015. <http://www.si.com/college-football/2015/10/29/vanderbilt-rape-case-retrial-date>.

¹¹ Warren, Lydia. "Vanderbilt student 'was thrown out like a piece of trash' after four football players were finished raping her, say prosecutors as they wrap up closing arguments." January 27, 2015. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2928651/Vanderbilt-student-thrown-like-piece-trash-four-football-players-finished-raping-say-prosecutors-wrap-closing-arguments.html>.

portrait painted and made visible through media coverage simultaneously makes all other forms of campus sexual assault invisible.

THE GENDERED PAUCITY OF DATA WITHIN FEDERALLY FUNDED RESEARCH

As previously discussed, the media plays a primary role in informing the public and raising its consciousness concerning specific issues. Since consciousness raising was an important form of activism in laying the foundations of feminism, the media was of particular concern to second wave feminists. However, the foundation that feminism laid regarding rape was misleading. Brownmiller's understanding of rape deals with subject of male body as impenetrable, prevailing and strong which importantly has generated a socialized misconception that allows for men to imagine themselves as invulnerable—this misconception is dangerous to men as they perceive themselves as immune to the threat of rape—a notion constantly reinforced in society through the media and as previously discussed in feminist theories.

Currently, rape culture is highly contested in public discourse. A primary area of concern and limitation in research when studying rape culture is the prevalence of rape and the accuracy of current data. Weis' (2010) study on male sexual victimization examined the incidents of male sexual victimization that were reported to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). The examination revealed that 9 percent of rape victims are males, making clear that women by and large are disproportionately affected by sexual assault (U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics 2003). Despite the small percentage compared to their female counterparts, Weis purports,

the data also point to a sizable minority of male victims who have been largely ignored by researchers and theorists. Thus, the present study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the unwanted sexual experiences of men in the United States. (276)

Despite the prevalence of violence towards men, the reality of violence against men and the praxis do not correlate. Reifying Brownmiller's rape portrait are countless cultural and political norms embedded within society. As Beverly, Ottens and Hotelling, establish, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been "conceptualized traditionally as male violence against women [and only] recently have the subjects of men as victims and women as perpetrators" been studied and incorporated into programming (190). Further, media coverage continues to subscribe to Brownmiller's portrait, exemplifying society's extreme misconception of campus sexual assault preserved through social norms. For example, the media's portrayal of the 'endemic' rape on college campuses misleads public perception to conceive a sudden increase in the number of incidents of rape on college campuses within the United States. However, according to data provided by the FBI detailing the number of reported forcible rape cases in the U.S. from 1990 to 2014, forcible rape is surprisingly on a significant decline going from 102,560 cases in 1990 fluctuating throughout and peaking at 109,060 in 1992, bottoming out at 82,109 in 2013 and increasing marginally to 84,041 in 2014.¹² Despite a trend indicating an overall decrease in forcible rape over the span of fourteen years, according to a variety of federally funded research concerning campus sexual violence, the perception of campus sexual assault on women has increased, though male victims continue to be largely invisible. Discussion will continue by examining other research studies federally funded by the government. The

¹² FBI. (n.d.). Number of reported forcible rape cases in the United States from 1990 to 2014.

In *Statista - The Statistics Portal*. Retrieved December 05, 2015, from

<http://www.statista.com/statistics/191137/reported-forcible-rape-cases-in-the-usa-since-1990/>.

Please refer to graph provided by link for the complete data set.

implications uncovered will reveal the extent to which institutionalized heterosexism has guided sexual assault research.

Preliminary data obtained concerning the prevalence of campus sexual assault, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) further supports this previous statement. RAINN is the largest anti-sexual assault organization in the United States. Easily accessible is the organization's website which provides information regarding sexual assault such as statistics, types of sexual assaults, ways to reduce one's risk of sexual assault, and a step-by-step guide to the incident reporting process. The following government-sourced statistics on campus sexual assault are provided on RAINN's website:

- Women ages 18 to 24 who are enrolled in college are 3 times more likely to suffer from sexual violence compared to women in general. Interestingly, females of the same age who are not enrolled in college are 4 times more likely.¹³
- Male college aged students are 78% more likely than nonstudents to be a victim of rape or sexual assault.⁴
- Female college aged students are 20% less likely than nonstudents to be a victim of rape or sexual assault.⁴
- Only 20% of female student survivors age 18-24 report to law enforcement. In comparison, 33% of female nonstudent survivors aged 18-24 report to law enforcement.⁴

¹³ Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice. *Rape and Sexual Victimization among College-Aged Females, 1995-2013*. 2014.

- 72% of campus law enforcement agencies have a staff member responsible for survivor response and assistance.¹⁴
- 8% of all sexual assaults occur while victim is attending school.¹⁵

Most interesting is the provision of statistics for males and females regarding college aged students. The statistics are counterintuitive to what is understood through the heterosexual rape narrative. First, the above data indicates that female college aged students are less likely to experience sexual assault than non-student females of the same age. If non-student college-age females are more likely to experience sexual assault, why is public discourse so focused on *campus* sexual assault? Further, if male students are 78% more likely to experience sexual assault than non-student males of the same age, why is public discourse on campus sexual assault exceedingly focused on female victims? With the understanding that rape is a tool through which sexism is perpetuated, the statistics provided by RAINN directly challenge the notion of female college students being more susceptible to campus sexual assault. The discrepancy between the previously discussed heteronormative conceptualization of rape, is widened by further implications of the role of college education in increasing a male's chance of sexual violence yet decreasing a female's chance. Overall, the preliminary data does provide statistics on the sexual victimization of college men which does give visibility to male victims and highlights the gap in research and media attention on male victimization despite a clear indication for increased

¹⁴ Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice. Campus Law Enforcement, 2011-2012. 2015.

¹⁵ Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice. Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010. 2013.

attention and research. However, the statistics provided were separated based on the heteronormative categories of male and female. Gender and sexual minorities within that data set remain invisible.

Upon analyzing the above data in its original report, the U.S. Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) resulted in the "Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization Among College-Age Females, 1993-2014" publication, which concluded that for the period of 1995 to 2013, prevalence of rape and sexual assault for 18-24 year-old males was lower than for females of the same age bracket. This assertion from the report directly contradicts the perception from RAINN's limited provision of statistics. Despite attempting to further investigate by aggregating data by victim and incident characteristics, the report failed to include further data for to male victimization. It focuses exclusively on females due to a small sample of male victims. Given the limited and gender-biased methodology, a cross comparison of similar surveys and studies is necessary for analysis. The following section will focus on statistics provided by the Campus Sexual Assault Study and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, respectively.

As with the NCVS report, the heteronormative meta-narrative for rape is exemplified through the Response to Intervention (RTI) International's Campus Sexual Assault Study (2007), a survey federally funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). The resulting report published in December 2007 is alarmingly heteronormative, focusing only on women as potential victims and men as potential perpetrators. The report devotes minimal discussion on male victimization and primarily focuses on male perpetrators. For example, in Section 6 – Conclusion and Recommendations, the Campus Sexual Assault Study (2007) prescribes two separate types of programs for men and women—sexual assault prevention for females and

sexual assault perpetration prevention for males (96). Yet, the rhetoric of the report is contradictory concluding sexual assault as “a serious social, public safety, and public health problem that affects men and women across the country” (2007: 98). Ironically, one of the primary aims of the Campus Sexual Assault Study (2007) was to “determine the prevalence of various types of sexual assault” yet it fails to incorporate sexuality as a key variable in data collection and analysis (92). In fact, sexuality is left completely out of discussion further implicating a sense of heterosexism within the study. Another problematic aspect of the methodology was the majority of the participants in the study, both female and male, were white.

The results from the Campus Sexual Assault Study concluded that approximately “one out of five undergraduate women experiences an attempted or completed sexual assault since entering college” compared to a “not surprisingly...considerably lower” rate of 3.7% for men (2007: 93-94). The rhetoric alone reflects a research bias. Rates for male victimization were “not surprisingly...considerably lower” than for women. Thus, the issue of campus sexual assault is watered down and essentialized as a matter of protecting the feeble white woman from the ravishments of a stronger domineering man. It is exactly this white heterosexist portrayal of campus sexual assault through media and research that reifies a white heteronormative patriarchal society wherein gender inequality and other forms of “Othering,” such as racism and homophobia, are perpetuated.

The Campus Sexual Assault Study (2007) and National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2011) both reported sexual assault prevalence rates that were significantly higher compared to the rates from National Crime Victimization Survey. The Campus Sexual Assault Study (2007) surveyed at two colleges and suggests that 14% of females ages 18-25 experience a completed sexual assault compared. The 2011 NISVS data, suggest that 2% of all

females experienced unwanted sexual contact during that 12-month period. These data compiled in each survey resulted in different findings, compared to NCVS' 2010 data, which suggest only 1% of females ages 12 and older experienced rape during that 12-month survey period. The differences, according to the NCVS, in the results among the three surveys are partly due to measurement differences in survey context and scope, respective definitions of rape and sexual assault, and wording in survey questions.

The fact that all three government funded surveys—seminal to informing the public on the issue of campus sexual assault—focus exclusively on females and even admit to disregarding male victimization is a clear indication of heterosexism embedded within governmental support. However, within the world of academia—namely the fields of women's studies, queer studies, and sexualities studies—there has been a growing interest in research on sexual violence within and towards the LGBTQ community. However, the data from various reports across the board are inconsistent and limited in scope, especially when compared to the plethora of research concerning female rape and campus sexual assault. Since feminism effected policy change by mainstreaming rape within the public consciousness, it was beneficial to understand further feminisms role in the heterosexist conceptualization of rape and the resulting invisibility of LGBT victimization. The previous discussion further contributes to this research's overall focus by demonstrating the ways in which governmental support has adhered to a heterosexist gaze on sexual assault.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT IMAGES

The extent to which heterosexist rape culture is still alive and influenced by the feminist discourse on rape can be seen through imagery found on the mediascape. The mediascape is purposed with “the provision and the selective construction of social knowledge, of social

imagery, through which we perceive the ‘worlds’” (2012: 325). Culture too plays an ever-increasingly “significant role because as an immaterial phenomenon “can more easily span time and space than material goods and services” (179-180). Culture can be expressed even quicker through the mediascape further perpetuating a misrepresented reality or cultural myth. For this reason, I conducted a qualitative visual analysis of “campus rape” images found through a Google search. The images being analyzed are the first ten images found from a search using the search term “campus rape”.

Using the advanced image search option on Google, “campus rape” was inputted in the “all these words” search box. The term “campus rape” was chosen after an initial search using the term “campus sexual assault” resulted in irrelevant images. Further, the words “campus rape” were specifically chosen because in theory they are gender-neutral in nature. The SafeSearch option was turned off in order to show the most relevant results. The usage rights option was adjusted to only search for images that were “free to use or share, even commercially.” The usage rights option was formatted to ensure that any images used in this analysis did not require copyright permission due to time constraints in completion of this project. Ideally, this analysis would have preferred to use the first ten images regardless of usage rights since the purpose of this analysis is to demonstrate the overarching narrative one could find by simply searching “campus sexual assault.” The region option was adjusted to limit image results to the United States since the primary focus of this analysis is the issue of campus sexual assault within the United States. The type of image option was adjusted to limit search results to photo type images to maintain consistency in image type and filter out other types such as animations or video files. All other options including image size, aspect ratio, colors in image, and file type were left in their default settings of “any.” The Google image search was conducted on April 19, 2018.

Using the aforementioned search settings, the first ten images that resulted could be easily divided into two categories: activist and politics. The images were either photographs of individuals engaging in activism for women's rights and/or the protest of rape or the photographs were of politicians advocating for legislation on the issue of campus sexual assault. It was of primary interest to first divide the images based on this criteria in order to then analyze the gender ratios and subsequent power dynamics within an activist environment versus a political environment. Four of the ten images contained citizens engaging in activism and six of the images contained politicians.

The activist images (C) were female-centric, containing a majority female-to-male gender ratio (see category II results) with three of the four images (Images B, F, and I). Despite image D being an outlier by having a majority male-to-female gender ratio, the activist group of images still project a female centric focus in all four images for category III by focusing exclusively on female individuals as the primary subject within each image. Further, all four images contained text relating to sexual assault. The text in this group of images varied from being gender neutral to gender specific if analyzed solely as text.

The text contained within images B and D and partly image I, are gender neutral. Image B depicts a female holding a sign that says "End Rape Culture." Similarly, image D depicts another female holding a sign that says "Take Rape Seriously." In image I there is one female individual with a sign toward the back of a crowd of people with signs. Her sign says "At ALL times in ANY context I RETAIN the RIGHT to say NO." These three texts alone do not necessarily signal a gendered narrative by referring to a specific gender in their wording. Therefore, the texts can at first be understood as gender-neutral within the analysis thus far.

However, when considered within the context of the image, the message being signaled by the text takes on a gendered narrative because all individuals who are holding the signs are female. The females holding the signs in images B and D are the image's respective focus. Therefore, the meaning being signaled by the image through the text changes by representing the voice of the female holder. Image B is from a public march against rape culture and gender inequality. The nature of the event even assumes their being an intrinsic interrelation between rape culture and gender inequality. This interrelation is founded on a heterosexist understanding of rape which promotes women as the sole victims of male perpetrators. Image D is further interesting in that its text, "Take Rape Seriously," specifically addresses men-at-large in the overall assumption that all men and institutions (that are largely governed by men) do not take the subject of rape seriously and that needs to change.

The text within image F and the majority of image I are gender specific. Image F contains four women wearing cat masks holding a banner that says "F♀urth Wave London Feminist Activists" from an International Women's Day event in London 2017. It is interesting that image F would result in this image search since its title and text do not necessarily concern campus rape or campus sexual assault. Of course, gender-based violence is a topic addressed on International Women's Day. However, the original focus of International Women's Day being concerned with labor rights. So generally the topic of gender-based violence is addressed within the context of the workplace. Still, the fact that this image resulted in the search is telling. In full transparency, my knowledge of search engine algorithms and the way they function is at best elementary. Therefore, I do not want to make sweeping assumptions in the way image F as an outlier resulted in the search. However, when considering the context of the image, it is hard to decipher its

relation to the words “campus” and “rape” especially given the fact that image F showed up in the first ten images within the search results.

Image I contains an overwhelming majority of female individuals with five specific female subjects as the focus in the center. The five females in the center are holding hands signaling female solidarity. Each female is dressed as a specific “character” or trope. From left to right, female A is a nun, female B is Jesus Christ, female C is Eve from the Christian creation story of Adam and Eve, female D is a Muslim, and female E is the Pope. All five women have chosen to dress as characters specifically tied to religion with four choosing figures from the Christian tradition and one choosing the dress as a female from the Muslim tradition.

The image is quite controversial in that the women donning attire that represents specific religious figures while simultaneously subverting the religious sanctity of these figures with the addition of fish-net stockings, corsets, bare midriffs, and heavy make-up. The sexualization of these figures is empowering for women in their subversive depictions of figures that are part of the world’s two primary religious traditions, both of which are patriarchal and subjugate woman as secondary to men. Female A sexualizes the Christian nun donning a black corset, black panties, fish-net stockings, studded boots, a leather studded bracelet, and a rosary around her neck. The nun trope is only recognizable by the habit on female A’s head which has been defaced with red lipstick markings all across the white front. Female A is wearing heavy make-up with black eyeliner visibly drawn downward from her right eye signifying tears. The sexualization of the nun is well-enough considered sacrilege and is only amplified by improperly wearing a real rosary around her neck. Within the Catholic tradition, women are not permitted to hold any position of power within the church. They are only permitted the role of a nun who,

unlike her male priest counterpart, is obligated to take a vow of poverty and charged with serving her church. The church she serves is strictly under the command of a male priest.

Female B is dressed as Jesus Christ. Within the Christian tradition, Jesus Christ was male when living as a human on earth. He is the Son of God and the founder of Christianity. To depict him as female while dressed in a two-piece outfit that bares the midriff with the top being ripped at the chest is again a subversion that would be considered sacrilege under the eyes of the Church. It is arguable as to which would be considered most disrespectful to the Church, the sexualization of Jesus Christ in general or the portrayal of Jesus Christ in a *female* body. Female E also subverts a traditionally male figure—the Pope—as a sexualized female Pope. The gender subversion of religious figures is interesting to note because they are directly implicating male religious leaders—even God—in their contributions to maintaining the oppression of women through their leadership of patriarchal religious institutions and their subsequent influence on social values. These values have subjugated women as lesser than men. Even Eve, depicted by female C, was created from the rib of Adam. Thus, within the Christian tradition, women were created from men. Their creation was dependent upon the existence of man himself!

Similarly, female D is depicting a Muslim woman recognizable in her traditional hijab. The hijab is controversial within Western discourse because it signifies to some a sentiment that women should not be seen nor heard. Their femininity should be covered in public and reserved for the pleasure of their husbands in private. The trope of the Muslim woman is again subverted. Female D juxtaposes the hijab with heavy eye make-up, bright pink bra and panties overlaid with fish-net stockings evocative of the prostitute trope.

The purpose of this analysis is not to debate the extent to which the acts of these women are offensive religious transgressions. The lens through which I will analyze this image is strictly

secular. The primary message these women are signaling is to draw a connection between the oppression of women and male dominated religious institutions and traditions. Further, it is the subjugation of women perpetuated by social values influenced by these religious institutions that have left women and their bodies to be regulated by society at large. These two religious traditions have regulated women's bodies in the appropriateness of public attire, all in the effort to "protect" female virtue. In reality, this meant the regulation of women's freedom of sexual expression. For a woman to dress so "provocatively" in a public sphere is to leave herself vulnerable to assault or even worse to *provoke* assault. In either case, the woman was "asking for it." The powerful message these five women are promoting is the empowerment of women, their sexual freedom, and agency over their own bodies, which is all depicted through a brave sexual subversion of traditional religious figures and the subsequent social values they represent.

The five subjects in image I are surrounded by a crowd of majority females who are holding signs. The text in these signs (with the exception of the one previously discussed) all contain a gendered message. All individuals holding signs in the image are female which again signals a gendered narrative. One individual holds a sign with three messages using an image of a faceless female followed by text. The first line is "(image of a faceless female posterior in a short shirt with knees bent) ≠ consent." The second line is "(image of a faceless female's mid-torso in a blazer with her chest exposed) ≠ asking for it." The third line is "(image of a faceless female in a bikini) ≠ an invitation to rape." Another individual holds a sign that says "There's no shaming this slut." Another says "A dress is not a yes." Finally, another individual holds a sign with a drawn picture of the character Ariel from Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, donned in her traditional shell-bikini top next to the text "she's not asking for it." The signs behind the five subjects in the image echo the same messages of protest against society. The image is taken from

a protest against victim blaming. As progressive as these acts of protest are, the gendered narrative of sexual assault remains unchanged and continues to leave LGBTQ victims invisible. In fact, none of the ten images contain any reference to sexual minorities.

The six political images are image A, C, E, G, H, and J and all contain politicians promoting governmental action against sexual assault. Four of the six images (images A, C, G, and H) have a female majority gender ratio. Image E contains no female subjects and image J contains a large crowd with a male speaker as the focus. It is interesting to note that despite these images containing a female majority, only two of the images focus on a female as the primary subject (images C and H). Both images with females as the center subject of focus are images where no men are pictured. The other four political images depict men at the center, regardless of the image's gender ratio. Further the male subjects of focus are clearly depicting leadership positions, such as in image A with President Obama signing a memorandum or in image J with Vice President Biden speaking to a crowd. Image G depicts a male politician addressing a crowd while surrounded by female politicians behind him. This gender dynamic evokes a power asymmetry where men in these images are the ones in positions of power and authority. Women play a secondary role. Again, no depiction of sexual minorities was found. However, this power asymmetry among the political images which is in stark contrast to the activist images is quite interesting. The differences between the two reinforce the public discourses surrounding campus sexual assault. Women are the ones who have to speak up and raise public consciousness on the issue yet they carry no political power or authority to enact legislation. Rather, it is men who are the ones in the positions of power that have the authority to enact legislative change. Again, we unfortunately see the emergence of heterosexist values and dynamics.

The results of the brief qualitative analysis show a disproportionate majority representation of female victimization and no LGBTQ representation. The image of the male perpetrator and female victim are hegemonically employed. In order to effect change and provide a more accurate mainstream understanding of LGBTQ victimization, the heterosexist narrative of rape must be contested. Since this is indicative of rape culture and since culture is immaterial, the site of contestation must be an immaterial site. Feminism actively uses the mediascape to promote its agenda and raise public consciousness. Thus, it would serve well to use the mediascape in the same manner in promoting the truth behind the rape culture lie.

In my analysis I found a disproportionate majority representation of women participants and no LGBTQ representation. Out of the ten images, none projected an image of male victimization. Further, the male perpetrator and female victim narrative was consistently signaled throughout. In this preliminary content analysis using google images, we see the heterosexist media gaze on campus sexual assault is still the dominating narrative on a national scale. The next section examines the interrelation between the national and local levels through feminist media events.

[EVERY] PERSONAL IS POLITICAL: TOWARDS AN INTEGRATIVE PLURALIST APPROACH TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

“Sexualities in World Politics: how LGBTQ claims shape international relations, edited by Manuela Lavinias Picq and Markus Thiel, uses the feminist tenet of ‘personal is political’ as a foundational concept to build upon and calls for an “integrative pluralist” approach using the “intersections of feminist, postcolonial, critical, and queer theory” which allows for alternative viewpoints (Picq and Thiel, 2015: pg. 3). This chapter argues for a similar “integrative pluralist” approach when addressing the issue of sexual assault because it encompasses a more fluid

understanding of the world: culture, norms, power, politics, and human rights. As this is research within the field of Cultural Studies, it is appropriate to use an integrative approach which denounces static understandings of the world. Gregory F. Seigworth similarly calls for a more fluid understanding of the world as “a heterogeneous mass of possibilities” especially with regards to theory and practice in “Cultural Studies and Gilles Deleuze” (Hall and Birchall, 2006: pg. 122). Thus, the pluralist approach will begin by integrating feminism and queer theory.

Although Queer theory was born out of feminism, the two theoretical frameworks remain fairly separate. Part of this study’s objectives is to call attention to feminism and queer-ism in hopes they will collaborate more in theory and praxis. This section will discuss intersectionality as it proves a useful tool in its application outside of the field of feminism. The objective is to demonstrate the ways in which synergism is possible in the pursuit of freedom from oppressions.

Kimberlé Crenshaw’s article “Traffic at the Crossroads: Multiple Oppressions” aims at bringing attention to the “interactive effects of discrimination” (2003: 43). Crenshaw argues that current law cannot properly address the issue of difference and employs this argument by contrasting racial and gender discrimination with their respective approaches to difference as a means of achieving equality. Race equality law encourages ignoring racial differences while gender equality law is “preoccupied with difference” (2003: 44). Crenshaw uses this example to highlight that there exists “large gaps between the conceptual world of law and policy...and the real world, where experiences of oppression(s) overlap in many complex ways” (2003: 44-45). These gaps fail to see the interactive effects of discrimination especially when an individual has a multiplicity in his or her personal identity.

The concept of “intersectionality” captures “both the structural and dynamic aspects of multiple discriminations” by addressing the ways in which “racism, sexism, and other

discriminatory systems create background inequalities that define the relative positions of women, races, etc.” (2003: 46). Crenshaw then describes various forms of multiple discriminations with specific examples. The forms discussed are as follows: targeted discrimination, compound discrimination, structural subordination, over inclusion, under inclusion, misappropriation, and structural-dynamic discrimination. Crenshaw keenly emphasizes the need to explore the individual experience of a marginalized person in order to further understand how these systems of discrimination overlap. Crenshaw’s concludes with a poignant statement:

without a lens focused on the interactive nature of subordination, we function with a partial view of what sexism, racism, homophobia, etc. really look like-as if we were squinting at the world with one eye closed. (56)

While Crenshaw’s article focuses on the inherent need for an ‘intersectional-ized’ lens to understand the various forms of multiple discriminations, Kathy Davis’ “Intersectionality as a Buzzword” article is an evaluation of the concept of intersectionality as a successful platform for feminist theory. After defining ‘intersectionality’ as “the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination,” Davis discusses the four characteristics of a successful social theory as they relate to intersectionality (67).

Intersectionality succeeds in the first characteristic that the theory “speaks to a primary audience concern” as it addresses the primary concern of “differences” within feminist theory (70). The second characteristic is to “provide a novel twist to an old problem” (72). Davis argues that intersectionality did so by offering “a novel link between critical feminist theory on the effects of sexism, class, and racism, and a critical methodology inspired by postmodern feminist theory” (73). Third, a theory must appeal to theory generalists and specialists. Davis argues that intersectionality fulfills this requirement by mending

the division between the generalists (feminist researchers) and specialists (theory), compelling the specialists to ground their meta-concerns in the concrete social and political contexts of women's lives and the generalists to reclaim theory as an integral part of feminist inquiry. (76)

The fourth characteristic is for the theory to be ambiguous and incomplete because "ambiguity stimulates synthesis" while incompleteness will inherently call for the continual testing and applying of the theory (76). Intersectionality has an ambiguous nature which provides a lens through which one can address their own "blind spots."

Keeping in that tradition, one could theoretically apply the concept of intersectionality to cases, such as male sexual victimization, which have traditionally been excluded, or at the very least marginalized, within feminist pedagogy. Ralston (2012) using an intersectional approach, demonstrates the role that stigma plays in victimization using male sexual assault victimization as the case study. Ralston (2012) draws from Goffman's (1963) work which connects stigmas associated with being an outcast to potential for putting the subject at an increased risk for social condemnation and other more serious consequences, e.g., physical and sexual assault victimization. The purpose of Ralston's work is to call attention to the need for more research on male sexual assault victimization because there currently does not exist an

agreed upon statistic that measures male sexual assault victimization, including the Uniform Crime Report (UCR), which only measures the sexual assault when the victim is female, narratives from academic research are the only accurate way at this point. (Ralston, 2012: 283)

Ralston (2012) presented a comprehensive literature review on work that connected stigma and victimization using intersectionality as a framework which the aim of generating a diversification of victimization studies for the inclusion of multiple identities. Ralston uses male sexual assault victimization to illustrate how the varying constructions of masculinity produce stigmas in distinct ways between collectives. In completing an intersectional analysis of research

on male sexual assault victimization, Ralston found that male victims experience greater depression and hostility, are not taken seriously by authorities, and even worse blame themselves for the assault (2012). Using Anderson's (1982) process wherein a male sexual assault victim ends up facing the following multiple levels of victimization:

(1) the victimization of the male by the perpetrator, (2) rejection and stigmatization by family, friends, and society, (3) internalization and self-blame, and (4) the continued negative reaction by society reinforces the self-blaming. (Ralston, 2012: 284).

Ralston explains the rationale of choosing the synthesis multiracial feminism with intersectionality was based on the original conceptual utilization of intersectionality within feminism; giving a voice to women (2012). Since women were in need of a voice due to marginalization, Ralston transcends feminist gender boundaries in applying the feminist concept to marginalization issues affecting males. Intersectionality was born out of necessity within feminism to address the multiplicities constituting a woman's identity and more specifically racial tensions and disparities within feminism. Ralston keenly relates this progression within feminism of the inclusion and greater focus within research to focus on racial identities, research on the LGBTQ community should follow suit. Let's face it, queer theory is basically feminism's gay-best friend especially within the context of a college campus.

Although the aim of Ralston's work was to expand the study of victimization, most importantly for the purpose of this chapter, Ralston demonstrated,

Examining hegemonic masculinity in an intersectional manner would allow for a greater understanding of whether there are multiple ideal constructions of masculinity that depend on social location. (2012: 290)

Ralston is speaking in the above quote in queer rhetoric. Interestingly, the sub-discipline of geographies of sexualities has incorporated queer theory even before queer theory's mother, feminism. To clarify, 'queer' is understood with respect to the confines of this research, as

“appellation for sexual positionalities that contest not just heteronormativity, but also homonormativity” (Browne et al, 2007: 12).

As women experience marginalization as the ‘second sex,’ so too do LGBTQ individuals experience marginalization as the ‘second sex-uality’¹⁶. Interestingly geographies of sexualities can expand from its heterosexist epistemology and incorporate queer theory. It does so in employing the notion of institutionalization of sexualized imagined geographies which positions heterosexuality within the ‘center’ of society and pushes queer-ity to the social periphery as a ‘moral threat’ (Browne et al, 2007: 4). This concept of the institutionalization of sexuality is key to understanding the politico-social norms and the power relations at stake, which in turn clearly define “who belongs and to define what bodies are allowed to do, when and where” (Browne et al, 2007: 4). The sub-field’s treatment of gender is much more inclusive and explanatory of reality as well. As Browne et al explain,

The intelligibility of the categories of ‘heterosexuality’ and ‘homosexuality’ is also reliant upon the opposition between ‘male’ and ‘female’ and upon the supposedly natural sexual desire between these two sexes (2007: 8).

This chapter has argued for an integrative pluralist approach in order to employ a more complete deconstruction of heteronormativity, homonormativity, and the gender binary which allows for a fluid understanding of sexualities and is a more inclusive theoretical framework for policymaking in addressing campus sexual assault. First, the way in which the term “queer” is being applied within the confines of this paper should be understood. The term comes from queer theory, which is the study and critique of normative assumptions about sex, gender and sexuality;

¹⁶ Beauvoir, S. d., Borde, C., & Malovany-Chevallier, S. (2010). *The second sex*. New York:

Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.

rejecting the idea that biological sex determines gender identity, and that desire and sexuality would be predictable from either (Browne et al, 2007). The term is applied “to question the supposedly stable relationship between sex, gender, sexual desire, and sexual practice” through which a process of decentering of heteronormativity occurs (Browne et al, 2007: 8). By decentering heteronormativity and, by full extension, normative conceptions of gender, the approach will account for a spectrum of gender expressions. Therefore, the gender binary which has constricted research will expand beyond its own bifurcation and open up theorization.

This chapter demonstrated through a preliminary content analysis of google imagery that the heterosexist perspective on campus sexual assault is still the dominating narrative on a national level. The next chapter will examine how this dominant discourse exists through media not only on a national scale but also interacts intentionally on local-campus level.

CHAPTER V

ENGAGING ACTIVISM AND AUDIENCES VIA SOCIAL MEDIA: ‘THE HUNTING GROUND’ AS A FEMINIST MEDIA EVENT

“Despite significant progress over the last few years, too many woman and men on and off college campuses are still victims of sexual abuse. Tonight, I’m asking you to join millions of Americans including me, President Obama, the thousands of students I’ve met on college campuses and the artists here tonight to take the pledge.”
 –Vice President Joe Biden¹⁷

INTRODUCTION

The quote above is from Vice President Joe Biden at the 2016 Academy Awards urging for a change in public discourse concerning campus sexual assault. The Vice President spoke at the 2016 Oscars to serve as the introductory speech segueing into Lady Gaga’s performance of her single “Til It Happens to You” from the 2015 critically acclaimed and Oscar-nominated documentary on campus sexual assault *The Hunting Ground*. *The Hunting Ground* documentary, Lady Gaga’s promotional single for the film, and her performance at the 2016 Academy Awards, received an immense amount of media coverage from mainstream news, activist media sites, and social media. The three feminist media events and the ways in which they interact and interrelate as a collective effort of feminist activism against sexual violence are what makes significant their feminist eventfulness.

This chapter will examine the ways in which victimization relational to gender was represented in each media event by analyzing each event in sequential order. I will begin with a

¹⁷ Delbyck, Cole. “Lady Gaga Made Hollywood Cry with Powerful Oscars Performance”

February 28, 2016. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/lady-gaga-performance-til-it-happens-to-you-oscars_us_56d335b5e4b0bf0dab32767b

content analysis of *The Hunting Ground* documentary as a feminist media event followed by an analysis of Lady Gaga's music video for "Til It Happens to You" as the second feminist media event. The final analysis will examine Lady Gaga's live performance of the documentary's promotional single at the 2016 Academy Awards as a dual feminist live and feminist meme event. The feminist eventfulness of these events culminates in this final installation representing a markedly more gender inclusive image of sexual assault victims than its two predecessors. The performance exemplified an embodied sense of feminist activism operating outside the confines of the gender binary. In my analyses, I focus on the audience interactivity with the live performance and music video on social media sites. I argue that audience interactivity and the feedback loop it creates directly impact the ways in which activist media events intersect and interact. In doing so, the audience feedback loop expands the ways in which activism can challenge hegemonic power relations by becoming a platform for representing marginalized voices.

Vice President Joe Biden's participation in the introduction to Lady Gaga's performance echoed the executive actions and initiatives by the Obama administration to end sexual assault on college campuses helped to mainstream the issue specifically within the last decade. In 2010, President Obama made a call to action for all federal agencies to make domestic and sexual violence a top priority. He also signed the third reauthorization of Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) on March 7, 2013. Then, in 2015, the Obama Administration published "Rape and Sexual Assault: A Renewed Call to Action," a report detailing the prevalence of the issue of campus sexual assault and the effects on victims. This initiative comes as no surprise given that the last few years has seen a surge of media attention focused on campus sexual assault and rape culture on college campuses. What makes the Obama administration's initiative to end campus

sexual assault unique is exemplified in Biden's introduction at the Oscars. It is his inclusion of men in addition to women as potential victims of sexual abuse.

This is quite a departure from the gendered rape meta-narrative circulated within media and public discourse. Prior to Vice President Joe Biden's at the 2016 Academy Awards, President Barack Obama made a similar statement in stark contrast to the gendered rape meta-narrative at a White House Press Conference in 2015:

If you give a woman – or a man, for that matter – without his or her knowledge a drug and then have sex with that person without consent, that's rape. I think this country, any civilized country, should have no tolerance for rape.¹⁸

This departure, supported by the Executive Branch, redefined sexual violence outside of the confines of gender and the movement against sexual violence that would follow. Since Obama's statement, particularly within the last two years, the movement against sexual violence has incorporated male victimization within academic research, empirical studies, and activism.

Beginning with empirical studies, the Association of American Universities (AAU) has made considerable progress in combating campus sexual assault. The implications of the survey reached beyond a simple provision of empirical data. With the primary goal that such data would be utilized to inform the participating universities' policies in the prevention and response to campus sexual assault and misconduct, the survey produced statistically reliable estimates for

¹⁸ Carroll, Kelsey. "President Obama's Definition of Rape is a Sign of Progress." July 17, 2015. <https://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2015/07/17/president-obamas-definition-of-rape-is-a-sign-of-progress/>

each IHE so that the aforementioned policies respective for each IHE could be tailored as such to adequately address campus sexual assault by the specificities of each campus.

In September of 2015, the AAU published “Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct.” The report concluded overall that rates of sexual assault were “highest among undergraduate females and those identifying as transgender, genderqueer, non-conforming, questioning, and as something not listed on the survey (TGQN)” (AAU, 2015: p. IV). Another study by Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, and Cohn (2010), did a gender comparison on campus sexual assault focusing on the extent to which survivors reported using campus resources and their knowledge of campus resources. Most significant in its findings was that men were significantly less knowledgeable of campus resources and less likely to use such resources or report their assault.

Davies, Filston and Rogers (2012) provide solid findings from a psychological study regarding the interconnectedness between sentiments of male rape, female rape, victim blaming, homophobia, gender roles, and sexism. The most significant finding from this study was that “male rape myth acceptance significantly related to female rape myth acceptance, negative attitudes about gay men, gender role attitudes, and victim blame” (Davies, et. Al: 2012: p. 1). If there is a correlation between male and female rape myths, homophobia, and sexism, then feminist activism would sure find the inclusion of male victimization within their research to be necessary to further understand how these oppressions function in tandem:

The implication here is that secondary victimization—which is often severe, long lasting, and detrimental to victim recovery (Williams, 1984)—may take a variety of forms, reflected in the types of negative attitude rape victims often experience and perhaps even come to expect. Service providers and those working to educate the public about rape need be mindful of the possibility that negative attitudes about rape are both wide-reaching and diverse, relating to more general beliefs about gender and sexuality than, say, attributions of blame for one’s own victimization. (Davies, Gilston, and Rogers, 2012; pp 14).

Media coverage on campus rape that gained national attention have depicted by and large a rape meta-narrative where a female student was assaulted by a male student. This gendered depiction would come as no surprise, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been “conceptualized traditionally as male violence against women” (Beverly, Ottens, and Hotelling, 2001: p. 190). Sexual violence gained media coverage through second wave feminism mainstreaming of the subject. Although feminism has achieved raising public consciousness and changing legislation for sexual violence against women via mainstream media, a gendered rape meta-narrative has continued to dominate the media’s portrayal of sexual assault.

Despite advancing the feminist agenda on sexual violence, the media’s portrayal through a heterosexist gaze has also contributed to systems of oppression and power that feminism seeks to abolish. Primarily, by only portraying women as victims of sexual assault, heterosexism is maintained through the reifying of gender norms. If women are the only victims, then as a whole, the issue of sexual assault is a woman’s issue attributed to the extent to which women are vulnerable and ‘penetrable’ which reifies sex roles. It also perpetuates the myth that men are impenetrable.

As previously stated, the media scape is key in molding public perception and carries with it the cultural capital to gain momentum on any given issue. The audience must be skeptical of the news media, understanding it as a “selected and constructed representation constitutive of ‘reality’” not a “window-on-the-world” (Barker, 2012: 326). However, this assertion assumes that audiences are active participants with full agency to engage in discourse.

A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF *THE HUNTING GROUND*

With respect to news media, the selection and construction of ‘reality’ are not determined, to a large extent, by the audience but rather the news outlets themselves. Audiences

occupy a much more passive position where information is disseminated primarily in a one-way direction towards the audience. There is little interaction between the receivers and disseminators of information. For this reason, the focus will be on forms of social media that have gained increasing popularity in the last decade and provide a more accessible platform through which the audience can engage and interact making their voice heard.

The Hunting Ground, written and directed by Kirby Dick and produced by Amy Ziering, premiered at the 2015 Sundance Film Festival and was publicly released on February 27, 2015. Its content is generally comprised of personal rape narratives intermixed with commentary from interviews with various participants including university administrators, victims, and even perpetrators. Primarily, the film focuses on two particular narratives—Annie E. Clark and Andrea Pino. Both women are former University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill students who experience sexual violence while enrolled at the institution.

The film chronicles the journey of these women, beginning with their respective experiences of assault, their process of recovery in finding solidarity with each other before culminating in their filing a Title IX complaint against the university citing its violation of Title IX in its response to the assaults. The film garnered immense media attention, including appraisal and criticism, the latter of which mainly concerned the film's use of highly contested data¹⁹. Despite this, little attention is paid to the marginalization of male victimization in the documentary.

¹⁹ “1 in 5” is the statistic the film uses during its opening scenes. It signifies that one in five women will be sexually assaulted during their undergraduate studies. It is the statistic often used

The Hunting Ground exemplifies the dominant discourse surrounding campus assault: it is mainly a woman's issue but men are *sometimes* victims. In fact, the whole treatment of male victimization is rather obscure despite the media coverage on the Obama Administration's White House initiatives focused on eradicating campus sexual assault which was gender inclusive in recognizing male victimization. However, the Obama Administration's report used data from a report that focused on female victimization and cited a need for further investigation into male victimization. The data for male victimization was incomplete. So, despite a more gender inclusive approach to campus sexual assault, the Obama era White House Initiatives were merely a call to action, rather than an action that would generate measurable change itself. *The Hunting Ground* demonstrated similar slacktivism by merely repeating the gendered metanarrative rampant in media coverage on campus sexual assault with a quick nod to male and queer victimization.

To begin, the notion that men are assaulted is not introduced until 43 minutes into the 1 hour and 43-minute documentary. For the first half of the documentary, it featured narratives of over a dozen women, with the exception of commentary from one male victim whose commentary was sandwiched in between multiple female victims' comments on how their respective college reacted. The male victim is given little screen time only providing testament to how he was asked to sit out for a semester. Overall, the assault narratives of the female victims are provided in great detail and given through an emotional "narrative" style. However, there is no emotional detail or narration provided for assaults involving male victimization. The

to exemplify the extent to which campus sexual assault is an epidemic on university campuses.

However, this statistic is highly contested.

treatment is very mechanical in that there is no ‘narrative,’ just a statement of randomized facts presented as a collective.

During the second half of the documentary, commentary from a handful of male victims is grouped together with each victim being given a quick snapshot on their feelings surrounding their assault. There was no single male narrative that was presented in a cohesive complete manner. The audience is left with very little connection to the male victims. With no cohesive narrative, the audience is not given enough information to form an emotional connection to the male subjects unlike their female counterparts. More airtime was given, in fact, to commentary from a male rapist.

The male interviewed at length was a male perpetrator whose commentary on the pervasiveness of campus sexual assault interjected with commentary from another male voice discussing the pathology behind “these men.” The intermixed commentary between the male perpetrator and the ominous male voice of authority shifts discussion focusing on alcohol as a weapon. The male perpetrator agrees that alcohol can definitely aid in “overpowering the victim” which is followed up with the ominous male voice saying:

And then there’s an isolation phase, so you have somebody who has deliberately gotten this young woman extremely intoxicated and at some point he says to her ‘I’ll walk you back to your room or you can sleep it off if you want we have a bed upstairs and tats when the assault occurs.

The lack of representation of male victimization in comparison to female victimization coupled with the fact that more visibility was provided to the male perpetrator contributes to and reiterates the marginalization of male sexual victimization. I argue the treatment of male sexual victimization in the documentary reflects a gender bias in the film. The narration is seen through the documentarians’ heterosexist gaze.

As previously mentioned, the film focused on two primary narratives – Clark and Pino. Melinda Manning, a former Assistant Dean of Students at UNC Chapel Hill, was interviewed for the documentary. Throughout the film, Manning’s commentary is interjected between personal narrative accounts of campus sexual assault. The two primary personal narratives included in the film are from two female students who attended UNC Chapel Hill during Manning’s tenure.

The students credit Manning for assisting through the aftermath of being assaulted, originally choosing to confide in Manning because “she was somebody who a lot of survivors had worked with and trusted.” After the UNC students’ comments, the scene changes to the interview conducted with Manning. This particular interview scene, brings into question the documentarians’ gaze through the carefully crafted language displayed during the exchange. The scene begins with the interviewer posing the following question:

Interviewer: “So, in your time at UNC how many students came to you and said ‘they’d been assaulted’”

Manning: “it’s hard to put a number on it so...at least 100”

Interviewer: “and out of 100, how many of the perpetrators were removed from campus?”

Manning: “from what I remember, no one was expelled during that time”

Interviewer: “so these guys could just get away with it?”

Manning: “absolutely”

The language used by the interviewer is specifically gendered under the assumption that perpetrators are always male. Another point of contention are the data provided throughout the film. The first statistics given say the following:

- “88% of women sexually assaulted on campus do not report” (Fisher, Cullen, Turner, 2000) and (Washington Post, Kaiser Family Foundation, 2015)
- “In 2012, 45% of colleges reported ZERO sexual assault” (Washington Post, 2014)

- “Less than 8% of men in college commit more than 90% of sexual assaults” (David Lisak Ph.D. and Paul M Miller, 2002)

The data provided only concerns female victimization again marginalizing male victims which seems to reflect a power asymmetry coming from the documentarians’ gaze.

The Hunting Ground, upon release, was available for purchasing the rights to screen for public audiences at locations like college campuses and was released on DVD on December 1, 2015. Thus, the film was only accessible to those willing to attend screenings. The documentary was a literal grassroots movement upon its initial release through small-scale on-campus screenings across the nation. It quickly became the resource for universities to educate their student bodies on the issue of campus sexual assault.

STAR POWER AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

The Hunting Ground documentary continued to grow in notoriety once Lady Gaga and acclaimed songwriter Dianne Warren released the haunting ballad, “Till It Happens to You,” they penned together for the documentary. The single received a full promotional treatment including cover art, multiple live performances by Lady Gaga, and a music video. The music video was directed by Catherine Hardwicke and released on YouTube on September 17, 2015 and has garnered over 38,398,821 views²⁰. The video shows three cis-gendered women and one gender queer woman being raped, their grief in the aftermath and resolves with the women finding solace in female friendship. After the video, a text states that “One in five women will be sexually assaulted this year unless something changes”. Again, there is zero male victim

²⁰ Lady Gaga. “Till It Happens to You”. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZmWBrN7QV6Y> .

representation. Lady Gaga is renowned for her support of the LGBTQ community as an activist and artist.

The music video as a feminist media event when intersecting and interacting with the documentary further reifies the notion campus sexual assault is an issue involving solely female victims by giving visibility to only female victims. Visibility generates an asymmetric power dynamic wherein the visible obtain a status of privilege as “seeing is the origin of knowing” (Scott, 1991: 776). The *Hunting Ground’s* selective portrayal of victims’ narratives exemplifies this. Lady Gaga’s music video and specifically the choice in who to represent in the video further support this.

Still, the impact of Lady Gaga’s star power on raising awareness and engaging activism is demonstrated in its wide reach and audience interactivity on YouTube in response to the media events. Certainly, such a reach would not have been as accessible for *The Hunting Ground*. Further, being on a social media site such as YouTube enables for continued interaction. The site serves as a platform for social discourse. Analyzing the first ten comments organized by “Top Comments,” a space for marginalized people to voice their counter narratives is created. In analyzing the first ten comments organized by “Top Comments,” I was primarily interested in seeing if any comments engaged with the topic of male victimization. Of the first ten, the top comment said:

I understand some people wanted to see a male victim, and I'm sorry. This was showing just some examples. No where in this video did it say men don't get raped. So stop treating it like it did say that. Stop hating and maybe you can do something to spread awareness. Don't hate when people don't show what you want.

This obviously points to a discourse through which the user had been engaging with other viewers over male representation. Two other comments in the top ten that engaged with the topic of male victimization:

“I'm a boy and was raped by an older girl when I was only young. I've been embarrassed of it my whole life because I thought I did something wrong and people would be disgusted in me but now I feel comfortable telling people. It wasn't my fault and I'm in know way ashamed to tell my story to my friends. Thank you Lady Gaga for this song, you have always been there for me when I've been at my worse. I hope I can meet you in person to tell you this one day. -Alex”

“I desperately wished this video had shown a guy getting assaulted by another guy. And not a "feminine" male who people would "presume" got raped just because he's a "wuss" and not man enough to fight off an attacker. Awareness of male sexual assault NEEDS to be spread.”²¹

The music video proved to be provocative enough to garner participation from viewers and causing them to engage in gender discourses and sexual violence. Interestingly, the same analysis done on the live performance resulted in much less of a politicized exchange.²² Of the top ten, only one depicted male victimization:

I'm a survivor of sexual abuse thru three priests who passed me around when I was 13 years...I won my lawsuit and going to therapy once a month...i'm 46 now and finally getting back on my feet again. Seeing Spotlight win, I folded over into tears...SO glad it's a bigger dot on the map :) xoxoxox

Although the remaining nine comments were centered on discourse over whether Lady Gaga should have won the Academy Award for her song, the male survivor's testimony still managed to be rated high among them.

²¹ For full text, please see Appendix B.

²² ABC News. “Lady Gaga Oscar Performance 2016 "Til It Happens to You.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66UG34J6Alw>.

On Sunday, February 28, 2016, after a powerful introduction from the then current Vice President, Lady Gaga performed her Oscar nominated song at the Academy Awards. Mid-performance, the singer was joined on stage by 50 survivors of sexual assault. The group of survivors represented a diversity of gender expressions boldly demonstrating the extent to which sexual assault affects more than one gender. The change in gender representation between all three events is a testament to the ways in which social media can expand digital activism and how audience interactivity can impact that activism through the feedback loop. In these feminist media events, social media played a key role in being a site for contesting dominant narratives to effect change, foreshadowing minutely what would come a mere year and a half later with the #MeToo movement.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

[S]exual crimes against [women, lesbians, gay men, to name a few] effectively reduce them to their “sex,” thereby reaffirming and enforcing the reduction of the category itself. Because discourse is not restricted to writing or speaking, but is also social action, even violent social action, we ought also to understand rape, sexual violence, “queer-bashing” as the category of sex in action. (Butler, 1990: p. 212)

The dawn of a new era seemed on the horizon at the 2018 Golden Globes. All women attending the event donned black in solidarity for the Time’s Up legal defense fund. The Time’s Up campaign was created just a few weeks before the 2018 Golden Globes and became the most successful GoFundMe campaign ever raising over 16 million dollars in a matter of weeks²³. The campaign created the Time’s Up legal defense fund which will provide subsidized legal aid in sexual assault and harassment cases. It was unprecedented that such a politicized statement concerning a social movement had infiltrated a prestigious awards show at this level and in this manner. The sentiment was confirmed with Oprah Winfrey’s acceptance speech for the Cecil B. DeMille Award for lifetime achievement as she concluded,

So I want all the girls watching here, now, to know that a new day is on the horizon! And when that new day finally dawns, it will be because of a lot of magnificent women, many of whom are right here in this room tonight, and some pretty phenomenal men, fighting hard to make sure that they become the leaders who take us to the time when nobody ever has to say "Me too" again.²⁴

²³ For more information on the “Times Up” fund, please see:

<https://www.gofundme.com/timesup/donate> and <http://time.com/money/5107657/times-up-go-fund-me-donations/>.

²⁴ CNN. “Read Oprah Winfrey’s rousing Golden Globes speech.” January 10, 2018.

<http://www.cnn.com/2018/01/08/entertainment/oprah-globes-speech-transcript/index.html>.

Winfrey's powerful speech summed the essence and achievements of the #MeToo campaign—months of discourse over a social issue that would no longer be considered a 'woman's issue' but rather the responsibility of society at large. It is an issue that not just women, but men should engage in eradicating. This was truly groundbreaking.

From its inception, the #MeToo movement has promoted a single narrative rooted in a gendered framework—the female victim assaulted by the more powerful male perpetrator. However, if we look back to the high-profile cases that engaged public consciousness over the issue of sexual assault and harassment, there is one single narrative that did not fit the bill. *Rent* star Anthony Rapp's sexual assault allegations against Kevin Spacey when Rapp was an underage actor. Despite an incredibly insufficient public mea culpa statement from Spacey acknowledging forgotten wrong-doing which quickly turned into a deflecting 'coming-out' story, the gendered narrative in the media remained the same. There was no interest in hearing further from Rapp or engaging with the idea of young gay male actors dealing with similar vulnerabilities as female actors. The narrative remained focused on female victims and male perpetrators. Media attention surrounding Spacey quickly died off once Netflix almost immediately fired Spacey from the hit show *House of Cards* and his role in the upcoming completed film *All the Money in the World* was quickly recast and 22 scenes reshot.²⁵

Once the media caught news a few weeks later of allegations against *Today Show* host Matt Lauer and his subsequent firing, Spacey was relegated to a pool of perpetrators whose

²⁵ Barnes, Brooks. "The Race to Erase Kevin Spacey." December 13, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/13/movies/kevin-spacey-all-the-money-in-the-world-christopher-plummer.html>.

names would be listed in reference to #MeToo headlines in the news. Rapp's bravery would be overshadowed in numbers and coverage of the countless brave women who provided their narratives. To say the previous statement is to not count one victim's narrative as more or less important over another's. However, with a campaign dedicated to eradicating sexual assault and harassment and provide a platform for victims to voice their own narratives, it is interesting that Rapp's narrative and the gender dynamics of that narrative were left relatively unengaged within public discourse and media attention. The meta-narrative and the gendered framework within media coverage remained relatively the same, promoting a narrative of again a less powerful female victimized by a more powerful male assailant.

Then, the world arrives to the Golden Globes and the magnificence of Oprah Winfrey's words and presence. Yet, in a time where social change and gender equity are becoming more of a reality, what do those words *really* mean in a movement that seeks to eradicate sexual assault and harassment with a media that seems eager to promote a narrative with a specific gendered framework?

As groundbreaking feminist media events, such as Lady Gaga's 2016 Oscar performance, become more common and more individuals become emboldened with bravery to share their narratives, what is the future role for movements like #MeToo? Surely, the sudden rise in public consciousness and concern for sexual assault and harassment towards women is testament to the impact these movements have made. But, does the narrative remain unchanged? When is it the right time for the narrative to change? Sexual assault is not solely a women's issue. Yet, social movements, media, and feminist activism promote it as such. If a movement or a paradigm labels itself as rooted in social justice, how do we define 'social justice' when it calls for the

marginalization of other ‘Others’? What does this new dawn mean for the Anthony Rapps of the world?

This research began with an overview of data for LGBTQ victimization on campus from a multitude of studies spanning over the previous 25 years. As a collective, the literature found that sexual minorities are not only disproportionately affected by campus sexual assault but are largely ignored within research. Discussion then built upon that data by examining the campus space through a cultural geographic lens as a site of oppression for sexual minorities. The campus was then analyzed as a heterosexist matrix of domination to examine the ways in which feminist theory and activism functioned within it and contributed to the oppression of sexual minorities. Sexism and gender hegemony are inextricably intertwined – to aid in marginalization of male victimization is to be complicit in sexism. The main argument here is to prevent the replication of oppressions through an ongoing process of reflexivity.

Further, women’s centers are embodied spaces of feminist activism on the campus. The static function of women’s centers was interrogated as a space of bipolarity in which an inherent tension existed between inclusion and exclusion. Women’s centers on campuses are the primary sites for contesting the sexual assault meta-narrative. It may seem overly critical to examine these texts through a feminist critique, but heterosexism is maintained and perpetuated through cultural artifacts. Building upon these theorizations, discussion shifted to content analyses of media texts that are cultural artifacts of campus culture. Again, culture is a site where ideas are created, exchanged, and consumed. By using a feminist lens in studying symbolic culture—like films or multimedia and representations within those texts—through a content analysis one can critically interrogate these texts that in part comprise the culture we live. Doing such interrogation can expand and contribute to our understanding of how patriarchal and heterosexist

ideologies of social reality function in maintaining the oppression of women and sexual minorities.

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APPENDIX A

IMAGES FOR QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS



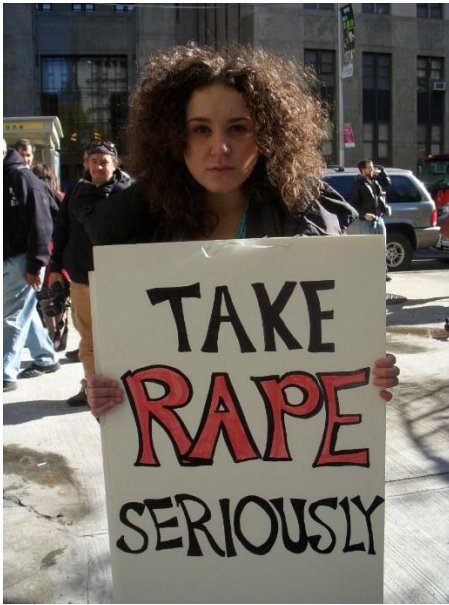
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APPENDIX B

FULL TEXT OF COMMENT FROM MALE VICTIM

The following is the second comment on male victimization detailing an account. For structure purposes the entire comment has been placed here:

“I desperately wished this video had shown a guy getting assaulted by another guy. And not a "feminine" male who people would "presume" got raped just because he's a "wuss" and not man enough to fight off an attacker. Awareness of male sexual assault NEEDS to be spread. My friend is a footballer. He is 6 foot 4 inches was 278 pounds. A total pretty boy the girls flocked to. He couldn't, and still can't walk into a room without every female in the room giving him a thorough once, or twice over. He was roofied at a regular club and raped by three GUYS. This was NOT a gay club! Just a regular club. The frigging bartender was in on it, he would mark guys his "friends" would like... And then spike their drinks, also paying other partygoers to take free drinks over to guys he marked, sending messages about how girls who were interested had sent over the drinks. The guys would automatically get curious about what kind of "ballsy" woman would buy them a drink. When I found out what had happened to my friend my life just went into a tail spin. I did not know these kinds of things could happen to guys. Rather, I had a rather ignorant view that even if it did happen, it only happened to "wimpy gay-ish" guys. My best friend just completely isolated himself. He stopped playing football, he stopped partying, used to be a pure party animal, normally partied 4-6 times a week, and he just stopped going out... Stopped leaving the house. Lost his job. He just stopped. Stopped smiling, stopped eating. He never reported anything.

We only found out exactly what happened 4 months afterwards when we forced him to see a doctor for some really bad "cuts" on the back of his shoulder. "Cuts" he never let us see, Christ he went from always walking around half naked and totally UN-self concious to...he never even took his clothes off in front of anyone anymore. Those "cuts" turned out to be bite marks. Bite marks from three grown men, so fucking deep and vicious that they turned septic. They had needed stitches in the first place and all my friend did was throw alcohol on em and keep em bandaged. The first thing I thought was, this cant be real. This shit only happened in effed up TV Shows like SUV or Criminal Minds. Well this is real. I am living and looking at the aftermath. We are all still working very hard to get my friend back on his feet. Back to loving the things he used to. We're been struggling to keep him eating, to put back on the weight and muscle mass he dropped. Struggling to even get him to go out and get fresh air every few days. Sharing my friends story anonymously, our story of the aftermath, My point is I guess, I hope that anyone reading this can at least be woken up by what they read. Guys, be careful out there. It's normally us girls that are told this. Us girls that get it drilled into our heads from an early age, until it becomes a common place thought always in the back of our heads. Males, Men, Guys, I would like to say to you that it can happen to you. You do not need to feel ashamed because "as a man" you should've never "let" it happen to you. You didn't let anything happen, you didn't want it, even if you couldn't physically say no, it doesn't change the fact that it was definitely going to be NO. Because you couldn't fight or didn't win the fight, doesn't make you weak or less of anything. Rape is rape. The sex of the victim is irrelevant. And to all those people

who look down on men this happens to, encouraging them to keep quiet, making them feel ashamed, blaming them.... Fuck You. You do not deserve to exist.”

VITA

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