Honouring the Stories of Student-Survivors: Trauma Informed Practice in Post-Secondary Sexualized Violence Policy Review

by

Kenya Rogers
BA, from University of Victoria, 2018

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Supervisory Committee

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Abstract

Rape culture permeates the landscape of post-secondary education throughout Canada. In recent years, student-survivors and advocates have been influential in the creation of provincial legislation mandating colleges and universities to develop stand-alone sexualized violence policies. In British Columbia these policies are to be institutionally reviewed every three years, but there is no clear legislative direction as to how these reviews should be conducted, or how survivors and advocates voices will be included.

My thesis examines the impacts of campus sexualized violence and the integral role that student-survivors and their stories play in transforming rape culture. Through the voices of nine University of Victoria student-survivors and five community-based service providers, I demonstrate that student-survivors and those who support them act as both change-agents and subject matter-experts regarding campus rape culture; as such, their inclusion in policy development and review is essential. However, my thesis also demonstrates that student-survivors and advocates navigate an increasingly corporatized post-secondary environment, whereby the stories of student-survivors are considered dangerous to the campus brand and reputation. In taking seriously the trauma associated with sexualized violence and the consequences of the corporate campus, my thesis offers a *Trauma Informed Consultation Guideline.* This guideline provides a trauma-informed and community based approach to consulting student-survivors in policy review with the intention of creating safer opportunities for story to inform future policy directions.

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Acknowledgments

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My thesis would not have been possible without the many survivors and service providers who shared their stories with me. Every single person I spoke with served as a reminder of resilience, community and the need for change. Thank you for trusting me.

Also central to my research has been the support and guidance of my community partner and dear friends at the Anti Violence Project (AVP). AVP has taught me so much about who I am and who I want to be. Thank you supporting myself and all those who participated in my research.

To my family: the lessons you have taught me led me here. Thank you for helping me through every challenge and for your willingness to learn alongside me. Heather and Kat, you made me laugh even on the hardest days and reminded me I could do this. And to my partner Evan, thank you –as always—for taking care of me.

Dedication

To a world where survivor's stories are met with belief, empathy and transformation.

Self-Location

Over the past four years, this research has been conducted on the unceded and unsurrendered territories of the Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples in the context of both my undergraduate and graduate degrees. During this time, I have been honoured to work alongside many professors, students, survivors and advocates that have shaped my understandings of my own identity and place within this work. As a white-presenting settler of mixed raced ancestry, the ease at which I navigate this institution manifests in a responsibility to challenge systems of power, privilege and oppression in my research. Rape culture, as is discussed throughout my thesis, is deeply rooted in Canada's ongoing colonization of Indigenous people and land. Sexualized violence has been employed as a tool of colonialism, and intersects with many of systems of power. These systems are both discussed *and* experienced by participants in my research, and I feel a deep accountability to their stories and resilience.

I am also situated in this work as a survivor of sexualized violence. In recent years, I have proudly worked alongside other student-survivors leading the charge on addressing sexualized violence. The experience of having my own story cared for by other survivors and advocates has greatly contributed to my passion for this project. I also owe so much of my understanding of how and why violence happens to my community-partner the Anti Violence Project (AVP), UVic's on-campus sexual assault centre. As a young student many years ago who had recently been assaulted, AVP taught me the word survivor, and taught me about healing. Through volunteering and working at AVP, I have come to recognize that my activism and research must accept a constant state of learning and unlearning. AVP has taught me the importance of centring care, reciprocity and

community in all aspects of this work. I am endlessly grateful for these gifts, and I hope they emerge on the following pages.

Introduction

On March 14ᵗʰ 2016, I sat in a broom-closet sized room in the basement of the Student Union Building (SUB) at the University of Victoria (UVic). At the time, the Anti Violence Project (AVP) — the on-campus sexual assault centre —ran support sessions out of the small windowless space. Staff at AVP did everything possible to make the space more comforting…lamps to drown out offensive fluorescent lighting, boxes of tissue readily available, an abundance of tea, colouring books, blankets, a small couch. A bowl of stones on a coffee table had reassuring words written on them…one read: BELIEVE. Several trained support staff from the sexual assault centre were present, as well as other students. All of us in the room were either activists, students or survivors. Mostly, we were all three.

On speaker-phone was a Canadian Press journalist who was reporting on sexualized violence at university and college campuses throughout the country. As part of a recent wave of activism against rape culture on campuses in British Columbia, AVP had invited us to speak with this trusted reporter to shed light on UVic's failure to both prevent and respond to sexualized violence on-campus. One survivor explained to the reporter that the university's investigation process was full of victim-blaming and how the university told her she could face legal action from UVic if she shared information from the investigation with anyone other than her family, therapist out legal counsel. The other survivors talked about being student-employees of UVic's Residence, and feeling silenced for speaking out about campus rape culture. After a student was accused of assaulting several women on campus, they were told by upper management not to speak with media, and to call campus security if they saw journalists on residence property. They said reports of sexualized violence seemed to go nowhere, resulting in those who had caused harm continuing to live, work and study on campus. As a student-union activist and survivor myself, I discussed the need for provincial legislation regarding campus sexualized violence policies, and for meaningful inclusion and consultation with student-survivors to be paramount at both the institutional and provincial level. We all stated that the university was complicit in ongoing campus rape culture and demanded a stand-alone sexualized violence policy at UVic.

The story was published the following day, March 15th 2016, with the title "University of Victoria Silencing Assault Victims: Students Say", and the article quickly went viral. Within hours, media requests erupted from all over…Vice Canada, Global TV, the Toronto Star and many others across the country. If you had opened the Globe and Mail mobile app on that day, it was likely the first article you saw.

On March 16th, 2016, just one day after publication, former Premier of British Columbia Christy Clark rose to the floor of the legislative chambers during question period and announced that her government would work alongside Green Party MLA Andrew Weaver on a new bill. This bill, now known as the Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act, would mark a monumental shift in how sexualized violence was to be handled on

public post-secondary institutions throughout the province; the legislation legally binds all public post-secondary institutions to create stand-alone sexualized violence policies.

No one expected Christy Clark to rise in the House in support of legislation that day; prior to March 16th, the Liberal government in BC had all but refused to take legislative action on the issue of campus sexualized violence. Differing accounts emerged as to why Clark supported such an unprecedented collaboration between mostly political rivals. Some said it was purely theatrics, an attempt to appeal to more left-leaning voters in advance of an election. Others called it opportunistic, an attempt to build rapport with the Green Party for the sake of future dealings. One reporter even told me I shouldn't hold my breath, because the bill would never make it past second reading. But a few months later, on May 19th 2016, the Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act was passed. Shortly after the passing of the Policy Act, Clark shared her own story of experiencing sexualized violence as a young woman, and how she connected to the stories of others survivors through her own personal experience, thus prompting her decision to support the legislation.

I share this story at the outset of my thesis because it embodies several central themes highlighted in the following pages; namely the transformative power of student-survivors and their stories, their role as subject-matter experts regarding campus sexualized violence, and their continued activism to challenge rape culture. I also share this story because it was a crucial moment in my own activism and research. Bearing witness to the stories of other survivors, and seeing the ways in which the Anti Violence Project cared for us, has led me to this current project. It is at these intersections of community, activism and storytelling that this thesis emerges.

Following the royal assent of the *Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* (known from hereon as the *Policy Act)* on May 19 2016, public-post-secondary institutions in British Columbia were given one-year to develop stand-alone sexualized violence policies.[1] The *Policy Act* stipulates that these new policies must be reviewed every three years, beginning in 2020.[2] However, the act fails to elaborate on how evaluation processes are to be conducted; legislative direction is limited to one broad statement that students shall be consulted during the evaluation.[3] As the story above highlights, the existence of on-campus sexualized violence policies in BC are the direct result of

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[1] Bill 23. (2016) *Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy act,* 5th Sess., 40th Legislature, Government of British Columbia
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.

courageous storytelling and tireless advocacy from student-survivors. With no guidelines
or frameworks however, it is unclear how institutions will make space for survivors'
stories to inform future policy directions. The inclusion of student-survivors into the
policy process is further complicated by corporatized institutional settings where
universities and colleges have often silenced survivors and failed to respond to sexualized
violence.[4] Student-survivors and their stories embody the most nuanced understandings
of campus rape culture, but their stories are also dangerous for institutions that wish to
maintain high performance ratings and pristine reputations. The impact of institutional
fixation on reputation is often an exacerbation of trauma experienced by survivors,
meaning that the inclusion of their voice into future policy directions must actively
consider the ways in which the institution itself is a perpetrator of harm, and the ways in
which that harm can be reduced.

Through the lived experiences and reflections of nine student-survivors of
sexualized violence from UVic, and five community-based service providers, this thesis
highlights the transformative potential of student-survivors, their stories, and the
communities that support them. I investigate the effect of corporate practices on
survivor's narratives, and consider how trauma-informed and community-based
approaches foster policy review processes that make space for the lived-experiences of
survivors and advocates.

Chapter One situates campus-sexualized violence as embedded in systemic rape
culture and highlights a longstanding history of inaction at the University of Victoria, and

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[4] Elizabeth Quinlan. "Institutional Betrayal and Sexual Violence in the Corporate University." In *Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses, and Strategies for Change*. (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017): 62

on Canadian campuses more generally. Through examples of advocacy and activism at UVic and other campuses, I highlight how student-survivors and those who support them consistently make up for institutional apathy towards rape culture and demand that sexualized violence be taken seriously. I further provide a succinct history of post-secondary sexualized violence legislation and the role of student-survivors in the establishment of stand-alone sexualized violence policy on campuses in BC, beginning in 2016.

Chapter Two outlines the trauma-informed, community-engaged, feminist and intersectional methodological approaches that ground this research. In acknowledging the traumatic effects associated with sexualized violence my methodology demands special attention on behalf of the researcher to increase safety, provide ongoing support, and care for participants. My thesis is therefore predicated on the creation of a research environment in which the re-traumatization of participants is actively mitigated. As my thesis will show, continued existence of rape culture both on and off the campus lends the utmost primacy of trauma-informed methods when conducting research with survivors of sexualized violence.

Chapter Three shares the lived experiences of student-survivors at UVic, demonstrating the innumerable challenges they face while navigating campus rape culture. Such examples serve to highlight a diverse range of consequences that student-survivors experience on the post-secondary campus, thus demonstrating the necessity of student-survivor voices in campus sexualized violence prevention and response. As highlighted in the story above, this testimony also outlines the transformative role that student survivors and advocates have played in demanding institutional and legislative

responses to campus rape culture. This chapter concludes with emphasis on how, amid many challenges, survivors and advocates continue to make space for each other's stories, to foster healing and to build solidarity.

Chapter Four exhibits the extent to which the stories and activism of student-survivors and advocates pose a threat to increasingly corporatized post-secondary institutions. In these corporate environments, notions of safety, support and community are bolstered to attract prospective students. Consequently, survivor's stories rupture dominant narratives of 'campus-life'. Rooted in survival and resilience, these stories are a reminder of institutional and structural failings of the university in prioritizing the safety and healing of their students, a phenomenon known as Institutional Betrayal.[5] To maintain a positive brand, institutions are often driven to silence survivor's stories, unless their reputation is actively on the line through media or relationships with consumers and investors. Student-survivors are therefore forced into vulnerable and high-risk methods of sharing story, most often through media, in order to negotiate institutional change. Once inside the walls of the institution, administrators rely on neoliberal management strategies to shape both the narrative of campus sexualized violence and the direction of policies. Resultantly, survivors and community-based organizations are pushed farther out of the 'professional apparatus' of campus sexualized violence prevention and response.

The aforementioned chapters culminate in an overwhelming affirmation that the stories of student-survivors and advocates are crucial to the creation and maintenance of effective institutional policies to address campus-sexualized violence. My thesis therefore concludes with the assertion that institutions themselves must learn from and give power

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[5] Ibid.

to the survivors and community-based organizations that already do the work of

challenging rape culture every day. Bringing together the voices of my participants, I

present a *Trauma Informed Consultation Guideline*. This guideline imagines what

community and trauma-informed frameworks could be prioritized in institutional settings

so that student-survivors and their stories can substantially inform future policy

directions.

I

Rape Culture and the Campus

*Every woman in my family is a survivor of sexualized violence… I was
a survivor before I was even born* – Zoe-Blue

Introduction

My thesis is rooted in the assertion that we currently live in a "rape culture", whereby

sexualized violence is both normalized and glorified, and that this culture extends to the

university campus. In foregrounding rape culture as real and prevalent, I remain attentive

to historical and ongoing systems of power and oppression that make possible sexualized

violence in our communities. The following section therefore outlines rape culture as it is

conceptually advanced throughout this thesis, and the permeation of rape culture on post-

secondary campuses in Canada.

The term 'rape culture' was originally coined by feminist scholar Susan

Brownmiller in her 1975 book *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape.*[6] Brownmiller

articulates rape culture as the "cultural normalization and acceptance of sexual assault";[7]

since 1975 however, many scholars have contributed to shifts in understanding and

definition of the term. Though Brownmiller's work is one of the most notable second-

wave feminist contributions to the study of sexualized violence, her work also

perpetuates harmful stereotypes that my thesis seeks to avoid. Now broadly critiqued,

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[6] Chloe Garcia and Ayesha Vemuri. "Theorizing "Rape Culture": How Law, Policy, and Education can
Support and End Sexual Violence." *Education & Law Journal* 27, no. 1 (2017): 9
[7] Ibid, 7.

Brownmiller's analysis of race in *Against Our Will* enshrines a problematic and inaccurate assumption of Black men as perpetrators of sexualized violence, predominantly sexualized violence against white women. Many critical feminist scholars have challenged these harmful mistruths, including Black activist and scholar Angela Davis, showing how Brownmiller's work entrenched racist stereotypes into the anti-rape movement.[8]

Less criticized in current sexualized violence literature is the extent to which Brownmiller's scholarship highlights *male* violence towards *women* as central to rape culture.[9] While my thesis accepts that men are most often perpetrators of sexualized violence, and that women disproportionately experience sexualized violence, I also firmly rejects the Violence Against Women (VAW) framework. The UN Declaration on Violence Against Women defines VAW as a "manifestation of unequal power relations between women and men and a mean by which inequality is obtained";[10] however, this generalization does not interrogate the intersections of oppression through which *disproportionate* rates of violence emerge. For example, historical and ongoing processes of colonialism continue to shape Indigenous women's experiences of violence as the state has sought to dispossess women of territories, roles, political agency and social decisions.[11] Systemic transantagonism results in disproportionate rates of sexualized and intimate partner violence experienced by trans people. And yet, the vast majority of literature discussing sexualized violence and rape culture continues to reify the myth that

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[8] Tanya Serisier. *Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics*. Secaucus (New York;: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 11.
[9] Ibid, 3.
[10] Amnesty International. Canadian Section. *Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada.* (Amnesty International Canada, Ottawa, Ont. 2004), 7.
[11] Serisier, *Speaking Out*, 8.

sexualized violence is perpetrated only against cis-women.

To remain grounded in a systemic analysis of how and why violence is perpetuated, my thesis draws on the important work of my research partner, the Anti Violence Project (AVP).[12] As the on-campus sexual assault centre at UVic, AVP defines rape culture as "the current dominant culture that normalizes and glorifies sexualized violence, creating a sense of entitlement to other people's physical, emotional, and sexual being without consent".[13] AVP's analysis of rape culture links to broader systems of control and violence such as "racism, colonialism, nationalism, and other systems of oppression."[14] My conceptualization of rape culture therefore understands that Black women, Indigenous women, women of colour, trans, two-spirit, gender-queer people, and people with disabilities all experience rape culture in disproportionate and distinct ways. Survivors from marginalized communities are not only "disproportionately targeted", but face systemic barriers within colonial systems of justice such as the law enforcement, court proceedings, and other institutional processes.[15] Historic and ongoing structural injustices compound rape culture, intimately tying it to "racist, neo-colonial and nationalist ideologies".[16]

Sarah Hunt stresses these connections to systemic oppression and rape culture noting that universities are colonial institutions built to uphold euro-centric structures of power and domination. She explains that "academic space is not neutral and colonial

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[12] The Anti Violence Project is the on-campus sexual assault centre at the University of Victoria. The group is funded by student-fees and provide free, confidential, peer-based support, education, prevention and response to sexualized violence. Our research partnership is discussed at length in the following chapter.
[13] Glossary." The Anti-Violence Project. Accessed April 05, 2020. https://www.antiviolenceproject.org/info/glossary/.
[14] Garcia and Vemuri. *Theorizing 'Rape Culture,* 9
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

violence in inequitably felt by Indigenous students."[17] Thus, my project understands rape culture and the perpetuation of sexualized violence as inherently connected to systemic violence and the ongoing ways in which the Canadian state and settler-society upholds colonialism. As signaled by Hunt, rape culture is experienced and perpetuated on the campus in many distinct ways. Public post-secondary institutions in Canada have long been known—for lack of a better term— as "hot spots" for sexualized violence. This is evidenced by high rates of violence, but also incidents of blatant misogyny, sexism, racism, and colonial violence.

Shifting away from the VAW framework also means challenging a narrative of violence that is deeply rooted in the notion of the gender binary, a colonial concept which conflates sex and asserts that there are only two genders: male and female. Instead, I draw on Leanne Simpson, who explains how the notion of two genders simply does not align with Anishinaabeg thought. In her community, gender has historically been considered a fluid concept, not constricted to two arbitrary categories.[18] The rigidity of the colonial gender binary produces roles and expectations that are defined by Euro-centric standards of being; thus, any deviation from the norm is irregular and bodies that reject this binary or operate outside of it are policed into colonial categories. It is through the policing of bodies into such categories that gender-based violence emerges. Such frameworks limit the data and knowledge made accessible around identities that deviate from the male/female dichotomy, simply because institutions do not collect "statistics

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[17] Sarah Hunt. "Decolonizing the Roots of Rape Culture: Reflections on Consent, Sexual Violence and University Campuses." Academia.edu - Share Research. (2016): 4 Accessed April 05, 2020
[18] Leanne Simpson. "Not Murdered, Not Missing: Rebelling Against Colonial Gender Violence." *www.leannesimpson.ca* (blog): para. 7. Accessed April 5, 2020

about violence against Indigenous Two Spirit, LGBTTQQIA[19] and gender non-conforming people".[20] [21]

As evidenced above, my thesis aims to stretch the concept of rape culture to include dependency upon continued systemic oppression. The interrogation of systemic violence as inalienable from rape culture demands that institutions such as universities and colleges turn inward and critically engage with their own structures. This conceptualization helps to unravel the structural roots of sexualized violence. Following this assertion, the proceeding chapters discuss at length the ways in which institutions themselves are spaces that perpetuate structural violence and rape culture. Having established my conceptual framework here, I turn now to a succinct history of rape culture and institutional inaction on the Canadian campus, with specific attention to the University of Victoria.

Rape Culture on the Canadian Campus: A History of Inaction

Perceptions of campus rape culture in Canada are often framed against the pervasiveness of sexualized violence on the American college campus. This is due in part to more expansive literature pertaining to the study of campus rape culture in the American context, and a longer history of both federal and state laws directly related to campus

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[19] Refers to folks who identify with the following: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Transexual, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual
[20] Ibid, para. 15.
[21] Native Women's Association of Canada. *What their Stories Tell Us: Research Findings from the Sisters in Spirit Initiative*. Ohsweken, Ont: Native Women's Association of Canada, 2010: 1

sexualized violence.[22] While is true that emergence of specific legislation mandating campus sexualized violence policies in Canada only began in 2016,[23] on-campus sexualized violence is an *emerging* phenomenon on Canadian campuses. Furthermore, rampant rape culture on Canadian campuses has not gone unbeknownst to post-secondary institutions themselves either. In 1993, DeKeseredy and Kelly released ground-breaking statistics through the Canadian National Survey, revealing that 28% of female post-secondary students had been sexually assaulted in the previous year.[24] In that same survey, 45.1% of female participants stated they had been sexually assaulted since leaving high school.[25]

In light of such disturbing statistics, Canadian scholars in the field of sexualized violence research began to consider the role of institutions in addressing and disciplining acts of sexualized violence on campus. Though sexualized violence is a criminal offense, post-secondary institutions are not bound to the same burden of proof found in criminal cases. The vast majority of sexualized violence cases are never reported to police, largely because survivors are not often believed by law enforcement, and this fear being shamed or blamed for their experiences.[26] While colleges and universities do not have the power to send anyone to jail, investigations are based on a balance of probabilities;

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[22] See: Aliza Lopes-Baker, Mathew McDonald, Jessica Schissler, and Victor Pirone. 2017. Canada and United States: Campus sexual assault law & policy comparative analysis. *Canada-United States Law Journal* 41 : 156.

[23] *Bill 132* in Ontario was introduced in October of 2015, following several months of stakeholder engagement. The *It's Never Okay* action plan preceded the legislation, and was released in March of 2015. *Bill 132* reached royal assent on March 8th 2016. Alternatively, in BC *Bill 23* was introduced on April 27th 2016, and reached royal assent on May 19th 2016.

[24] Walter S. DeKeseredy, "Measuring Sexual Abuse in Canadian University/College Dating Relationships," in *Researching Sexual Violence Against Women: Methodological and Personal Perspectives*. , ed. Martin D.Schwartz. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 15.

[25] Ibid.

[26] The majority of sexual assault cases are not reported to police with estimates of only 33 per 1000 cases reaching law enforcement; See: Government of Ontario "Its Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Violence and Harassment", 2015.

consequences are unique to the campus such as suspension, expulsion, and removal from classes or campus residence. Many academic *and* non-academic offenses have been regularly investigated on campus through policies that cover issues from plagiarism and destruction of property to physical assault.[27] As such, scholars offered numerous recommendations for how institutions might curb the prevalent issue of campus sexual assault. These recommendations included an array of policy directives, male peer-support initiatives, the creation of victims' advocates, and the development of educational campaigns.[28] Despite the calls to action of scholars and advocates however, the institutional recommendations went largely ignored by Canadian universities and colleges.

Like many other post-secondary institutions throughout the country therefore, the University of Victoria has a long history of institutional inaction regarding campus rape culture. Resultantly student-survivors have consistently made up for such inaction by balancing roles as students, survivors, advocates and frontline responders. Drawing on a history of advocacy and activism at UVic, the following section outlines historic failures of the university to respond to rape culture, and the crucial role that student-survivors and community groups have played in addressing sexualized violence on campus.

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[27] For example, see UVic's Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.
[28] Ibid, 137.

Student Advocacy: The Date Rape and Dating Violence Education Project

In 1991 a group of UVic students came together to confront the issue of campus rape culture and the university's lack of structures and supports for survivors. These students formed *The Date Rape and Dating Violence Education Project* (DRDV) becoming the only group on campus—student-led or otherwise—undertaking education and support programming related to on-campus sexualized violence. While developing services for those impacted by sexualized and intimate partner violence, they also played a broader advocacy role by lobbying the university on two main fronts: (1) the education of UVic students, staff and faculty on the issue of sexualized violence, and (2) the creation and coordination of resources for survivors of sexualized violence.[29]

The DRDV attempted to gain support for their programming from the institution for several years, but were repeatedly dismissed by the university. For example, in 1993 former coordinators Tina Walker and Brent Johnson wrote a letter to the editor of Maclean's magazine. Maclean's had recently reported on date rape and the handling of a case involving a professor in New Brunswick. Walker and Johnson responded to the article, highlighting their frustration at the lack of support they experienced from UVic administration:

> As a group of university students confronting the issue of date rape on an almost daily basis, we applaud your decision to report on the recent events that occurred at the University of New Brunswick ("Conflict on campus," Canada, Nov. 29). Date rape is a contemporary issue on all Canadian university campuses and to continue to debate its existence amounts to a waste of time and money. A true effort at eliminating campus sexual assault requires administrations to endorse binding institutional policies and to provide a structure that is capable of responding to incidents as they arise. Our own

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[29] Chris Schmidt and Janet Sheppard. *Sexual Aggression in Intimate Relationships Survey*. (The Date Rape and Dating Violence Education Project, 1995), 1.

efforts at implementing these measures at the University of Victoria have so far been met with a frustratingly high level of administrative apathy. The question that remains for us to pose is: what will it take?[30]

The concerns expressed by Walker and Johnson underscore the extent to which students—faced with campus rape culture and institutional inaction—take on roles as advocates, program developers and frontline responders. Based on their experiences with these roles, Walker and Johnson are uniquely positioned to provide feedback to the university on how to better support survivors and curb campus rape culture. And yet, as is expressed, their recommendations are met with a profound "administrative apathy".

In the same year the letter above was written, the DRDV submitted a proposal to the UVic administration for the implementation of a full-time sexual assault officer. The request sought space, funding, and administrative support for a campus-based sexual assault centre. The request was unsuccessful, leading the group to pursue funding through the University of Victoria Student's Society (UVSS) instead.[31] Notably, the UVSS is a student-run organization completely funded through student-fee levies established via referenda. This is to say that once again the continued existence of on-campus support for survivors of sexualized violence was made possible by student initiatives, not that of the institution. In January 1994 the UVSS allotted space in the Student Union Building (SUB) for a sexual assault centre and created a work-study position with the DRDV. Having rejected previous calls from the DRDV to develop a sexual assault officer or

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[30] Tina Walker and Brent Johnston. Letter. *MacLean's Magazine,* Dec. 27 1993. https://archive.macleans.ca/article/1993/12/27/letters
[31] "History." The Anti-Violence Project. Accessed April 05, 2020. https://www.antiviolenceproject.org/about/history/

advocate position, UVic instead created the position of the Personal Safety Officer under the department of Campus Security.[32]

While the DRDV was unsuccessful in accessing university resources for support workers, policies and dedicated services, they were able to secure some funding for on-campus research in 1994. With the support of the former Ministry of Women's Equality UVic contracted the DRDV to conduct a survey regarding sexual aggression and intimate partner violence at UVic. The survey aimed to increase awareness while providing "a tangible course of action to follow in creating, maintaining and coordinating resources to educate the UVic community, provide support to survivors and ultimately prevent this type of violence from occurring".[33] Noting that sexualized violence needed practical attention, rather than further preliminary research, the survey was meant to effect "change in awareness of the issue and the provision of resources for survivors".[34]

1100 questionnaires, based on several strata, including gender, faculty and year of study, were randomly sent out to students across the university. Of these 1100, the research team received a 27.8% response rate (306 participants). The survey confirmed high rates of violence on campus, estimating between 1 in 6, to 1 in 4 women experiencing sexualized violence on campus.[35] Data further revealed high rates of violence experienced in intimate partner relationships, thus challenging dominant conceptualizations that sexualized violence happens between

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Schmidt and Sheppard. *DRDV Survey*, 3.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid, 30.

strangers. Significantly, the survey showed a low uptake on university support services such as counselling, with many participants choosing not to access university services for fear they would be not be believed or supported.

When discussing the survey in UVic's independent student-run newspaper, DRDV project organizer Chris Schmidt said he believed there were "changes afoot in the administration"[36] at UVic. He further stated that the intention of the survey was to "determine if the needs of survivors [were] being met on campus", hoping that the results would "cause a reassessment of on-campus services". [37] Schmidt also noted that his opposition "to doing more research of this kind for its own sake", stressing that the data collected should be used to develop responses and services for those who experience sexualized violence on campus.[38] Accordingly, the DRDV analyzed the data and put forward three recommendations[39] to UVic:

> (1) The University of Victoria should take responsibility for educating students, faculty, and staff on the issue of sexualized violence and violence in intimate relationships. In order to do so the, the university must acknowledge the high prevalence of sexualized violence on campus, make a clear statement that sexualized violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the university community, inform the campus community about on and off-campus resources, and provide consistent education efforts.

> (2) The University of Victoria should refocus existing preventative efforts towards preventing violence from intimates, rather than focusing solely on violence perpetuated by strangers.

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[36] Jenny Manzer. "Survey Looks at Survivor Needs." (*The Martlet,* January 19, 1994), para. 7.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid, para. 13.
[39] Schmidt and Sheppard. *DRDV Survey*, 62.

(3) Existing programs and positions on campus are ill equipped to respond to the needs of survivors and therefore programs *specific* to addressing the problem of violence from intimates are necessary.

The University of Victoria did not undertake any aspect of the recommendations, and despite innumerable calls to action, no standalone institutional policies related to sexualized violence were developed until 2016. Put simply, for more than twenty years UVic ignored both students and statistics, failing to address persistent rape culture on campus and resulting in community and student-led organizations making up for this inaction. The DRDV therefore grew into a dedicated sexual assault support service on campus, known as the Open UVic Resource Sexual Assault Centre (OUR-SAC), remaining funded entirely by student fee-levies. The group built partnerships with other service providers in the Victoria area, and jointly developed a volunteer training program with the Victoria Women's Sexual Assault Centre (VWSAC). In 2004, the group changed their name to the Anti Violence Project (AVP), my current research partner.

Since 1996 the Anti Violence Project has run free, confidential, peer-based support sessions on campus. Data is collected annually based on the number of support sessions and the hours spent in each session:

Figure 1: Number and Duration of AVP Support Sessions 1996-2018
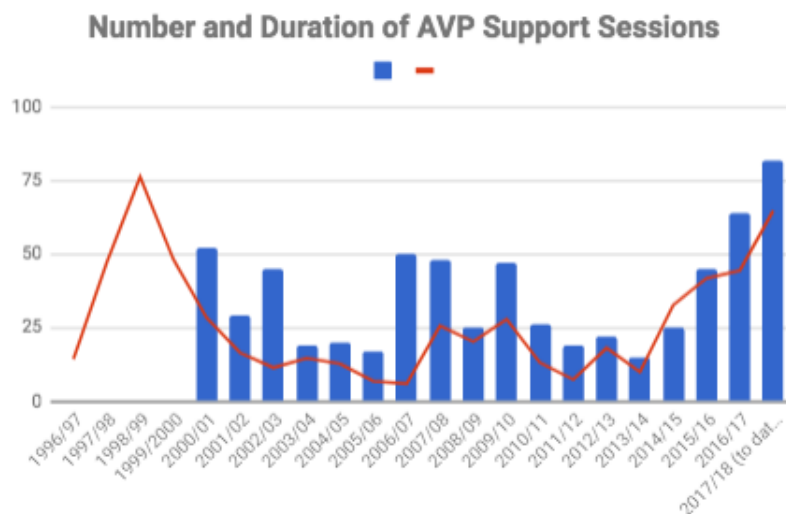
(Graph from the Anti Violence Project)

In their first year as a fee-levied group on campus, AVP ran 38 support sessions, and jumped to 94 sessions the following year. On average, they run 30 support sessions a year, though annual totals vary depending on staff and organizational capacity. As is noted in the graphs above, sessions have remained on a steady upward trend since 2013.

The story of the DRDV's —and eventually the Anti Violence Project's— advocacy on campus traces a history of inaction that shapes contemporary issues of campus rape culture at UVic today. While there undoubtedly challenges that are unique to UVic's campus, the overarching theme of prevalent violence and institutional inaction is one that is woven into the fabric of post-secondary institutions throughout North America.[40] The challenges highlighted by survivors and advocates at UVic are indicative of a struggle for support and justice that has often been silenced by institutions who fear the repercussions of having such issues on their campus publicly known.

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[40] DeKeseredy. *Measuring Sexual Abuse,* 1997, 49.

After more than two decades of advocacy and activism in favour of the creation of institutional policies to address sexualized violence on campus, some Canadian universities and colleges were finally compelled to act in 2016 with the emergence of binding provincial legislation noted in the Introduction. Nonetheless, the terrain of post-secondary sexualized violence legislation in Canada remains complex and uneven, with only four provinces mandating universities and colleges to create stand-alone sexualized violence policies: Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba and Quebec. Ontario was the first province to undertake the creation of binding legislation, with British Columbia following just two months after.[41] The proceeding section demonstrates the political shift toward binding legislation, the history of legislation in BC and outlines the role of student-survivors and advocates in creating an emerging post-secondary sexualized violence policy field.

Sexualized Violence on Campus: An Emerging Policy Field

Beginning in the mid-2010s, several highly publicized incidents began to shift public awareness regarding sexualized violence on campuses, workplaces and throughout the country. In March 2014, the entire University of Ottawa hockey team was suspended for promoting widespread rape culture and the involvement of several players in a sexual assault in Thunder Bay. In the fall of 2014, multiple charges were laid against former CBC broadcaster Jian Ghomeshi, sparking a nation-wide conversation on sexualized violence. Amid these incidents, activists and survivors shared stories of their personal

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[41] "Shared Perspectives: A Joint Publication on Campus Sexual Violence Prevention and Response," OUSA, 2018 May 08, 7. Accessed May 14, 2020, https://www.ousa.ca/misc_sharedperspectives_campus_sexualviolence

experiences through the #BeenRapedNeverReported twitter hashtag. In December of

2014, former Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne announced her government's

commitment to ending gender-based and sexualized violence. She referenced stories

being publically shared by survivors throughout the province, spurred by the Jian

Ghomeshi trial:

> This fall, a series of events have served to remind us of the progress we have not
> made — of the women we have not been able to protect from the experience of
> violence; of the crimes that still go unreported; of the persistent, underlying myths
> and biases that lead to sexual violence and harassment and then lead to the re-
> victimization of the brave few who do come forward.[42]

Wynne, known as both an "activist" and "feminist" Premier,[43] then announced the

creation of the *Select Standing Committee on Sexual Harassment.* This committee was

tasked with the development of recommendations to prevent sexualized violence and

harassment "and to improve the province's response system to these problems".[44] The

committee managed a comprehensive consultation plan, hearing from a range of sexual

assault survivors, advocates, frontline responders and educators. Following this

consultation plan, in March 2015 the Ontario government launched *It's Never Okay: An*

Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment.

The action plan included a $41 Million budget and several commitments, such as

the introduction of "legislation to enhance the civil claims process and address sexual

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[42] Kathleen Wynne. "Kathleen Wynne: We need a strong response to sexual violence." *The Star*, December 5, 2014. Accessed May 14, 2020. https://www.thestar.com/opinion/commentary/2014/12/05/kathleen_wynne_we_need_a_strong_response_to_sexual_violence.html

[43] For example see: Catherine Porter. "Kathleen Wynne's bold plan will change the lives of thousands of women in Ontario: Porter", *The Star,* March 6, 2015. Accessed July 2, 2020. https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2015/03/06/kathleen-wynnes-bold-plan-will-change-the-lives-of-thousands-of-women-in-ontario.html

[44] Ontario. Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment. *Final Report.* 1st Session, 41st Parliament, 2016. http://www.ontla.on.ca/committee-proceedings/committee-reports/files_html

violence and harassment in the workplace, on campuses, and in rental housing".[45] The

action plan outlines an entire section on "Safer Campuses" outlining sexualized violence

on campuses as a significant problem in its own right. In October 2015, *Bill 132* was

introduced, containing amendments to several acts, each case increasing attentiveness to

issues of unique importance to survivors: (1) Compensation for Victims of Crime Act, (2)

Limitations Act, (3) Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities Act, (4)

Occupational Health and Safety Act, (5) Private Career Colleges Act and, (6) Residential

Tenancy Act. *Bill 132* requires public *and* private colleges and universities to create and

maintain sexual violence policies. These policies must set out institutional processes for

prevention, education, support and response to sexualized violence and mandates the

collection data on the usage of support services, awareness programing, number of

incidents on campus, and the implementation and efficacy of the policy itself.

Conversely, in April 2015, the BC Liberal government released *A Vision for a*

Violence Free BC: Addressing Violence Against Women in British Columbia. The

strategy focused predominantly on redirecting civil forfeiture grants for programming

related to violence against women.[46] Through $3 Million dollars in grants related to

sexualized violence, the BC government claimed that the strategy would provide a

blueprint for "changing the way violence against women is viewed, addressed and

approached".[47] *Vision for Violence Free BC* highlighted domestic and intimate partner

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[45] Government of Ontario "Its Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Violence and Harassment", 2015. Accessed May 2020. http://docs.files.ontario.ca/documents/4136/mi-2003-svhap-report-en-for-tagging-final-2-up-s.pdf

[46] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", Unpublished Honours Thesis (University of Victoria. 2018), 32.

[47] British Columbia. Ministry of Justice, British Columbia. Ministry of Children and Family Development, British Columbia, Legal Services Society of British Columbia, British Columbia. Victim Services and Crime Prevention Division, and British Columbia. Premier. 2015. *A vision for a violence free BC: Addressing violence against women in British Columbia*. Victoria, B.C.: British Columbia.

violence, but failed to mention universities, students or campuses. Unlike the commitments made through the provincial action plan in Ontario, the former Minister of Advanced Education Andrew Wilkinson at the time claimed there was no intention to create specific legislation like that in Ontario, opting instead for generic guidelines and best practices on how universities might address sexualized violence on campus.[48]

In the fall of 2015, several highly publicized assaults on campuses such as UVic, University of British Columbia (UBC) and Thompson Rivers University (TRU) resulted in increased media attention throughout the province. Student-survivors shared stories of being silenced by their institutions—discussed at detail later in my thesis—and the systemic failures committed by institutions when responding to cases. In response, on March 8th 2016, Green Party MLA Andrew Weaver tabled a private members bill called *M205: Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Policies Act*. The bill drew explicitly on Ontario's *Bill 132*. Though there was initially no uptake from government on *Bill M205,* pressure mounted from media and advocates, urging the provincial government to act (discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two). This pressure culminated during question period on March 16th 2016 when former Premier Christy Clark was set to be asked by the opposition whether or not her government was prepared to support Andrew Weaver's private members bill. No one in the chambers, press gallery or elsewhere expected her to stand up during question period that day and support the bill. The former Premier herself

[48] Global News. "Critics call for policy review following UBC sex assault complaints." Global News. November 24, 2015. Accessed July 14, 2020. https://globalnews.ca/news/2357771/critics-call-for-policy-review-following-ubc-sex-assault-complaints/

described her feelings and reasoning for taking action regarding on-campus sexualized

violence in an open letter:[49]

> Governments almost never consider Bills introduced by the Opposition. There are a
> lot of reasons for that - some good, some not so good - but it's a long, unfortunate
> tradition in Canada's notoriously partisan parliaments. In BC, we broke from that
> tradition. Earlier this spring, the Greens introduced a Bill that would set clear
> guidelines for sexual assault and misconduct at all public post-secondary
> institutions in BC. I happened to be reading it during Question Period when I was
> surprised with a question about whether or not we would pass it. As I got up to
> answer, I decided that our government would pass the opposition legislation. I
> knew it was the right thing to do. Why? It's about changing the environment in
> which post-secondary students spend most of their time, and providing more
> supports for victims of sexual assaults and sexual violence on college and
> university campuses. It speaks to the large number of women and men who stay
> silent about their experiences. As I sat in my chair on the floor of the legislature, it
> struck me: I knew all too well why women stay silent. For over 35 years, I've been
> one of them.

Clark goes on to explain how she herself has experienced sexualized violence,

further stating that:

> Shame is painful. It's also pervasive and isolating, but the capacity to survive and
> heal is achievable through the sharing of our experiences. Let's build a community
> where women and men who have dealt with sexual violence can feel safe and
> comfortable talking about it. Let's build strength in numbers. Let's help the
> institutions where we work, go to school and live our everyday lives, understand the
> breadth of this problem. Let's get to work on addressing it. You know what bothers
> me the most about what happened to 13 year old me? Not knowing if the man who
> pulled me into the bushes kept going until he caught a girl who couldn't get away. I
> wish I'd had the courage to say something then. I do now.

As the quotes above highlight, former Premier Clark was deeply moved by the stories of

survivors circulating throughout the province and country at the time that Weaver's bill

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[49] CBC. "B.C. Premier Christy Clark reveals personal story behind support for campus sex assault bill".
CBC, June 9, 2016. Accessed July 14, 2020. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/christy-
clark-sexual-assault-1.3623936

was tabled. Amid demands from survivors, advocates and student organizations, Clark connected to the issue of on campus sexualized violence prevention as a survivor herself.

Due to the government's previous assertions not to interfere with the affairs of post-secondary institutions, Clark's support for the bill was unforeseen—and unprecedented. In March of 2016 however, the BC Liberals were in the middle of their last Spring legislative session before an election year; they were facing mounting and targeted pressure from survivors and student groups such as the BC Federation of Students and the Alliance of BC Students who were actively lobbying members of all sides of the House to take action; several high-profile cases of campus sexualized violence were beginning to tarnish not only the image of post-secondary institutions, but the 'BC brand' as well. And, in the early stages of a re-emergence of the #MeToo movement, they had a leader who was personally impacted by the experience of rape culture and sexualized violence. Student-survivors and advocates cultivated this political context, creating a policy window whereby the problem at hand (on-campus sexualized violence) was met with both a viable solution (the creation of binding legislation) and a political climate that was positive for change.[50]

Unlike the process in Ontario (whereby the *Select Standing Committee on Sexual Harassment* conducted in person consultation hearings throughout the province including frontline workers, survivors and advocates), *Bill 23* was pushed rapidly through the legislature, resulting in the vast majority of the process happening behind closed doors. On May 19 2016, *Bill 23: Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* reached royal

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[50] Guldbrandsson et al. "An Exploration of the Theoretical Concepts Policy Windows and Policy Entrepreneurs at the Swedish Public Health Arena." *Health Promotion International* 24, no. 4 (2009): 435

assent, making BC the second province in Canada with legislation mandating all publicly funded post-secondary institutions in the province create sexualized violence policies.[51] These policies were to be created and implemented no later than one year from royal assent.[52] Specific mandates under the legislation requires post-secondary institutions to develop sexual misconduct policies which:

> (a) Address prevention and responses to sexualized violence;
> (b) Set out procedures for complaints and reports brought forward by students;
> (c) Require the university to review the policy every 3 years; and
> (d) Consults with students in the development and review of the policy.[53]

While the passing of *Bill 23* was a welcomed development for many student-survivors, unlike the collaborative legislative process in Ontario, the formation of *Bill 23* happened with limited stakeholder engagement. Survivor's stories primed a political landscape that launched the BC provincial government into action. Student-survivors were imperative in bringing issues of sexualized violence on campus to the forefront of political discussion during this time. Nonetheless, their involvement in the direction and formation of legislation was notably limited. Though Andrew Weaver initiated conversations[54] with the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, the Anti Violence Project and survivors during the creation of his Private Member's Bill, stakeholder consultation was not prioritized in the creation of *Bill 23*. As the *Policy Act* reached royal assent less than one month after it was

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[51] Vancouver Sun. "B.C. Now Requires Universities to Have Sexual Assault Policies." May 22, 2016. Accessed April 06, 2018. http://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/b-c-now-requires-universities-to-have-sexual-assault-policies.
[52] Bill 23. *Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy act,* 5th Sess., 40th Legislature, 2016. Government of British Columbia
[53] Ibid.
[54] "Bill 23: Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act." Andrew Weaver, MLA. April 27, 2016. Accessed April 05, 2018. http://www.andrewweavermla.ca/2016/04/27/bill-23-sexual-violence-misconduct-policy-act/

tabled, there was little time for consultation at all. Student-survivors and advocates concerned over this lack of consultation urged the Province not to "water-down" the legislation that was originally submitted by Andrew Weaver, explaining that anything less than what was originally proposed in the private member's bill would be inadequate.[55]

A review of legislative debates surrounding *Bill 23* also reveals scepticism from NDP MLAs who worried that the process was being rushed forward and lacked meaningful public engagement from key stakeholders.[56] Citing the Ontario action plan, former Advanced Education Opposition Critic Kathy Corrigan challenged the process leading up to the creation of Bill, stating that Ontario's legislation had included "a lot of preparatory work and a $41 million action plan that's based on 'the advice and input from diverse communities.'"[57] In the Ontario case, strategic priorities, language and provisions were developed through the *Select Committee on Sexual Violence and Harassment,* resulting in broad reaching legislation, and a province wide action plan for addressing sexual violence across sectors, including:

- A multimedia awareness campaign.
- Training for front-line workers in the health care, justice and tourism industries who may be the first point of contact in assault or harassment complaints.
- Increased funding for sexual assault crisis centres.
- Confronting misogynist culture beginning in early education, with the new sexual education curriculum.
- Free legal advice to sexual assault survivors.

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[55] Laura Kane. "B.C. to work on passing campus sex assault bill", Global News, March 16, 2016. Accessed July 14, 2020. https://globalnews.ca/news/2583081/b-c-to-work-on-passing-campus-sex-assault-bill/
[56] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic" (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria., 2018), 41-42.
[57] British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, *Hansard*, 40th Leg, 5 Sess, (18 May 2016) at 13259.

- Changes to legislation to move more quickly with assault and harassment complaints.[58]

Even so, several of the provisions in Weaver's private member bill were missing from that which was brought forward by the provincial government. Notably, private institutions are not subject to the *Policy Act*, institutions are not legally compelled to report data publically or to the government, and the language throughout the legislation focuses on 'sexual misconduct' rather than sexualized violence. *Bill 23* was not coupled with any streamlined resources for the implementation of policies across the province, and had no broad consultative plan. Unlike the collaborative process employed in Ontario, BC's *Post-Secondary Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act* was only minimally informed by community and is therefore narrow in scope.

In order to complete the timeframe mandates outlined in *Bill 23,* the University of Victoria (like many other institutions) created a "Working Group on Sexualized Violence Programs and Policy Development" (SVP Working Group). The SVP Working Group undertook "broad consultations and extensive research in order to recommend" a campus wide policy, prevention and support strategies to the Board of Governors.[59] Membership of the committee included 21 representatives from various sectors throughout the university. Student representation on the committee was limited to 4 participants, comprising of the Director of Student Affairs from the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS), the Chair of the Graduate Students' Society, a representative from the

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[58] CBC. "Kathleen Wynne vows to end sexual violence, harassment in Ontario". CBC, March 6, 2015. Accessed July 14, 2020. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/kathleen-wynne-vows-to-end-sexual-violence-harassment-in-ontario-1.2984313

[59] University of Victoria. "Working Group on Sexualized Violence Programs and Policy Development." University of Victoria. Accessed November 30, 2017.https://www.uvic.ca/info/sexualizedviolencepolicy/about/group/index.php.

Anti-Violence Project and a representative from a survivor-run student group called the

Sexualized Violence Task Force (discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three).[60] The

Working Group conducted over 100 in person consultations with various stakeholders

over the course of the yearlong policy development process.[61] The SVP Working Group

then presented the *Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy* (SVPR) in spring

2017 outlining procedures for support, disclosure and reporting, as well as investigation,

adjudication and appeals.

Now, four years after the implementation of the *Policy Act* across the province,

sexualized violence policies on public campuses in BC are up for review. This review

period marks one of the first mandated opportunities for survivors and advocates to

provide feedback on policies, considering that legislation is not currently being reviewed

or re-opened. Governed by the *Policy Act* however, post-secondary institutions are given

little direction on what consultation with students should look like, and there are no

specific guidelines available:

> A post-secondary institution must consult with students and with prescribed persons
> or prescribed classes of persons, if any, when the post-secondary institution:
>> a) establishes its first sexual misconduct policy under section 2, and
>> b) reviews its sexual misconduct policy under section 3 (1).[62]

At the time of writing the Ministry of Advanced Education has not prescribed persons or

classes of persons who must be included in the policy review. Despite the consistent role

of both student-survivors and advocates in demanding action from institutions in

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[60] Ibid.
[61] University of Victoria, "Working Group on Sexualized Violence Programs and Policy Development: Interim Report and Preliminary Recommendations", *University of Victoria* 2016: 15
[62] Bill 23. (2016) *Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy act,* 5th Sess., 40th Legislature, Government of British Columbia

transforming campus rape culture, there is no assurance of their inclusion in the evaluation and future direction of policy. UVic has recently announced their review process for the SVPR, but has thus far excluded representation from community groups such as the Anti Violence Project, and has not detailed any broad consultation plan for students and survivors, investigated further in Chapter Four.

The pervasiveness of rape culture on Canadian campuses is neither a new or undocumented phenomenon. Consistently, student-survivors and those who support them have created space for survivors to heal, to advocate for themselves and to demand change from institutions that have failed them. The same frustrations that led Walker and Johnson to write their letter to Mclean's or to create the Anti Violence Project, have driven student-survivors in more recent years to demand institutional policies and supports as well. Advocacy and resistance has always run parallel to institutional failures, cover ups, silence and at times, blatant mishandling of sexualized violence on campus. Provincial and institutional response to this advocacy has left in its wake the complicated and rutted terrain upon which campus sexualized violence policies now exist in Canada. In British Columbia, there is no clear way forward to ensure that the voices of the survivors who have and continue to navigate campus rape culture, can be included into these processes in ways that feel safe, that centre their needs and that make space for their stories. It is against this backdrop of campus rape culture, an emerging policy field, and the stories of student-survivors that the following chapters are written.

Conclusion

Having established rape culture as a conceptual frame, and having outlined a longstanding history of inaction regarding rape culture at the University of Victoria, it follows that special considerations must be made in order to research the issue of sexualized violence on campus. By asserting that rape culture is both harmful and pervasive, distinct efforts to reduce harm are integral to research of this nature. Furthermore, in seeking to operationalize story as a method for building better structures and responses to sexualized violence on-campus, I contend that researchers must also meaningfully consider how to take care of the stories shared. In an effort to mitigate harm and make space for the stories of those who have and continue to survive campus rape culture, the following chapter will discuss what I call a *trauma-informed research design:* a combination of methods and frontline practices that I have developed alongside the Anti Violence Project to engage participants throughout my thesis.

II

Trauma-Informed Research Design

Whenever I think of survivor-centred I think of trauma-informed. Like, in a very practical sense, not re-doing the harm that's already been done. Someone who has survived sexualized violence has had choices taken away from them, they have been forced into precarity, they've been forced into pain and shame…You recognize not only that what happened specifically in the instance of sexualized violence is not the fault of the person who experienced it, but also the fall out financially, emotionally, academically. That is the responsibility of a bureaucratic system to take seriously. –Cory

Introduction

As the Introduction has outlined, student-survivors are the primary combatants of rape culture on campus, and often act as a crucial source of care and support of other survivors on campus. Accordingly, the stories of student-survivors and community frontline responders provide significant nuance to the topic of campus sexualized violence and how to create services and responses to support survivors. However, few studies have actively situated student-survivors as subject matter experts and agents of social change regarding campus rape culture.[63] Rather, much empirical evidence related to campus sexualized violence establishes students as either survivors, perpetrators or bystanders.[64] These empirical studies tend to decontextualize sexualized violence from the systemic nature of rape culture, erasing important details about the reasons why sexualized

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[63] Krause, Kathleen H., Stephanie S. Miedema, Rebecca Woofter, and Kathryn M. Yount. 2017. Feminist research with student activists: Enhancing campus sexual assault research. *Family Relations* 66 (1): 214. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/fare.12239/abstract,
[64] Ibid, 221.

violence happens and how it may impact survivors.[65] Resultantly, the field of sexualized violence research has rarely investigated the role of student-survivors and those who support them in transforming campus rape culture through advocacy and activism.

Alternatively, my thesis understands student-survivors and those who support them as both experts and change agents in transforming campus rape culture. This understanding is rooted in decades of trauma and psychology research establishing the long-lasting effects on the health and well-being of survivors of sexualized violence.[66] Neurobiologists have determined that experiences of sexualized violence launch body and brain responses that constitute a threat to a person's survival.[67] These responses flood "the body with stress hormones that functionally impair the brain's prefrontal cortex and its deliberative, decision making processes".[68] In the time after experiencing sexualized violence, survivors may notice increased psychological distress including "fear, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, bipolar conditions, disordered eating, obsessive-compulsive conditions, substance use, and suicidality".[69] Though every survivor's story is different, the trauma of sexualized violence can be devastating, often resulting in long-term physical, social and mental impacts.[70]

In the pursuit of developing a qualitative research design that centres survivors and their stories, I consider research practices that actively reduce harm and address the

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[65] Susan K. Hippensteele, "Activist Research and Social Narratives," in *Researching Sexual Violence Against Women: Methodological and Personal Perspectives*. , ed. Martin D.Schwartz. (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997), 90.

[66] Elizabeth Quinlan et al.*Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses, and Strategies for Change*. (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017), 4.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid, 5.

[70] Heather L. McCauley et al., "Advancing Theory, Methods, and Dissemination in Sexual Violence Research to Build a More Equitable Future: An Intersectional, Community-Engaged Approach." *Violence Against Women* 25, no. 16 (2019): 1.

needs of participants. I take seriously the traumatic impacts associated with sexualized

violence and rape culture by employing what is commonly known in service provision as

'trauma-informed practices'. Trauma-informed practices are "those that *realize* the

impact of trauma and potential paths for recovery, *recognize* the signs and symptoms of

trauma, *respond* by integrating knowledge about trauma into approaches, and *resist*

retraumatization."[71] Guiding principles of trauma-informed practice include an emphasis

on choice for survivors, promoting agency and sense of control.[72] In recognition of the

impact that trauma may have throughout a survivor's life, trauma-informed practice calls

on service providers to treat survivors as "equal partners in their care" and to work to

mitigate potential harm.[73] The movement towards trauma-informed practice has

contributed to the proliferation of sexualized violence support services that centre the

wellbeing and safety of survivors in many service sectors.[74] For many grassroots anti-

sexualized violence organizations such as the Anti Violence Project, trauma-informed

approaches are embedded into both organizational culture and the support services

provided.[75]

My thesis therefore considers the ways in which a trauma-informed approach to

research, as opposed to solely service provision, can work to mitigate harm, increase

safety, and create opportunities for empowerment when conducting research with

survivors of sexualized violence.[76] Employing principles of trauma-informed practice are

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[71] Rebecca Campbell et al., "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Sexual Violence Research Ethics and Open Science." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 34, no. 23-24 (2019): 4767.

[72] Ibid, 4768.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid, 4767.

[75] Heather L. McCauley et al., "Advancing Theory, Methods, and Dissemination in Sexual Violence Research to Build a More Equitable Future: An Intersectional, Community-Engaged Approach." *Violence Against Women* 25, no. 16 (2019): 14.

[76] Campbell et al, "A Trauma-Informed Approach", 4767.

essential in conducting research with survivors of sexualized violence because many survivors have experienced further harm from service providers, or institutional settings whereby the story of their experience is not taken seriously, is mishandled or met with blame.[77] Prior research also indicates that trauma-focused studies with survivors of sexual assault frequently result in participants feeling distressed or upset, and in some cases regretting their participation in the overall process. My thesis therefore operationalizes a mixed methods approach combining, community-engaged, feminist and intersectional approaches, with trauma-informed practice and storytelling. As a survivor, advocate and researcher myself, I strive to answer the call from both community and other academics in this field who envision a future of sexualized violence research that actively works to mitigate harm. The following section outlines my trauma-informed research design including the approaches, methods and analytical tools employed with the express purpose of caring for both the participants in my study and the stories I have been privileged to bear witness to.

Approaches: Community-Engaged, Feminist and Intersectional

Survivors and service providers have called upon researchers to consider community-engaged, feminist, and intersectional approaches as integral to the future study of sexualized violence.[78] This call is largely due to an abundance of existing literature predominantly focused on the pursuit of empirical data that informs an "identity-neutral approach".[79] Thus, applying research methodologies that make space for understanding

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[77] Ibid, 4768.
[78] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 1-26.
[79] Ibid, 7.

power and identity is part of a broader methodological shift that is desired by scholars and advocates in the field. This shift is made urgent by either stagnant, or worse, increasing rates of sexualized violence, demanding a reconceptualization of the methods and theories through which sexualized violence research is conducted.[80]

Community-engaged research in the area of sexualized violence provides space for those on the ground to become partners on projects that directly impact their work. Such organizations are best equipped to ensure the appropriateness and relevance of responses to sexualized violence, as this is precisely the work these organizations do every day.[81] When research creates space for those already doing the work to drive forward emerging concepts and theories, voice is given to the "priorities and strengths" entrenched within community praxis.[82] Through these partnerships, the complexities of survivorship, healing and institutional barriers can more readily be navigated and interrogated throughout the research process. The unique connections that service providers already have within community results in intimate knowledge of the "lack of adequate and appropriate services for underserved, marginalized, and culturally specific populations".[83] Thus they are, alongside survivors themselves, best equipped to identify "the cultural appropriateness of responses to both victimization and perpetration".[84] Service providers and the communities that grow within and around them are the spaces where survivors already are, where many have sought out and found comfort.

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[80] Ibid, 1.
[81] Jacquelyn W .White et al. "Envisioning Future Directions: Conversations with Leaders in Domestic and Sexual Assault Advocacy, Policy, Service, and Research." *Violence Against Women* 25, no. 1 (2019): 114.
[82] Ibid, 109.
[83] Ibid, 118.
[84] Ibid, 114.

My research is therefore in partnership with the Anti Violence Project (AVP), the on-campus sexual assault centre at UVic. AVP has been a partner on this project since its inception nearly four years ago, and staff were influential in shaping how this research has been conducted. This partnership has included everything from approval of initial research proposals to consultation on overall research design. I have presented research progress and provided updates on data collection to AVP staff. This process has given space for the organization to contribute feedback and suggestions on how the research itself is conducted. In the pursuit of implementing a Trauma-Informed Research Design, AVP graciously provided access to their on-campus support room, as well as staff and volunteers who were available for participants during and after interviews. This support has also been extended to myself in recognition of the potential emotional drain I might experience in conducting interviews as a survivor. Our partnership has continually carved out space for "innovative and transformative approaches" to my research, helping to sustain and "grow a vibrant anti-violence movement, rooted in the community and built with community voice".[85]

In addition to a community-engaged approach, my thesis is grounded within a feminist and intersectional methodological approach. I draw on feminist approaches to challenge myself as a researcher to analyze and acknowledge interactions of power, gender, and opportunities for social transformation throughout my research.[86] Specifically, my research project applies two central tenants of feminist methodological approach: (1) collaborating with participants and; (2) understanding research as a tool for

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[85] Ibid, 123.
[86] Kathleen H. Krause, et al., "Feminist research with student activists", 213.

social change.[87] Parallel to these central tenants, my project undertakes distinct ethical

considerations to ensure that the "dynamics of power in knowledge production are deeply

interrogated throughout the research process",[88] by employing an intersectional approach.

Intersectionality requires researchers to communities in their "fullness.",[89] and to

understand that communities do not exist solely on the axis of one form of oppression;

rather, they are the culmination of all identities and positionalities within them.[90]

The use of this approach is engaged in recognition that that a perfect

intersectional method cannot be achieved. Instead, my project draws on the notion of

intersectionality as a "travelling concept", one that can take on various shapes and forms

based on the context in which it is invoked. Intersectionality offers an opportunity for

research to interrogate the interplay "between structures and institutions at the macro-

level, and identities and lived lives at the micro-level."[91] By striving towards a method of

intersectionality that emerges through my own experiences, and the experiences of my

participants, the work produced can more readily interrogate how power, privilege and

identity are at play throughout this work. This project therefore echoes Rita Dhamoon's

assertions that using intersectionality as a "paradigm of analysis" can lead to useful

critiques of power that fundamentally disrupt relations of "privilege and penalty".[92] These

disruptions can open alternative ways of imagining social relations and subjectivities.

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[87] Ibid.

[88] Natalie Clark et al. "Ethical Dilemmas in Community-Based Research: Working with Vulnerable Youth in Rural Communities." *Journal of Academic Ethics* 8, no. 4 (2010): 243

[89] Clark et al. Ethical Dilemmas in Community-Based Research, 243.

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ann-Dorte Christensen and Sune Qvotrup Jensen. "Doing Intersectional Analysis: Methodological Implications for Qualitative Research." *NORA : Nordic Journal of Women's Studies* 20, no. 2 (2012): 110. doi:10.1080?08038740.2012.673505

[92] Rita Kaur Dhamoon. "Considerations on Mainstreaming Intersectionality." *Political Research Quarterly* 64, no. 1 (2010;2011;): 241

This potential for disruption and transformation is what "gives intersectional-type work its radical potential",[93] and is precisely why I seek to engage an intersectional approach in this study.

The approaches outlined above culminate in an analysis that considers the intertwining ways in which identity, power and social location impact experiences of privilege and marginalization. In the context of research with survivors of sexualized violence, my approach demands attentiveness to the "nuance and context of an individual's existence", and contemplates places where the needs and experiences of survivors are similar, and where they diverge.[94] History has repeatedly shown that it is on the backs of survivors – many of whom are BIPOC[95] women and the LGBTQ2 community—that major changes in dominant culture toward sexualized violence happen.[96] Perhaps the most recent testament to this is the re-emergence of the #MeToo movement. #MeToo has created waves through social and popular media, as well as within communities of survivors and those who support them. This movement was founded by Tarana Burke –a Black activist, survivor and frontline support worker—as a means to create space for survivors to share their stories and know that they weren't alone.[97] However, the initial re-emergence of the #MeToo movement in 2017 was predominantly attributed to affluent white women, namely Hollywood actors. This example highlights a recurring attribution of survivorship to "ideal" or "perfect" survivors, most often depicted or understood as innocent white women.

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[93] Ibid, 241.
[94] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 8.
[95] Black, Indigenous, People of Colour
[96] Ibid.
[97] Elizabeth Wagmeister. "Tarana Burke." *Variety* 339, no. 13 (2018): 54-55.

Disregard for intersections of identities and multiple axes of oppression has resulted in most sexualized violence research, response and prevention strategies being "best suited for White, middle-class, heterosexual, cisgender women".[98] The field of inquiry regarding sexualized violence is impacted by Eurocentric notions of how and why violence happens, contributing to a broader culture whereby violence against more marginalized bodies is normalized. Thus, my commitment to community-engaged, feminist and intersectional research throughout this project is with the intention of rejecting recreation of such harmful mistruths, while also contributing to an emerging body of anti-sexualized violence literature that is rooted in lived-experience and systemic analysis.

Methods from the Frontline: Trauma-Informed Interviews:[99]

The application of the approaches outlined in this chapter also demands interrogation how academic research is embedded in hierarchies, privilege and power dynamics. In order to be attentive to this reality, my research seeks to reduce harm and create opportunity for survivors and advocates to be cared for through trauma-informed practice. As noted earlier, trauma-informed practice is guided by an understanding of the impact sexualized violence can have on a survivor's life.[100] Thus in a research context, the implementation of trauma-informed practice must also understand how violence

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[98] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 7.

[99] Portions of the following sections are adapted from previous undergraduate Honours research conducted by author: Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", Unpublished Honours Thesis (University of Victoria. 2018), 15-25.

[100] Denise E Elliott, Paula Bjelajac, Roger D. Fallot, Laurie S. Markoff, and Beth Glover Reed. "Trauma-informed or trauma-denied: Principles and Implementation of trauma-informed Services for Women." *Journal of Community Psychology* 33, no. 4 (2005): 432

impacts those participating in research. My methods of data collection therefore strive to reduce harm, create opportunities for healing, and avoid re-traumatization.

Prior research indicates that trauma-focused studies with survivors of sexual assault often result in participants feeling distressed or upset, and in some cases regretting their participation in the overall process.[101] Although my thesis is not a formal investigation into past experiences of sexualized violence, and interview questions did not call upon survivors explicitly to recount their experiences of sexualized violence, the subject matter could still be triggering or lead to a disclosure of violence during an interview. While interviews are considered an effective method for engaging in feminist, intersectional and community-engaged analysis, I paid special attention to the setting of space, my role as a researcher and the autonomy of the interviewee over their own story.

Lightly-Structured Interviews: Making Space for Storytelling

My research design followed a lightly-structured interview model whereby ample space and time was given for participants to share "life-story narratives".[102] Participants were given time to build their own narratives as they connected to their unique identities and positionalities through interview testimony.[103] All participants were given an opportunity to self-locate in their own words at the beginning of each interview. Rather than providing a set of clear introduction questions, through self-location power is transferred back to the participants to create their own road map of identity. Interviews were

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[101] Nielsen et al. *Causing Harm When Trying Help,* 412.
[102] Christensen and Jensen. "Doing Intersectional Analysis", 114.
[103] Ibid.

conducted in a lightly structured narrative interview design, focusing on "the elicitation and provocation of storytelling."[104] This design involves minimal intervention on my part as the researcher focusing instead on actively listening to participant's narration of their own stories. Considering and analyzing these 'life-story narratives' centres the lived experiences of participants as valuable aspects of sexualized violence research.

Physical setting was essential to conducting interviews while striving toward trauma-informed spaces that were safer and more comfortable for participants.[105] Trauma-informed spaces should offer a welcoming environment including "sufficient space for comfort and privacy"[106] and an "absence of exposure to violent or sexual material."[107] Such spaces should include appropriate staffing of trained individuals who can monitor the setting and assist in creating a sense of safety, confidentiality and support. Accordingly, most interviews took place in the AVP support room, a confidential space equipped with tea, couches, colouring books, snacks, blankets and other resources. In some instances, participants requested an alternate space in which case they were provided with a list of on and off campus resources and access to AVP's phone-support services. Interviews taking place at AVP were accompanied by a dedicated AVP support-staff or volunteer. To ensure confidentiality, support people were located in the AVP main offices down the hall in a separate room and were available for the duration of the interview and a short time afterward to ensure that participants could

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[104] Tom Wengraf, *Qualitative Research Interviewing: Biographic Narrative and Semi-Structured Methods*. (London: Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE, 2001), 2.

[105] Denise E Elliott, Paula Bjelajac, Roger D. Fallot, Laurie S. Markoff, and Beth Glover Reed. "Trauma-informed or trauma-denied: Principles and Implementation of trauma-informed Services for Women." *Journal of Community Psychology* 33, no. 4 (2005): 467

[106] Ibid.

[107] Ibid.

access an alternate support person other than myself.[108] The implementation of these

trauma-informed practices were essential in fostering a research context in which student-

survivors and service-providers could share their stories and be supported throughout the

process.

The story-telling centred in this research design has long-since been embedded

into the anti-sexualized violence movement. There exists a standing tradition of women

and marginalized groups "organizing by sharing stories and experiences of violence and

discrimination".[109] Breaking the silence on sexualized violence has fostered solidarity

amongst survivors, often building common ground through a shared understanding of

trauma. Storytelling has also been integral in rewriting dominant scripts that reinforce

notions of victim-blaming and normalize violence. Survivor's stories contribute to an

alternative history that conveys relationships between sexualized violence, gender and

power.[110] Through sharing their stories, survivors have illuminated the "transformative

political potential of experiential storytelling",[111] and that can be tool for social change[112].

Storytelling however, is not immune to structural violence and inequity; this is to

say that not all stories are weighted with the same transformative political power in

institutional settings. For example, second wave feminists often locate the emergence of

"women speaking politically about rape" to radical feminists in the 1970s, disregarding

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[108] I am also trained in the AVP support model and have been both a staff and volunteer support worker since 2017.

[109] Lena Wånggren, "Our Stories Matter: Storytelling and Social Justice in the Hollaback! Movement." (*Gender and Education: 'if Not Now, when?': Feminism, Activism and Social Movements in the European South and Beyond* 28, no. 3 2016): 402.

[110] Tanya Serisier, "Speaking Out Against Rape: Feminist Stories and Anti-Rape Politics." (*Lilith (Fitzroy, Vic.)* 16, 2007): 93.

[111] Serisier. *Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics*, 4.

[112] Sherene Razack. "Story-Telling for Social Change." *Gender and Education* 5, no. 1 (1993): 55-70.

the fact that Black women had been speaking "publicly and politically about rape from the time of slavery".[113] Furthermore, dominant narratives or "genres" of sexualized violence storytelling centre violence against predominantly white cisgender women. The interpretation of *some* women's stories, namely those of white, cisgender and able-bodied women, have dominated the field of sexualized violence inquiry. This is what Sherene Razack calls 'established-knowledge', meaning knowledge that privileges certain voices and stories while others are pushed to the margins of our collective understanding of how and why sexualized violence happens. Story highlighting voices beyond that which has been deemed dominant can contribute to the formulation of counter-narratives that dismantle these "majoritarian stories'.[114] The collection of voices present in my thesis therefore contribute to a growing body of literature that builds understanding of a widespread issue of rape culture at the distinct intersections of the survivors who actually experience it.

Storytelling also demands distinct accountability on behalf of the researcher; that is, questioning the production of knowledge, being a teller and a listener, and finding ways to take story "out of the realm of abstraction and into political action".[115] Story requires the researcher to listen closely to and learn from the "experiences of others, past and present'.[116] In the context of my current research, I aim to remain accountable to survivors and advocates by listening, seeking social change and caring for story. I also note that creating space for story also has the radical potential for survivors to create

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[113] Serisier. *Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics*, 9.
[114] Wånggren, "Our Stories Matter", 404.
[115] Sherene Razack. "Story-Telling for Social Change." *Gender and Education* 5, no. 1 (1993): 55-70.
[116] Wånggren, "Our Stories Matter", 411.

more spaces where they are supported and believed,[117] and in which survivors may fulfil a desire to speak their truth.[118]

Participant Selection

The initial participant group for this research was identified during my undergraduate Honours thesis, involving interviews with nine self-identified UVic student-survivors. These participants were predominantly recruited based on involvement in a peer-based survivor support and advocacy group called the Sexualized Violence Task Force, and/or the Anti Violence Project. Other participants not involved in these two groups were identified by me as being involved in sexualized violence advocacy at UVic over a five year span between 2013-2017. My initial research illuminated the crucial role that service providers such as sexual assault centres and advocacy groups also play in anti-sexualized violence activism and support for survivors. Accordingly, as my research developed into a Master's thesis, I expanded my participant group to explicitly include service providers. Beginning in October 2020, I recruited five service providers from various programs on Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories ('Victoria'), through both personal connections and the Anti Violence Project. Two of these participants had previously interviewed for my initial research as student-survivors, and one additional student-survivor, approached me personally to become a participant. The following is therefore a compilation of the self-locations shared with me during interviews with student-survivors and service providers:

> *Cory* is a queer, Trans person who is from a northern rural place. They identify as someone with a disability related to domestic and sexualized

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[117] Ibid, 407.
[118] Wånggren, "Our Stories Matter", 402.

violence. They have been involved in advocacy since they were high school, working for a non-profit that teaches about sexual health and healthy relationships. They were a founding member of UVic's Sexualized Violence Task Force, sat on the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Working Group Committee and are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree at UVic.

Quinn is a gender-queer, non-binary, settler, Jewish person, who identifies as living below the poverty line. They are an immigrant from the United States with no biological family in Canada. Their advocacy work began during their time at UVic, after attending a solidarity event put on by AVP. They sat on the Sexualized Violence prevention and Response Working Group Committee and were a founding member of the Sexualized Violence Task Force at UVic and UVic alumni. Quinn originally interviewed for my thesis as a student-survivor in 2017. In 2019 I interviewed them again in their current role at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre, where they work with more marginalized survivors and build programming and curriculum to share different experiences and knowledge with other service providers.

Zoe-Blue is a queer black woman from Toronto. She has been involved in advocacy work through the UVic Student's Society, and was outspoken on issues related to the lack of sexualized violence policy at the university and throughout the province. She shared her story publicly and was interviewed by several national and international news stations in regards to the

mishandling of sexualized violence investigations at UVic. She is a student at UVic.

Alex is UVic alumni who identifies as a cisgender, straight white woman. She is a poet and has used her poetry as a venue to speak about the trauma of sexualized violence. She defines her advocacy primarily through resistance and solidarity in her community and through being an ally to her many friends who have also experienced sexualized violence**.**

Jesse identifies as a settler, cisgender female. She is a former employee of Residence Services at UVic and describes much of her advocacy through speaking out against power and silencing within her work context. She shared her story of being silenced by UVic when handling issues of sexualized violence involving Residence. Her story was shared through the Canadian Press and made headlines throughout the country.

monte is the former Education Coordinator at the Anti Violence Project and UVic alumni. They identify as a gender-queer human and a white-settler who lived on the territories of the Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ people between 2010 and 2018. At AVP they ran consent and support workshops for students, staff and community. Education drives much of their advocacy they do frontline support work with survivors, as well as informal support as someone who is recognized as working within the anti-violence community.

Sarah is a UVic alumni who identifies as a cis-woman and a settler who has been living on Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories for the past nine years. Her advocacy is shaped by experiences volunteering in community and on campus during high school, and she has been very involved in youth engagement and supporting youth programs. She has also been involved in advocacy work in Victoria around low-wage workers. She completed the Anti Violence Project Volunteer Training Program and facilitates consent workshops on campus and to youth in the greater community. Sarah originally interviewed for my thesis as a student-survivor in 2017. In 2019 I interviewed her again in her former role at the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre where she was the Prevention Coordinator. Sarah coordinated VSAC's school-based program "Project Respect" focusing on discussing gender, sexuality, gender-based violence and consent with high-school students.

Clara is a mixed-raced, queer woman, alumni of UVic. As a student she was a Community Leader and because of her identity, was in the minority amongst her co-workers. Much of her advocacy at UVic was in response to incidences of sexualized violence on campus. She assisted in founding a group of Residence Community Leaders who would support each other and address sexualized violence within UVic Residence. She shared her story of being silenced by the institution and this was shared throughout the country on several media platforms.

Lynn is a PhD candidate at UVic and identifies as a cisgender woman of Chinese descent from Singapore. Lynn locates herself as someone who is targeted for sexualized violence based on her physical appearance and as someone who is racialized in distinct ways as an Asian woman. Lynn has navigated formal and informal structures of the institution as a survivor of sexualized violence and a graduate student. She is involved in the national feminist movement in Singapore through her work with the Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE), which is Singapore's leading gender-equality advocacy group.

Nathan is a gay cisgender man who identifies as an Indigenous person of colour who is able-bodied. He works for the advocacy group UVic Pride, and much of his work involves building support for gender and sexual diversity. In this role Nathan has supported several survivors who were queer and racialized in accessing services and resources both on and off campus.

Participant This participant is a fourth year student at UVic who uses she/her pronouns and has grown up on unceded Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories. She became involved with sexual health education in her mid-teens and has worked as both a volunteer and summer student at Island Sexual Health. She is employed by UVic to deliver Bringing in the Bystander programming through the Office of Student Life and is an auxiliary facilitator for Project Respect. She recently completed the Anti

Violence Project's training program and volunteers as a support worker and workshop facilitator.

Niko uses they/them pronouns and identifies as a white-settler who grew up and lives on Lekwungen and W̱SÁNEĆ territories. They have also done a lot of learning on the lands of the T'Sou-ke, Scia'new and Pacheedaht Nations. They work for the Victoria Sexual Assault Centre in the Prevention and Education branch. Prior to their position they had been a casual educator with Project Respect. Niko is also a volunteer at the Anti Violence Project and a former member of Project Respect's Youth Social Action Team.

Ongoing Consent and Data Analysis

In caring for the stories shared by the participants introduced above, I have prioritized informed and ongoing consent. Based on the principle that consent is not a contract, participants could change their minds regarding involvement in my research at any time. While ongoing consent is enshrined in the UVic Human Ethics standard, it also reflects community-built understandings of consent more generally, such as those developed by the Anti Violence Project. AVP comes from a fundamental belief that consent can be revoked at any time and as such, must be approached as an ongoing process. Accordingly, transcripts of interview content were sent back to all participants for their final review, edits and redactions. Student-survivors who originally interviewed for my undergraduate research were contacted again and asked for the use of their transcript in my Master's research and were once again given time to change anything in the transcript. Once participants confirmed that they were

comfortable with the content of their transcripts, I analyzed the data and scanned for key themes and recurring ideas.

Initial data from the first nine participants was analyzed between fall 2017 and spring 2018 for the completion of my undergraduate Honours thesis. The four central themes discussed in my previous research were: (1) The Role of Student Advocacy in the Creation of Policy; (2) Community-Based Definitions of the terms: "Survivor-Centred" and "Intersectional" Approaches; (3) Institutional Accountability and the Bureaucracy; and (4) Impact and Healing. Building on previous research and in conducting further interviews with survivors and advocates, this current thesis builds upon the Role of Student Advocacy and Impact and Healing, while analyzing two further themes (2) Institutional Betrayal and the Corporate Campus, and (3) Creating Space for Survivor Stories in Policy Evaluation and Development.

Once such themes were identified, I placed relevant interview quotes into appropriate theme categories and engaged in discourse and frame analysis. When grounded in a feminist and intersectional methodology, discourse analysis allows researchers to reflect on the ways in which "language constructs both meaning and power relations."[119] Such analysis "explores how meanings are produced through language and categorization" and challenges the researcher to question whose discourses are the loudest, and to amplify the voices of those traditionally silenced.[120] Frames can bring concepts together to reveal relationships underscored by power dynamics within institutionalized settings, and is therefore an effective method in drawing out meaning

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[119] Brooke Ackerly and Jacqui True. *Doing Feminist Research in Political and Social Science*. Basingstoke; New York;: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010., 212
[120] Ibid.

associated social problems, or policies.[121] Finally, frame analysis has the capacity to make visible the interactions between advocacy communities and institutions, in this case student-survivors, service providers and the University of Victoria.[122]

A Note on Emotion and Sexualized Violence Research:

As I have worked on this research over the past three years, I have come to understand the importance of naming, embracing and investigating my own emotion in this work. Although I am consistently honoured to learn from (and be a part of) advocacy and activism related to sexualized violence, my own proximity to this kind of violence as a survivor is constantly present throughout this work. As a researcher I remain in the space of healing and surviving sexualized violence, something I have come to understand as inseparable from my own practice in academia. As someone who has experienced the trauma of sexualized violence, I am uniquely attached to the realization of trauma-informed principles in my work, as I understand personally the impact of spaces and conversations that fail to care for survivors.

I therefore echo the sentiments of advocate-researcher Susan K. Hippensteele who states that her role as an advocate "does not allow me to position myself as a naive observer when conducting research."[123] Rather, I am consistently motivated by a collective anger, sadness and hope regarding sexualized violence prevention and response both on the campus and beyond. These emotions are not limiting; rather, they culminate

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[121] Ibid.
[122] Ibid.
[123] Hippensteele, "Activist Research and Social Narratives," 90.

in a profound sense of responsibility to care for participants and their stories while centring those who sustain the movement to dismantle rape culture every day.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined a mixed-methods approach to conducting research with survivors of sexualized violence and those who support them. The intention of a trauma-informed research design is to actively work to mitigate harm, to centre the needs of the participants throughout this study, and to build a research project that is rooted in community. My methodology bolsters the opportunity to analyze the transformative potential of survivor's stories, and highlights the implications on behalf myself as a researcher in studying story.

Knowledge production has a history of exploitation; however, I contend that researchers can strive toward methodologies that do not recreate harmful power dynamics or exploit survivors for their evidence or their narratives. Amongst the methods discussed throughout this chapter, I aimed to centre care and reciprocity. The Anti Violence Project has been influential in my understanding on the importance of recognizing the resilience and resistance work of survivors and advocates in our community. One way that the Anti Violence Project practices this reciprocity and recognition is through gift giving. As such, all survivors and support staff who participated in my research were gifted care-based products (locally made bath-bombs, soaps, candles, nail polish, mugs and tea), along with a personalized card from myself thanking them for their participation.

Finally, this research design was also guided by an understanding that the most common reason a survivor agrees to participate in face-to-face research about sexualized

violence is to help other survivors.[124] This is to say, survivors often participate in research to break silence, to let other survivors know that they are not alone, and to contribute to a body of literature that will hopefully assist in creating the world they want to live in: one that is free of harm. It is with this reality in mind that the following research was conducted, with the intention of creating space for story, advocacy, safety and transformation. Based on the testimony shared throughout the interview process, I move now to an analysis of the particular ways student-survivors are impacted by campus rape culture, and the communities they grow and sustain in order to survive it.

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[124] Rebecca Campbell and Adrienne E. Adams. "Why do Rape Survivors Volunteer for Face-to-Face Interviews?: A Meta-Study of Victims' Reasons for and Concerns about Research Participation." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24, no. 3 (2009): 399.

III

Surviving Campus Rape Culture

My experiences and many of the experiences that I have heard of other survivors specifically in regard to UVic, is that in some way or another they were made to feel quite alone and isolated…So it was important for there to be something alongside AVP to basically say look you are not alone, at the very least. And this is another avenue that you can take for your healing journey. –Quinn

Introduction

The application of the trauma-informed research design outlined in the previous chapter makes space for the stories of student-survivors to be brought to the forefront of my analysis of rape culture. Through the stories of participants, the following chapter highlights distinct ways in which student-survivors are impacted by sexualized violence and considers the role they play in creating change on campus. This chapter further demonstrates the innumerable ways that survivors and those who support them have built communities, sought safety and continued to survive under campus rape culture. The storytelling that follows allows for thematic similarities to be drawn, while also affirming that no one survivor's experience is the same.

The narratives shared throughout this chapter both humanize student-survivors and enrich understandings of campus rape culture. Sometimes, the stories involve disclosure of sexualized violence, or provide insight to how the university has failed student-survivors. Other times participants simply outline the real-life implications of sexualized violence. Taken in sum, this chapter demonstrates how survivors' stories provide the most comprehensive understandings of sexualized violence on campus,

nuances that would be eclipsed by purely statistical data. These stories are rich with lessons about sexualized violence prevention and response and thus essential to the evaluation and future implementation of policy.

Sexualized Violence and the Student-Survivor

As highlighted in the preceding chapter, there exists a large body of literature outlining the potential traumatic impacts experienced by survivors of sexualized violence. Less examined however, are the particular ways in which *student*-survivors are impacted.[125] Despite the longstanding history of rape culture on campuses, there is little information interrogating the effects of sexualized violence as it intersects with campus life. In what ways do the ramifications on health and well-being noted in Chapter One influence educational and learning outcomes of student-survivors?[126] Preliminary Canadian research indicates that student survivors experience negative learning outcomes in the days, months, or years after an experience of sexualized violence.[127] In particular, student-survivors may note a decline in academic performance, decreased sense of safety on campus, isolation and uncertainty about their future careers.[128]

Student-survivors shared details with me about the real-life impacts they experience on campus. These personal narratives breathe life into established statistical data which asserts that sexualized violence happens at exponentially high rates, and that

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[125] Lana Stermac, Sarah Horowitz and Sheena Bance "Sexual Coercion on Campus" in *Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses and Strategies for Change* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017), 28.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid
[128] Ibid, 32-33.

there are serious impacts on a survivor's health and well-being.[129] Many student-survivors outline struggles to achieve academic goals or maintain previous academic accomplishments. For example, several student-survivors note a lower grade point average (GPA) in the time after experiencing sexualized violence, or as a direct result of traumatic responses to sexualized violence.[130] These drops in GPA can have major consequences, sometimes resulting in the removal of students from classes all together. For instance, Cory shared with me their struggles to navigate the experience of sexual assault and continue their education prior to the implementation of a sexualized violence policy at UVic:

> I deferred a lot of my classes, and then in the following semester I had planned to do them, and to take more classes, but was unable to do that...so I returned home. But then I was sexually assaulted and basically was unable to do anything other than police interviews and focusing on like, trying not to die. So that meant that I actually received a letter in June that I had been conditionally suspended from taking classes because my GPA was 0, and in order to reverse that decision I needed to appeal it with the university and needed to provide proof of that.[131]

Cory outlines how their experience of sexual assault directly interfered with their capacity to complete course work, resulting in a massive drop in GPA. In the process of attempting to navigate trauma from multiple assaults, Cory was also dealing with an open police file. Distinct to the experience of being a student-survivor, they are faced with negative impacts on their course work completion, GPA, and ultimately whether they could even return to school.

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[129] Chelsey Lee and Jennifer S. Wong. "A Safe Place to Learn? Examining Sexual Assault Policies at Canadian Public Universities." *Studies in Higher Education* 44, no. 3 (2019): 432.

[130] Stermac et al. "Sexual Coercion on Campus", 32.

[131] Cory. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.

Similarly, Quinn tells me about attempting to drop a course after an experience of sexualized violence from another UVic student. Once again with no standalone policies in place at the time, Quinn was asked by the university to receive a letter of support from their professor in order to be accommodated in dropping the course. Quinn therefore had to re-tell their story to the professor so that they could, as Quinn states, "meet some kind of requirement".[132] At the same time Quinn was making a difficult decision to step back from a class, they were also obligated to share their experience in order to access particular accommodations, a process that can be uniquely painful in the aftermath of an assault.

Decisions to drop courses or seek accommodations also exist amid potential financial strain. Courses dropped after the course drop date are non-refundable unless a student completes the institutional paperwork necessary.[133] Such requests have to be processed by the institution and deemed adequate in order for funds to be returned to the student. Requests for academic concession also involve letters of support from "professionals" such as medical doctors, therapists or counselors. These challenges exist within the context of ever-increasing expenses associated with post-secondary education. Many student-survivors who I spoke with were unable to complete courses, continue work or access affordable housing. Resultantly for these survivors, the impacts of sexualized violence are compounded by financial instability.

Academic challenges faced by survivors vary based on whether or not a student is an undergraduate, graduate or doctoral candidate. Lynn for example, is a PhD student.

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[132] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.
[133] University of Victoria Office of the Registrar, *Request for Academic Concession.* Accessed July 15, 2020. https://www.uvic.ca/registrar/students/appeals/acad-concession/index.php#rac

She told me about choices she had to make when deciding whether to report an incident of sexualized violence that took place in her department:

> I had to launch a formal complaint with the, I don't know like, the central [Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Office]. That whole thing was just…I couldn't really afford the cost of resistance so to speak, because, like I was doing my comps [PhD Comprehensive Examinations] and there was a huge…a lot of other things and I'm not sure if there were actually many people who were aware of the situation and that kind of thing. So in the end I just decided that a private solution would be the best way.[134]

As a PhD student, Lynn took into consideration the potential negative impacts of launching a formal process amid high intensity comprehensive exams, which are critical to her future success as a Doctoral candidate. Graduate students often occupy several different roles at once on campus; while they are students and researchers, they are likely also teaching and research assistants, or sessional instructors. They may be working below several different supervisors at one time and are also often tied to post-secondary institutions to a greater degree than undergraduate students.[135] This is because their degrees take longer, are dependent on the support and funding of the school itself, and demand extensive personal and laborious investment.[136] Lynn made the ultimate decision not to report her experience officially to the office of Equity and Human Rights Office,[137] which currently manages campus prevention and response to sexualized violence. Though Lynn was able to seek some informal and private solutions through her

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[134] Lynn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2019.

[135] Aynsley Pescitelli, "Understanding Sexual Violence: A Graduate Student's Perspective", *Simon Fraser University*, March 14, 2018. Accessed July 15 2020. http://www.sfu.ca/olc/blog/graduate-students/understanding-sexual-violence-graduate-students-perspective

[136] Ibid.

[137] The Equity and Human Rights Office functions as a branch of the university, and provides "education, information, assistance and advice in aid of building and supporting an inclusive campus". The office is tasked with several policy areas including: sexualized violence, discrimination and harassment, and equity and inclusion (for more information see: https://www.uvic.ca/equity/)

department, substantive measures could only be placed upon the person who caused harm through a formal complaint process.

Lynn's department remains limited in the action they can take to restrict the access of a person who has caused harm to the office, or to ensure that Lynn does not have to take classes or seminars with this person. Though Lynn explains that several members of the department in positions of authority have been very helpful in developing informal solutions and supporting her, the department is restricted in what they can accomplish in the absence of a formal report to the EQHR office. In this sense, Lynn identifies the current conditions of formal reporting as an added barrier for survivors who are seeking solutions within their departments without additional investigations from another university office. The policy acts as what Lynn describes as a "double-bind" whereby the necessity of formal policy comes at the cost of an additional institutional hurdle survivors must go through. As Lynn posits, if those with authority within the department, such as Chairs, Grad Advisors, and supervisors, were given the autonomy to navigate solutions within the department, this could diminish some of the institutional barriers that actually deterred her from reporting in the first place.

As Lynn and others highlight, survivors who have experienced sexualized violence from someone in the campus community may be faced with difficult and potentially dangerous situations when attending a class, living in a residence, or simply moving through university spaces. [138] Zoe-Blue shared with me how the person who assaulted her was an employee of the university; the outcome of her complaint was such that the person who caused harm was fired, but still allowed full mobility and access to

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[138] Stermac et al. "Sexual Coercion on Campus, 32-33.

campus and residence. As she explains, this resulted in Zoe-Blue "having to be on

campus and live beside [her] assailant for months on end with nothing being done about

it".[139] Zoe-Blue's story shows how the experience of sexualized violence in the post-

secondary environment can tangibly restrict the mobility of student-survivors on campus.

Thus, student-survivors, amid navigating course work and everyday academic

challenges associated with post-secondary endeavours, are actively faced with decisions

about where they can work, study, go to class or participate in social activities. Student-

survivors may reduce social interactions as a result of anxiety, low-mood and an

increased focus on doing whatever they need to do to survive.[140] Quinn once again

explains:

> I was sexually assaulted while at the University of Victoria when I was 20...it had
> been such a traumatic experience, uhm, I didn't really know what to do. Basically, I
> felt very very lost, and I felt very alone. And that feeling of feeling alone really got
> cemented in my head after that experience because when I went to UVic counselling
> services and I, the first time I ever tried to access services there, uhm, I got in to see
> a counsellor and kind of explained what had happened and that I didn't know what to
> do. And her advice was to have me go home to Los Angeles and potentially take a
> semester off my studies….All I could think of at that time was "wait a second, why
> should I be punished for being assaulted? Why shouldn't the person who has caused
> me harm, why shouldn't they leave?"...So yeah, I isolated myself for a while, I felt
> quite alone.[141]

Quinn indicates how feelings of isolation are exacerbated by institutional inaction and

victim-blaming narratives that put the onus of healing and even course completion onto

survivors themselves. Though these institutional failures are grappled with more

thoroughly in the proceeding chapter, they are nonetheless pertinent to understanding the

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[139] Zoe-Blue, Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 14, 2017.
[140] Stermac et al. "Sexual Coercion on Campus, 33.
[141] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.

difficult choices student-survivors may face with when navigating their own academic learning outcomes.

The experience of sexualized violence can also permeate spaces where violence did not necessarily take place. This is to say, that just because an incident of sexualized violence does not occur within the scope of the campus community, does not mean that survivors will not be impacted in their studies. Alex for example, explains how sexualized violence has a far-reaching impact on her day-to-day life:

> For me, my assault isn't a singular event, its every time a male looks at me too long, its being you know, stopped on the street and not let past and being asked for my number, it's men calling cars over to get out and talk to me, it's the co-worker that followed me to the bathroom and forced himself [sic: on me]. These are just every day.[142]

Alex illustrates a significant point that being a survivor of sexualized violence can fundamentally shift how survivors engage and think about the world around us. She broadens dominant conceptualizations of sexualized violence which tend to portray overt physical violence and assault, and in doing so, shows how these "every day" acts or experiences can have a significant impact of a survivor's wellbeing and sense of safety. When conceptualizations of sexualized violence are limited to narrow definitions, or understood in terms of a hierarchy, survivors can be pushed further to the margins of their communities and left feeling as though the services that do exist do not account for their experiences. The reflection that Alex shared highlights how sexualized violence that happens outside the campus community is, and should be considered, part of the student-survivor's experience as well.

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[142] Alex. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 25, 2017.

This being said, throughout the interview process, survivors often discussed the importance of understanding the experience of being a survivor as one that is not monolithic. As previously stated, the ways in which sexualized violence is entangled in other forms of structural oppression results in rape culture being inequitably felt by students who exist at the intersections of other marginalized identities. Zoe-Blue highlights this by describing the 'disproportionate harm' that a previous lack of policy at UVic has had for BIPOC[143] students:

> Not having standalone policies has had such an impact on people, a disproportionate impact on women on campuses and has had a disproportionate impact on women of colour and Indigenous people and has stopped us from being able to receive our education and having had the experience of being assaulted on campus going out into the world, and still holding on to that trauma of being shut out of an institution and therefore not allowing us to trust any sort of institution that we go into after that.[144]

Here Zoe-Blue demonstrates how institutional failure to adequately prevent and respond to sexualized violence have impacts that extend beyond the experience of being student. Many students feel the impacts of systemic racism and ongoing colonial violence on post-secondary campuses, and as Zoe-Blue highlights, are pushed out of these institutions and left with residual traumatic impacts and mistrust of institutions both within and outside the campus.

Students may also come to campus already bearing the weight of failures from other institutions that impact their capacity to engage with policies and services. As Bourassa et al. explain, assimilative state and institutional tactics are disproportionately felt by Indigenous women and two-spirit people, manifesting in

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[143] Black, Indigenous, People of Colour
[144] Zoe-Blue, Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 14, 2017.

profound distrust of institutions for many Indigenous student-survivors. If the government can break promises made through the legal mechanisms of the settler-state, why would a colonial institution such as the University of Victoria be any different? Jesse addresses this nuance stating that:

> If a student is Indigenous but can't find someone from their nation [to support them] like…Indigenous nations are really broad and really diverse and you can't just lump them all into the same melting pot. It doesn't work like that. And I think despite the best efforts of policy makers to make this [policy] as diverse and nuanced and intersectional as it can be, you know it still has a long way to go to effectively be a useful tool for all the individuals who experience this sort of harm… Because yes that policy is a result of massive and difficult advocacy that survivors did, and yes there were survivors who were involved in the development of that policy but at the same time it's still policy in an institution that is still causing harm that is still colonial.[145]

As Jesse alludes, for some students, keeping themselves safe might mean rejecting the formal structures of the institution, and choosing not to report or disclose. Even with the development of a stand-alone sexualized violence policy, access to campus services remains limited if student-survivors do not see their lived-experiences and communities reflected in both the structures and people tasked with implementing campus responses.

My intention in sharing the stories above is not to contribute to a voyeuristic discourse whereby survivors are expected to share their deepest and darkest moments for academic consumption and dissemination. Rather, I believe that these stories provide valuable nuance to a web of implications faced by student-survivors of sexualized violence. The development and evaluation of sexualized violence policy requires mapping these details so as to better understand the diverse responses necessary to

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[145] Jesse. Interview by Author, Audio Recording. Victoria, October 27, 2017.

actually support survivors on campus. The stories shared here are an unambiguous reminder that every survivor is different, and "what they need, from whom, and when" is in constant flux.[146]

Sexualized violence cuts across temporal and spatial landscapes and may emerge in different ways depending on a variety of factors. I therefore understand the stories shared throughout my project as emerging from a localized context, but contributing broadly to a historic and ongoing project to dismantle rape culture.[147] The stories shared here provide valuable insights that apply to other institutions throughout the province and country. These stories assist in deepening understandings of on-campus sexualized violence, provide a glimpse into the networks of support and safety that survivors build for themselves, and challenge institutions to consider their role in dismantling cultures of violence within campus communities.

Though the previous section has outlined the ways in which story provides important information about the unique challenges that student-survivors face, my thesis has also shown how these stories have not been sought out or heard by the institutions in which they are experienced. Though Chapter Three will elaborate in greater detail as to why institutions have selectively chosen to "hear" certain stories, the following section demonstrates the advocacy and activism that demanded public witnessing of survivor's experiences when both institutions and government were choosing to ignore them. As will be shown below, when space for story was not made readily available to them, student-survivors carved out those spaces for themselves.

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[146] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 3.
[147] Ibid, 405.

Stories as Advocacy[148]

In September of 2015, several men attacked a UVic student in a wooded area on

campus.[149] Two months later, six women came forward at UBC accusing the institution

of failing to adequately handle their complaints against another student on campus.[150]

Two students took their complaints to the BC Human Rights Tribunal, challenging the

"school's broken and dysfunctional system for reporting and processing alleged

cases of sexual assault and harassment."[151] One student said that the reporting process

at the university was more traumatizing than the incident of assault she experienced.[152] In

January of 2016, two international students attending UVic were assaulted by a stranger

in their home near the university.[153] Shortly after, in February of 2016, another story

broke at the University of Victoria in which four women between the ages of 19 and 20

came forward with allegations one male student.[154]

These are just a few of the highly publicized stories from student-survivors in BC

that gave rise to a growing provincial dialogue about on-campus sexualized violence in

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[148] Portions of the following section are adapted from previous undergraduate Honours research conducted by author: Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic" (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria. 2018), 33-41.

[149] CBC News. "Male student arrested in connection with alleged sexual assaults at UVic." CBC news. March 01, 2016. Accessed November 30, 2017. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/uvic-sexual-assaults-campus-1.3470192.

[150] Global News. "Critics call for policy review following UBC sex assault complaints." Global News. November 24, 2015. Accessed November 30, 2017. https://globalnews.ca/news/2357771/critics-call-for-policy-review-following-ubc-sex-assault-complaints.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid.

[153] CBC News. "Male student arrested in connection with alleged sexual assaults at UVic." CBC news. March 01, 2016. Accessed November 30, 2017. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/uvic-sexual-assaults-campus-1.3470192.

[154] CBC News. "Male student arrested in connection with alleged sexual assaults at UVic." CBC news. March 01, 2016. Accessed November 30, 2017. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/uvic-sexual-assaults-campus-1.3470192.

the province. Amid tragic and recurring violence,[155] student-survivors and advocates urged the provincial government to develop legislation that would legally bind universities and colleges to create sexualized violence policies.[156] Despite these calls for action, on March 2 2016, the former Minister of Advanced Education Andrew Wilkinson, claimed that the province was developing "best practices" for a uniform approach to addressing sexualized violence, but would not discuss formal legislation.[157] Though there were no legislative or legal barriers compelling institutions *not* to create their own sexualized violence policies, UVic and other institutions continued to sidestep the creation of stand-alone policies. This lack of action on the side of government and institutions themselves, compelled student-survivors and their supporters to demand attention outside of the formal institutional structures of both government and the academy. On International Women's Day 2016, student-survivors saran-wrapped and spray-painted a sign at the busiest entrance to UVic's campus. The sign read "2016, NO SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY? SHAME. #ANDREWWILKINSON.[158]

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[155] This is not to say that advocacy was not happening prior to these months; rather, my research has indicated that within these particular months many of the student-survivors who I spoke with were involved in advocacy. This was coupled with increased media attention and survivors sharing their stories in the media. Furthermore, it is important to remain cognizant of the fact that the majority of sexualized violence is not reported, and therefore never makes the news.

[156] Ibid.

[157] Laura Kane "University of Victoria silencing sexual assault victims, students say." The Globe and Mail. March 24, 2017. Accessed November 30, 2017.

[158] CTV News. "Shame: Activists hijack UVic sign over lack of assault policy." Vancouver Island. March 02, 2016. Accessed November 30, 2017. https://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/shame-activists-hijack-uvic-sign-over-lack-of-sex-assault-policy-1.2808934

Figure 2: Image of Sexualized Violence Protest at UVic

Source: "The Martlet" Accessed April 5, 2018, http://www.martlet.ca/protests-continue-as-mla-tables-sexual-assault-bill/

Other banners and actions happened across campus, contributing to widespread media attention that highlighted institutional mishandling of on-campus violence. Zoe-Blue reflects on this day remarking that:

> We were just really fed up, so we put up banners, and we broke into the Student Union Building and hung banners shaming the school and we called news sources and told them what was going on because we were so fed up with it. And it led to Andrew Weaver introducing the sexualized violence bill into the House.[159]

Figure 3: Image of protest banner hanging from UVic Student Union Building
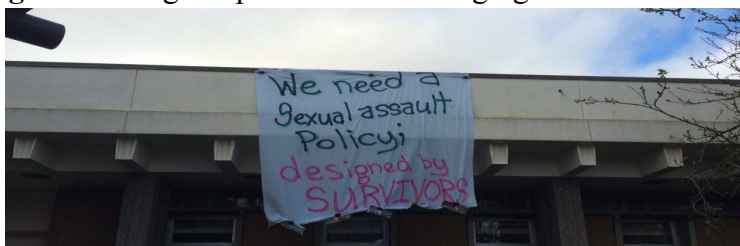
Source: "Women's Centre" Accessed April 5, 2018, https://womenscentreuvic.com/2016/03/19/uvics-message-on-sexual-assault/

As Zoe-Blue explains, on the same day as the widespread actions were occurring at UVic, Green Party Leader Andrew Weaver introduced a private member's bill titled *Bill*

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[159] Zoe-Blue, Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 14, 2017.

M205: Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Policies Act.[160] Drawing on Ontario's *Bill 123,*

Bill M205 demanded that post-secondary institutions across the province be legally

mandated to create stand-alone sexual assault policies related to sexualized violence. He

noted that his interest in bringing forward the bill was a direct result of the advocacy of

students and survivors throughout the province.[161]

Just a week later, the stories of Zoe-Blue, Clara and Jesse –shared at the outset of

these thesis—went viral. During her interview with me, Zoe-Blue reflected on the media

requests that quickly ensued after the story was released:

> I spoke to Vice, the Canadian press, CTV, CBC, and told them my experience
> of being assaulted, reporting the incident and being shut down by the
> university and having to be on campus and live beside my assailant for
> months on end and nothing being done about it. The university found out
> about it, and the students found out about it and it was like, my first time of
> my being at university and like having people talking about it on campus.
> And people actually realizing that the reasons why all of this shit was
> happening and all of these survivors were being shut out of their community
> was because there was this policy in place that was enabling assailants and
> was enabling them to thrive on the campus while survivors had to stay hidden
> in the dark or leave.[162]

Zoe-Blue shares how the release of her story publicly (though she remained anonymous

at the time for fear of backlash from the institution), was the first time she felt like the

university and those around her began to take issues of silencing and mishandled cases

seriously. By circumnavigating institutional processes that were both failing to support

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[160] Bill M205: Post-Secondary Sexual Violence Policies Act." Andrew Weaver, MLA. March 11, 2016.
Accessed November 30, 2017. http://www.andrewweavermla.ca/2016/03/08/post-secondary-sexual-
violence-policies-act/.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Zoe-Blue, Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 14, 2017.

her and actively silencing her, Zoe-Blue used the public telling of her story as both an advocacy and consciousness raising tool.

Residence Community Leaders Jesse and Clara also shared their story of being stifled by the institution in their roles as student employees. As Community Leaders, people like Jesse and Clara are often first responders to sexualized violence on campus, providing valuable insight into how sexualized violence was handled prior to the implementation of specific policy. Outraged by institutional inaction on issues related to sexualized violence on campus, Clara and Jesse also decided to share their stories with the media. Jesse explains this decision noting that:

> Incidents of sexualized violence had been happening on campus and there was a very insufficient response on behalf of the institution to those incidents. So myself and a couple of other individuals were invited to speak to the Canadian Press, about what was going on…insofar as how wide spread these incidents are and the lack of response that was available.[163]

Though Jesse and Clara both made the decision to share their experiences of being silenced by the institution, Clara explains how challenging it was to speak out about the issues happening in their workplace and to other UVic students:

> It was really hard to do stuff while also staying under the radar. Because pretty much as soon as you were pinpointed as someone who like cause a ruckus or was more outspoken, then you were, you were kind of blacklisted in terms of being a staff member. I felt like disrespected by my supervisors…We were [also] particularly frustrated when we were told that we weren't allowed to talk to any press even though that's kind of a blanket statement that they give to staff. You know you 'can't represent the school, don't talk to press'. But the way they said it was just like 'if the press asks you any questions just say no comment'. Instead of saying 'you can comment, but just as an individual'. And so they just left that out, and if you didn't know better than you would know that you could do that. Not even know better, if you just weren't aware of that which I think, the majority of staff were not.[164]

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[163] Jesse. Interview by Author, Audio Recording. Victoria, October 27, 2017.
[164] Clara. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, January 27, 2018.

Zoe-Blue, Clara and Jesse turned to the media in hopes of triggering institutional change.

However, as Jesse and Clara explain, this was a high-risk endeavour. Despite fear of

being "blacklisted" not only by their employer, but by other co-workers as well, these

student-survivors and UVic employees shared their stories, contributing to massive media

backlash towards to University of Victoria for inadequate responses to sexualized

violence on campus.

As noted at the outset of my thesis, on March 15 2016, the stories of Zoe-Blue,

Clara, and Jesse were released. The articles quickly spread across the country,

everywhere from Saanich News to the Toronto Star.[165] On March 16th 2016, just one day

post-publication, former Premier Christy Clark agreed to work alongside Andrew Weaver

to pass legislation pertaining to sexualized violence on campus. This marked a rare and

unprecedented occurrence; "since 2001, Opposition Members have introduced 202

Private Members' Bills, but none have passed."[166] The government's willingness to work

alongside Andrew Weaver was therefore highly symbolic, and dramatically impacted the

willingness of UVic's administration to develop their own strategy. On March 18th 2016,

UVic president Jamie Cassels released a statement positing that "sexualized and gender-

based violence is a significant issue", and launched a policy review that would include

"extensive consultation with students and other campus stakeholders."[167] While President

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[165] For examples see: https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/british-columbia/university-of-victoria-silencing-sexual-assault-victims-students-say/article29252614/;

[166] "Bill 23: Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy Act." Andrew Weaver, MLA. April 27, 2016. Accessed April 05, 2018. http://www.andrewweavermla.ca/2016/04/27/bill-23-sexual-violence-misconduct-policy-act/

[167] University of Victoria "President Jamie Cassels' statement on sexualized violence." University of Victoria. Accessed November 30, 2017.
https://www.uvic.ca/info/sexualizedviolencepolicy/about/news/index.php.

Jamie Cassels expressed a need to develop a more robust response to sexualized violence,

a formal process was not initiated until this larger provincial shift occurred, spurring the

university to act.

Survivors and their stories acted as catalysts for unprecedented change in

sexualized violence prevention and response in BC. This assertion was even confirmed

by former Minister Wilkinson, who, despite previous refusal to consider binding

legislation on the matter, stood in the house during debate on *Bill 23* and stated that:

> We find ourselves in an environment where, as the Ministry of Advanced Education,
> we recognize the need for this iterative change, as suggested by activists such as
> Kenya Rogers[168] at the University of Victoria, and we have acknowledged the need
> for that change by bringing in this legislation.[169]

He goes on to say:

> In fact, we didn't lead the process. Societal activists led the process. The merit of
> their work was acknowledged, and we now seek to promulgate it throughout society.
> That is, obviously, the role of the Legislature. It's how legislative and social change
> happens.[170]

The former Minister of Advanced Education clearly states that the existence of the

Sexualized Violence and Misconduct Policy Act is a direct result of the advocacy and

activism of student-survivors, and the relentless sharing of their stories. In the face of

victim blaming, silencing, and potential backlash, student-survivors courageously made

visible that which had been silenced by pervasive rape culture, inadequate policies and

both institutional and government inaction. An analysis of all the student-led advocacy

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[168] During this time I was a student advocate and involved in student politics as the Executive Director of
External Relations for the University of Victoria Student's Society. I led several campaigns alongside other
students and survivors in the province to lobby the provincial government for on-campus sexualized
violence legislation.
[169] British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, *Hansard*, 40th Leg, 5 Sess, (18 May 2016) at 13252.
[170] Ibid.

that occurred leading up to the creation of the *Policy Act* is beyond the scope of this paper; however, participants in my thesis make clear that survivor stories, when listened to, contribute to widespread social change, building momentum and solidarity throughout the province, and country.

The public sharing of such stories though, is often an extremely laborious process for survivors. Many student-survivors I interviewed note that the support networks, both formal and informal, were central to their decision to share their stories openly. Often existing behind closed doors, as whispers in the hallway or around the kitchen table, these community spaces are where survivors find time for processing, strategizing and healing.[171] The creation of such spaces are often also born out of story-telling, out of a desire to be witnessed by others who have experienced something similar, and to bear witness to those who are ready to share their story. This chapter therefore concludes with ways in which student-survivors, and those who support them, care for each other and their stories.

Caring For Story, Caring for Each Other

Through the sharing of stories, survivors build communities and solidarity, learn about supports and resources, and break the silence surrounding sexualized violence. Family, friends, and community-based organizations are often those who survivors share their stories with for the first time, where their stories are listened to and where they are

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[171] White et al. "Envisioning Future Directions", 114.

believed.[172] Throughout my research, every student-survivor shared with me the different places and people that brought them comfort, time for healing, or the support they needed to continue to survive after experiencing sexualized violence. They told me about what made them feel better, the moments that kept them alive, and how others cared for them. Too often, stories of sexualized violence are discussed in terms of tragedy, trauma and loss. This is not to say that these things do not remain entangled in the experiences of many survivors; rather, the following section centres resilience, community, and demonstrates that "alongside each history of violence and oppression, there runs a parallel history of prudent, creative, and determined resistance".[173]

Many survivors do not initially share their stories for fear of disbelief, backlash or further isolation. Cory explains how it wasn't until a chance encounter at the Women's Centre[174] (now known as the Gender Empowerment Centre) that they realized they weren't alone in their experiences:

> So in October, probably, I met Quinn, because I had just talked about how awful everything had been for me in the UVSS women centre. And immediately after they messaged me saying that they had had a similar experience, which was, probably the moment that everything changed for me. Up until that point, I had known people that had been sexually assaulted, I had known people who had experienced enormous amounts of violence, but it was the first time that someone had been disadvantaged by UVic in such a way that felt relatable to me. At that point, I thought that I was the only one, that I had somehow failed, both at university and somehow personally because I couldn't do the thing that would allow me to go back to school.[175]

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[172] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 8.

[173] Allan Wade. "Small Acts of Living: Everyday Resistance to Violence and Other Forms of Oppression." *Contemporary Family Therapy* 19, no. 1 (1997): 23.

[174] The Women's Centre, now known as the Gender Empowerment Centre, was and continues to be a space for self-identified women, trans and gender non-confirming folks.

[175] Cory. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.

As Cory and Quinn began to talk back and forth about what they had been through, they decided to do something to hold the university accountable, and to create a space where other survivors could come together for support. Quinn tells me about their decision to create a group on campus that could do this work:

> We met for the first time and talked and decided that we wanted to create some kind of a Task Force to keep the university accountable to the harm that they had caused, to pledge to do better, to actually take action, and then [we wanted] also to serve as peer support for others. Because I think both of our experiences actually, many of the experiences that I have heard of other survivors specifically in regard to UVic, is that in some way or another they were made to feel quite alone and isolated in their experiences and so it was important for there to be something alongside the Anti Violence Project to basically say look you are not alone, at the very least. And this is another avenue that you can take for your healing journey. And so that's kind of how it started and then we started the Sexualized Violence Task Force and started to kind of gather folks in that who wanted to be involved.[176]

The Sexualized Violence Task Force (SVTF) became an informal group of student-survivors who were committed to demanding accountability and action from UVic, while supporting each other in navigating institutional structures.[177] The SVTF assisted other survivors by addressing the practical obstacles that were preventing survivors on campus from being able to freely live their lives after experiencing sexualized violence.[178] Casual conversations that began in the Women's Centre at the beginning of the academic year in 2015 grew into weekly meetings where student-survivors would gather, share food, share space and support each other.[179]

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[176] Quinn. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.
[177] Cory. Interview by Author, Victoria 2017; Quinn. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.
[178] Quinn. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.
[179] Cory. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.

Figure 4: Example of a Sexualized Violence Task Force Graphic

Source: "Sexualized Violence Task Force". Accessed April 5, 2018,
https://www.facebook.com/SVTFUVIC/

The group created hashtags such as #FallingOffTheUVicEdge, and #EdgedOut to attract

social media attention, and developed flyers demanding a sexualized violence policy to

handout or hide in library books.[180] They helped other survivors navigate bureaucratic

structures such as filling our Request for Academic Concession forms, calling doctors,

sending emails or making reports.[181] A founder of the group, Cory notes that the SVTF

was not about achieving a particular goal, but rather it was about surviving in an

institutional setting that was causing harm. They explain that:

> We never really sought out a formal 'anything' really. It was just,
> sometimes we came together and had dinner. And it was like, this thing is
> trying to kill you and surviving feels really awful right now, but like maybe
> we can feed each other. And that'll be enough. And I think a large part of
> the work that we did was working together to feel less dehumanized…[I
> remember] all of us just sitting down and eating together and being like, the
> best meal that I am going to have all week is with these people.[182]

Cory further explains how important the advocacy that the SVTF was for them saying:

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[180] Quinn. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017; Kenya Rogers, "Centring
Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", (Unpublished
Honours Thesis, University of Victoria, 2018), 44.
[181] Cory. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.
[182] Ibid.

> Ultimately, who puts the food in front of your face, is the person you wanna spend time with. *That* is the advocacy that we did. *That* is the advocacy that seems to have made the biggest difference. I literally would not be alive if I had not done that.[183]

Cory powerfully outlines community that was forged through the Sexualized Violence Task Force, explaining that this form of advocacy literally kept them alive. While the SVTF was not a formal club or group on campus, they played an integral role in ensuring that survivors of sexualized violence on-campus felt as though they were supported amidst numerous failures from the institution.[184]

The SVTF went on to conduct a campus wide survey on the prevalence of sexualized violence and the use of on campus support the results of which were presented to the university as part of UVic's sexualized violence policy development process. As noted previously, there was also a seat reserved for a representative of the SVTP on UVic's Sexualized Violence Policy Working Group in 2016.

Several participants were part of the SVTP, but participants told me about other spaces that survivors sought comfort and support. Many participants mentioned the Anti Violence Project, and Zoe-Blue shared with me why she thinks university is in need of more community-based supports that are similar to those provided at AVP:

> I think the university needs more community support. What I mean by that is, AVP was a huge reason why I even felt brave enough to talk to the university. And honestly, like they do most of the grunt work —*laughs*. And you know, like there are no couches anywhere when you go and talk about a policy. There needs to be more couches. There needs to be more like, you know food, there needs to be more like you know, actually meeting people instead of having these power dynamics when you talk to them and investigators.[185]

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[183] Ibid.

[184] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria. 2018), 45.

[185] Zoe-Blue, Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 14, 2017.

Zoe-Blue recognizes that AVP has played an integral role in supporting those who have experienced sexualized violence, while also holding the university accountable. She highlights how the prioritization of trauma-informed practice, such as access to comfortable space, alleviates some of the challenging dynamics of discussing sexualized violence. Fundamentally, Zoe-Blue calls upon the university to learn from the grassroots organizations and networks that have been doing the work of supporting survivors for decades. This call to action is reaffirmed by Sarah, who also discusses the significance of spaces like AVP:

> I think it's really important to have resources for people like AVP for people who just need like support, and I think that like that comes from the ideas that we have about justice. Like even when it comes to the way that [I was abused], what the justice system is going to offer me, I don't view that as helping me at all. So I think like accommodating and responding to like different ways that people think that healing can happen.

Similarly, Nathan explains how important it is for services to be safe enough and relevant to a diverse range of students:

> My experiences [of doing sexualized violence support work] were specifically with people of colour who are queer, trying to access resources. And I noticed that they face particular, unique barriers that I don't think somebody who didn't have those intersections would have faced.[186]

Nathan, Sarah and Zoe-Blue affirm that community-based organizations have long-since been the spaces where survivors feel believed, supported and can access services that are cognizant of the many intersections of identity that a survivor may occupy.

Finally, many survivors also told me about the support systems they found in their family and friends. I turn to a message from Lynn, who reminds us that these social

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[186] Nathan. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 20, 2019.

safety nets have been –and continue to be—some of the most important supports that

student-survivors access:

> I think if there's one thing that I learned it's the importance of friendship networks
> and community…If you always know that you can rely on your friends and informal
> network, then you don't need to go through institutions or the state and all that. That
> doesn't mean that I don't think that the institution should do something, or that we
> shouldn't engage at all with this institution, but the importance of the friends and all
> that has actually mattered to me so much in this interaction.[187]

There are many different reasons why a survivor might share their story or reach out.

Sometimes survivors are seeking a bridge to more formalized support, most often though,

survivors want their experiences to be "witnessed by a trusted person in their life".[188]

Friends of survivors tend to be those who have the most positive and helpful reactions to

disclosures of sexualized violence,[189] while formal mechanisms such as law enforcement

or medical professionals are often spaces where survivors experience re-

traumatization.[190] As has been outlined in the many stories shared throughout this

chapter, survivors are frequently subject to victim-blaming narratives that may leave

them "felling distressed, violated, embarrassed, distrustful of others, regretting their

decision to seek help and ultimately, reluctant to seek further help".[191] However, as has

also been outlined throughout this chapter, community-based crisis centres, or sexual

assault centres such as the Anti Violence Project are generally experienced by survivors

as more positive.[192] Most frontline service providers have specialized training with

emphasis on reducing self-blame, centring empowerment and believing survivors who

come to seek support. It is therefore logical that survivors tend to associate experiences

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[187] Lynn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2019.
[188] McCauley et al, "Advancing Theory", 3.
[189] Ibid.
[190] Ibid, 4.
[191] Ibid.
[192] Ibid.

with frontline services providers with lower distress, increased social supports, autonomy, sense of control and overall better treatment.[193]

As the survivors who have shared their stories throughout my thesis posit, there is something uniquely healing about the creation of spaces where story can be shared with other survivors. Sarah Ahmed refers to this phenomenon as "creating worlds". These worlds exist outside of the realm of institutions and are places meant "for repair, for healing wounds, for reflection and vulnerability".[194] As Ahmed describes, the creation of these worlds can provide relief for those who are impacted by systemic violence, while also opening pathways for interpersonal relationships and community-based responses to rape culture to be sustained. Those who understand the affective experiences[195] associated with surviving rape culture help to create settings where survivor's stories can be told. These stories contribute to what Dian Million calls "alternative truths" and "alternate historical views"[196] that lift the veil of silence regarding lived realities of student-survivors on campus and beyond.

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[193] Ibid.
[194] Sarah Ahmed, *Willful Subjects*. Durham: Duke University Press (2014), 170. As cited in: Briony Lipton and Elizabeth Mackinlay. *We Only Talk Feminist here: Feminist Academics, Voice and Agency in the Neoliberal University*. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017; 2016), 104. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-40078-5.
[195] Dian Million, *Therapeutic Nations: Healing in an Age of Indigenous Human Rights*. (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2013), 67.
[196] Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the importance of survivor's stories in understanding sexualized violence on the university campus. Story can be used as a mechanism for understanding impacts and nuances associated with student-survivors, the role survivors play in shifting culture and institutional responses to on-campus sexualized violence, as well as the communities that survivors continue to create in order to survive campus rape culture. The examples highlighted in this chapter provide strong evidence that stories can assist in creating policies and structures that recognize the many intersections of survivors, that include them as agents of change, and that seek to create spaces where survivors can feel safe enough to share their stories in the first place.

The stories of survivors shared here and on campuses elsewhere have been critical catalysts for institutional and cultural change. However, in the context of increasingly corporatized university settings, institutions are concerned with controlling the narratives of student survivors as a means of managing risk and avoiding institutional blame. The stories of survivors are dangerous to the reputations purported by institutions seeking to increase their consumer base and customer retention. In the process of protecting their own bottom line, university administrations may exacerbate the trauma experienced by student survivors; this is known as *institutional betrayal.* In their pursuit of remaining "on brand" universities have inadequately addressed the stories of student survivors, demonstrated disbelief, or attempted to control survivor narratives. Having established the importance and influence of survivor's and their experiences, I move now to an analysis of the university's corporatized environment, and its impact on survivors and their stories.

IV

Speaking the Unspeakable:
Survivors Stories on the Corporate Campus

My biggest concern with this policy is that it is just a way for the university to cover its ass. And like that's the reason why I got involved in the advocacy work is because I recognized that the lack of policy was because the university wanted to get out of the situations as quickly, as cheaply and as safely as possible without tarnishing their reputation…and their reputation of being a business… if you are expecting us to live here then you have to treat us like real human beings instead of like people that are going to give you money. –Zoe-Blue

Introduction

In recent decades Canadian university campuses have transformed into increasingly corporatized environments. Influxes of private partnerships and research initiatives, as well as a growing demand for brand recognition amongst 'competitive' post-secondary markets has resulted in managerial practices that situate students as consumers of products rather than builders of "imagination, social responsibility and critical capacities".[197] In this highly corporatized environment, institutions are simultaneously encouraged and deterred to address sexualized violence; insofar as their reputation and branding campaigns are put on the line by stories of failure to address on-campus sexualized violence, institutions may be persuaded to take action to ensure the protection of their bottom line.[198] Conversely, the profit driven administrative culture of the modern post-secondary campus is such that cost-benefit analysis will likely dissuade institutions

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[197] Elizabeth Quinlan. "Institutional Betrayal and Sexual Violence in the Corporate University." In *Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses, and Strategies for Change.* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017): 63.
[198] Ibid, 61.

from implementing "wide-ranging prevention training and response supports".[199] Within

this paradox, institutions continue to illicit trust and dependency from their consumer

base (students) as a means of ensuring a continued supply chain. Universities and

colleges are marketed "academic communities" where students get to live, learn and play

all at once.

The moves to silence or ignore student-survivors and advocates that have been

alluded to throughout my thesis are therefore not without intention; rather, they result

from an imbedded institutional desire to maintain a pristine reputation in order to grow

their consumer base and funding partnerships. This corporate approach results in those

institutional actors tasked with the implementation of sexualized violence prevention

effectively working for the same hierarchical "company".[200] The following chapter

therefore investigates the effects of the corporate campus on survivors, advocates, and

their stories. Based on the testimony shared by participants throughout my thesis, I focus

my analysis of this corporatized post-secondary landscape on three core features: (1)

fixation on institutional reputation, (2) transformation of students into consumers, and (3)

the impacts of neoliberal and hierarchical management practice.[201]

Accordingly, this chapter first provides a succinct history of the trend towards

corporate practices on Canadian university campuses beginning in the 1970s, and

highlights some of the major shifts and branding campaigns that have shaped UVic's

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[199] Ibid, 64.

[200] Jennifer Doyle. *Campus Security, Campus Sex.* (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), Cambridge, Mass.; London, England : Distributed by the MIT Press, 2015), 39.

[201] There are several other features of corporatization on the campus that are worthy of further investigation insofar as they may intersect with experiences of sexualized violence and rape culture. For example, the ways in which staff and faculty are brought into hierarchical relationships with each other and administrators, the role of unions on campus, and the intersections of Collective Agreements, HR policies and campus sexualized violence policies. For the purposes of my thesis however, I have chosen to remain focused on the aspects of corporatization that have been identified or alluded to by my participants.

public image in recent years. The university's fixation on reputation and a consumer

approach to education can exacerbate the trauma experienced by student survivors and

contributes to the continued mishandling of cases; this is what betrayal trauma theorists

Smith and Freyd call *Institutional Betrayal*. I also provide analysis of how, in an

increasingly profit driven campus environment, institutions strategically control

narratives of campus sexualized violence and rape culture. Finally, this chapter concludes

with an investigation of how the neoliberal professionalization of campus sexualized

violence prevention and response results in a depoliticization of community-based

approaches to prevention and response, and pushes both survivors and advocates to the

margins of institutional influence.

Institutional Betrayal and Story on the Corporate Campus[202]

In order to keep up with growing demand from undergraduate learners in the 1970s, post-

secondary institutions in Canada began to engage more heavily with the private sector.[203]

The push toward corporatization was emboldened in the mid-1990s by drastic cuts to

federal-social-transfers, resulting in universities turning to private investors to make up for

large budgetary deficits.[204] On the Canadian campus, these shifts in governance and

funding have resulted in "significant changes to the ways universities are funded (such as

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[202] Portions of this section are adapted from previous undergraduate Honours research by the author: Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria, 2018), 61-75.

[203] Elizabeth Quinlan. "Institutional Betrayal and Sexual Violence in the Corporate University." In *Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses, and Strategies for Change*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017: 62

[204] Ibid.

multi-year agreements with targets for enrolment, retention and quality improvement plans), increased performance indicators and audits, and increased emphasis on education as a product that students consume".[205] Resultantly, tuition rates have skyrocketed, tripling since 1994 to an average $6791 per year[206] and raising student debt rates to $35,000.[207]

The proliferation of corporate practices on campuses across Canada is symptomatic of what Higher Education theorists call the Student as Consumer (SAC) approach. The SAC approach understands "brand loyalty" as synonymous with student retention, meaning that positive branding is integral to the stable influx of student consumers annually. [208] Universities and colleges therefore build programming, services and advertising campaigns that seek to maintain satisfaction amongst students, and ensure a steady flow of their consumer base: students. The SAC approach alters the role of students, professors and the institution, creating an environment defined largely by a neoliberal private sector mentality. The student transforms into the customer, the professor into the supplier of goods, and the educational process into production.[209]

Former Education Coordinator at the Anti Violence Project, monte, discussed with me how the corporatized university impedes meaningful implementation of sexualized violence prevention and response:

> We need to be survivor-centered rather than corporate-centered. This is the great thing about the Anti Violence Project. We don't have to deal with [corporate

[205] Ibid.

[206] Ibid.

[207] Joe Hernandez, "B.C. Budget Eases Interest on Student Loans While Debt Continues to Soar." CBC News. Feb. 22, 2017. Accessed April 05, 2018. http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/bc-budget-student-debt-relief-1.3994268.

[208] Brian A. Vander Schee."Students as Consumers: Programming for Brand Loyalty." *Services Marketing Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (2011; 2010;): 32

[209] Ibid.

interests] so I think it's easier for us to be survivor-centered. I think that if we wanted to reflect the principles of the policy[210] better we would have to make UVic a non-profit and exist outside of the corporate world somehow.[211]

monte's comments highlight the ways in which institutions such as UVic are tethered to corporate interests in such a way that sexualized violence prevention and response will always be hindered. They mention in their interview how UVic is bound up in extractive industries, with more than $39 Million invested in the fossil fuel industry.[212] These extractive industries are directly connected to the ongoing perpetration of gender-based violence against Indigenous women, two-spirit people and girls.[213] Such investments cannot be separated from UVic's continued complicity in rape culture, and therefore remain a barrier to the actualization of survivor-centred services on campus. As monte has stated, the corporatization of the campus remains counterintuitive to centering survivors, unlike community-based organizations such as AVP that are at liberty to solely focus on education, prevention and support.

The University of Victoria, like many other post-secondary institutions, has participated in rigorous re-branding and marketing campaigns in order to establish UVic's place in a "highly competitive and highly saturated post-secondary market".[214] These practices contribute to the solidification of a neoliberal campus environment marked by the privatization of funding and services, the deregulation of the post-secondary market and the reinforcement of "individual agency" and responsibility of

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[210] Meaning the principles outlined in the Sexualized Violence Prevention and representative of a survivor-centered and intersectional approach.

[211] monty. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, January 12, 2017

[212] For more see: https://divestuvic.com/

[213] Native Youth Sexual Health Network "Violence on the Land, Violence on Our Bodies Report". *Women's Earth Alliance,* 18 July 2016, 54. Accessed July 15 2020. womensearthalliance.org/updates/violence-land-violence-bodies-report-published/.

[214] Ibid, 14

those involved in the academy.[215] One of the most transparent examples of these private

sectors practices at UVic is the roll out of the "UVic Edge" Campaign. The UVic Edge is

both a slogan and branding package that seeks to highlight UVic's research intensive

programming and appealing lifestyle meant to be associated with campus culture. The

current UVic website reveals that this branding campaign is framed against national and

international competitors, with a focus on UVic as an emerging top research institution.

For example, UVic purports that:[216]

> In 2014 we set out to deepen our understanding of why faculty, staff, students and partners choose UVic over other top Canadian and international universities. The culmination of those insights are three ingredients[217] that define who we are today and set a bold path for how we will remain a university of choice in the future. We call it the UVic Edge.[218]

Furthermore, on a webpage titled "The UVic Edge Brand", the explicit intention of brand

building is thoroughly discussed:

> Consistent messages and a unified look and feel support the story we want to tell about UVic, bringing our distinct advantages to life for the audiences with whom we want to build strong relationships. We want people to immediately recognize UVic everywhere we are. It'll take time, effort and all of us working together to achieve that. High quality design, smart use of design elements, a distinct colour palette, strong photography and video, common vocabulary and a consistent tone of voice will help tell our story, highlight our key messages and gain recognition for what makes UVic different and for the amazing things it does.[219]

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[215] Briony Lipton and Elizabeth Mackinlay. *We Only Talk Feminist here: Feminist Academics, Voice and Agency in the Neoliberal University*. (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2017; 2016), 6. doi:10.1007/978-3-319-40078-5.

[216] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria, 2018), 53-55.

[217] UVic defines these three ingredients as: Dynamic Learning, Vital Impact, and an Extraordinary Academic Environment

[218] University of Victoria. *Why the Edge?* Accessed July 15, 2020.
https://www.uvic.ca/brand/about/index.php

[219] Ibid.

As evidenced by the above quotes, the University of Victoria sets out a strategic vision to expand its relationships with key stakeholders. UVic draws on its reputation as a leading research institution, rhetoric used tactically to appeal to the consumer audience and recruit new students. UVic is dedicated to a branding strategy that will appeal to a wide and competitive consumer-audience. If the university maintains a positive reputation, they will also maintain high recruitment and retention levels amongst students.

Several participants in my research highlight the ways in which an institutional focus on preserving a positive image resulted in the mishandling of their cases, silencing from the institution and a failure to create adequate supports. These consequences are not abstract or singular; rather, the corporatized environment of UVic (and other post-secondary institutions across the country) contributes directly to the exacerbation of trauma experienced by student-survivors within the institutional setting, or through institutional processes. These corporate values have resulted in experiences of what Smith and Freyd call "Institutional Betrayal".

Departing from dominant understandings of interpersonal betrayal, Institutional Betrayal accounts for the unique ways in which people experience betrayal and trauma in institutionalized settings. Larger institutions such as universities and colleges, elicit trust and dependency from their members similar to that found in interpersonal relationships.[220] Trust is commonly understood as the "basis for interpersonal

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[220] Carly Parnitzke Smith and Jennifer J. Freyd. "Dangerous Safe Havens: Institutional Betrayal Exacerbates Sexual Trauma." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 26, no. 1 (2013): 120

relationships and stability in in social institutions".[221] Therefore, maintaining trust

between the academic institution and its members becomes a key element in increasing

quality perceptions, generating positive word-of-mouth effects, and reducing sensitivity

to cost and tuition changes.[222] A primary implication of this relationship is the

expectation that the institution is safe, and that members who engage with it will be

protected.[223] Clara highlights the extent to which institutions such as UVic illicit this kind

of trust and dependency from students:

> They bring you into it. They want you to think of this as home. And they lay that
> into you over and over again through orientation. You know you feel safe here, you
> call campus security is anything feels wrong. You know it's all layered into you to
> feel completely at home and safe and then if something is wrong and you don't feel
> safe anymore and they just blame you. And they will move you out if they think
> that that will make you feel better.[224]

When safety and community are constantly framed as part of an institutional setting,

trauma experienced within that institutional settings is associated with "more difficulties

as one continues to try and function in that environment".[225] These difficulties include

higher levels of several posttraumatic symptoms, as evidenced in Figure 5 below:[226]

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[221] Minjung Sung, and Sung-un Yang. "Toward the Model of University Image: The Influence of Brand Personality, External Prestige, and Reputation." *Journal of Public Relations Research* 20, no. 4 (2008): 364.
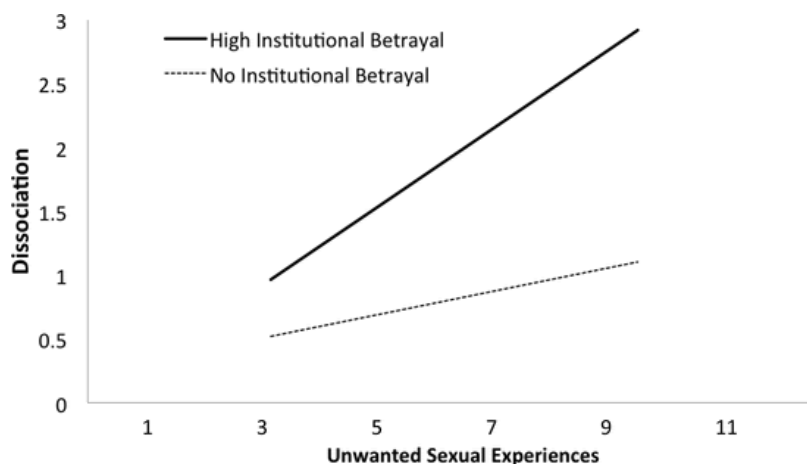
[222] Ibid.

[223] Ibid.

[224] Clara. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, January 27, 2018

[225] Smith and Freyd, "Dangerous Safe Havens", 120.

[226] Ibid, 122.

Figure 5: Exacerbated Effects of Institutional Betrayal

Source: Smith and Freyd. *Institutional Betrayal*, 578

Sexualized violence that is mishandled in institutionalized settings can therefore result in more severe impacts and increased difficulty thriving post-betrayal,[227] an assertion that has been highlighted extensively by student-survivors throughout my project.

In the context of sexualized violence, Smith and Freyd identify four dominant indicators of institutional betrayal: (1) Failure to prevent abuse; (2) Normalizing Abusive Contexts/ Punishing Victims and Whistleblowers (3) Difficult Reporting Procedures and Inadequate Responses and; (4) Supporting Cover-ups and Misinformation. Drawing on Institutional Betrayal indicators and the testimony of participants in this study I have identified several instances of Institutional Betrayal at UVic.[228] Throughout interviews student-survivors repeatedly shared with me their experiences of being re-traumatized by inadequate responses and non-existent policies for addressing sexualized violence.

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[227] Ibid.
[228] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", (Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria. 2018), 87.

Overwhelmingly, student-survivors attributed lack of action or inadequate response to the

university's fixation on branding and maintenance of national and international rankings

as a reputable research-intensive institution.

While it is not possible within the scope of my current thesis to summarize and

reflect on every incident of Institutional Betrayal discussed by student-survivors, I have

summarized in the proceeding table key indications of betrayal. The table below

highlights examples discussed by student-survivors interviewed for this project, and

provides further indication that Institutional Betrayal is present at the University of

Victoria.

Table 1: Indicators of Institutional Betrayal at UVic

Indicator of Institutional Betrayal	*Examples from Student-Survivors*	*Potential Impact of Betrayal*
Failure to Prevent Abuse	• Students experience sexualized violence on campus • Survivors indicate frustration and shock that the university had no standalone policy in the past • Existence of the Anti Violence Project to address violence on campus that the institution is not preventing • Professors don't listen to students when they make harassment complaints about other students in class	• Fosters mistrust between student-survivors and the institution • Indicates that sexualized violence is not a priority for the institution over-all • Student survivors experience a difficult time thriving in institutional spaces once they have experienced violence • Students experience academic consequences such as lowered GPA, dropping courses • Financial strain on survivors

Normalizing Abuse/Punishing Victims and Whistleblowers	• Residence staff promote a culture of silence on issues related to sexualized violence on campus • Residence Community Leaders are 'blacklisted' by supervisors and co-workers if they speak out about sexualized violence • University allows powerful professors that cause harm to keep their jobs • Victim-blaming language is used in investigation reports • Trans survivors are misgendered in institutional settings • Survivors who participated in policy development experience emotional exhaustion and are not paid for their labour	• Survivors feel as though they will be punished not only socially but also in their workplace if they speak out, thus promoting a culture of silence. • Survivors are made to feel as though their experience of violence is a product of their own doing • Survivors are re-traumatized through victim-blaming during and after investigations
Difficult Reporting Procedures and Inadequate Responses	• Survivors taken through a confusing 'whirlwind' process where multiple intersecting policies are triggered at once • Survivors feel as though they are not believed when reporting • Survivors must engage in dehumanizing bureaucratic structures (such as request for academic concession forms) • Formal reporting considered too lengthy and strenuous	• Survivors are re-traumatized through the process of reporting • Survivors fear that they will not be believed or that they will be blamed for what has happened • Perpetrators often remain on campus • Survivors may leave school due to of lack of support • Survivors may choose not to report their experiences formally
Supporting Cover-ups and Misinformation	• Reporting processes support victim blaming myths • Campus security upholding rape myths are victim-blaming narratives	• Promotes a culture of silence • Campus security is widely mistrusted by survivors • Survivors feel as though they must portray themselves as the 'ideal victim' in order to be taken seriously

(Adapted from interviews conducted by author and Smith and Freyd. *Institutional Betrayal*, 2014)

Though several of these indicators are based on testimony that was given roughly six

months after UVic's Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy was passed,

they nonetheless highlight instances of harm perpetrated by the university. Institutional

Betrayal is just one of many consequences experienced by student-survivors on the

corporate campus, illuminating the burden with which student-survivors engage the university in seeking institutional change. The theory of Institutional Betrayal demands a reconceptualization of the university not as a nebulous institution, but rather as an active player in the further perpetuation of rape culture on campus.

Under the conditions of Institutional Betrayal, student-survivors at UVic in 2016 understood that the institution would not act unless their reputation was significantly threatened. Amid several highly-publicized assaults involving UVic students[229], survivors and advocates shifted their messaging to directly attack the university's public image, using the aforementioned UVic Edge branding strategically in demonstrations. Quinn explains that:

> One of the members (of the Sexualized Violence Task Force) had this rad idea to actually use the marketing and communications strategy that UVic had developed -the UVic edge-against them. In the form of a hashtag #fallingofftheuvicedge and so, we started like printing up cards and leaving them in books around campus, and offices on tables in the Biblio the library, pretty much everywhere. For the JCURA project which had nothing to do with this, but I was like handing out these cards at that event.[230]

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[229] As mentioned in previous chapters there were also several other highly publicized assaults on campuses throughout BC including University of Vancouver and Thompson River University.

[230] Quinn. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2017.

Figure 6: Martlet Newspaper Cartoon: "Falling Off the UVic Edge"

Christy Shao. *Student's Falling Off the UVic Edge.* Accessed April 5, 2018,
http://www.martlet.ca/sexual-assault-survivors-are-falling-off-the-uvic-edge/

Strategically engaging with the university's branding campaign is significant on the

corporate campus because "media stories covering various aspects of community life

gain a heightened importance to administrators".[231] If instances of highly publicized

sexual assault cases become entangled with the university's brand, the university must

then deploy a tactical operation of damage control in order to restore the faith of their

consumer base and investors.[232] For this reason, Quinlan et al. understand the media as

the "Achilles heel of the corporate university",[233] whereby institutional change can be

mediated through the presence of damaging news stories of sexualized violence on

campus.

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[231] Quinlan, *Institutional Betrayal and Sexual Violence in the Corporate University*, 64
[232] Ibid.
[233] Ibid.

However, the calculated use of UVic's reputation and branding as a mechanism for social change does not come without great risk to survivors. This kind of advocacy relies heavily on the existence of high-profile cases and ongoing media coverage. Though effective in holding post-secondary institutions accountable to rampant rape culture on campus, the media has also poorly portrayed survivors of sexualized violence, participating in victim-blaming narratives or failing to adequately surmise a survivor's story.[234] Many survivors I spoke with expressed fear and anxiety regarding engaging with media. They worried about not being believed, or having their identity leaked and thus experiencing backlash from both the institution and their peers. Furthermore, media strategies are often fleeting because "in the absence of high-profile assaults, media attention tends to wane",[235] thus alleviating the pressure on institutions and subsequently quelling attacks on their reputation.

Fixation on branding and market competition has what Quinlan describes as "contradictory effects" on the ways in which post-secondary institutions respond to sexualized violence and rape culture on campus; they are simultaneously driven to strategically respond *and* to suppress issues of campus sexualized violence.[236] When the maintenance of brand loyalty is significantly threatened, institutions are motivated to take action on prevention and response initiatives. Alternatively, they are motivated to silence and ignore issues of sexualized violence when their reputation is not actively on the line.

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[234] Sandrine Ricci and Manon Bergeron. "Tackling Rape Culture in Québec Universities: A Network of Feminist Resistance." (*Violence Against Women* 25, no. 11 2019): 1301.

[235] Elizabeth Quinlan and Gail Lasiuk. "The Coalition Against Sexual Assault." In *Sexual Violence at Canadian Universities: Activism, Institutional Responses, and Strategies for Change*. (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017): 227.

[236] Quinlan, "Institutional Betrayal and Sexual Violence in the Corporate University", 64.

The push and pull of institutional motivation for campus sexualized violence prevention and response puts student-survivors and advocates in a double bind. If there is not sufficient pressure (read: sufficient threat to their reputation) on the institution to act, status quo is liable to remain in place resulting in the continued mishandling of cases and Institutional Betrayals experienced by student-survivors and perpetrated by the institution. Alternatively, in order for the reputation of an institution to be amply targeted, student-survivors and advocates must create enough attention—predominantly through media—for institutional change to be negotiated. If survivors' stories can be successfully tied to the institution's reputation, the realities of rape culture on campus come to tarnish the university's brand thus putting their relationships with investors and consumers at risk. In order to successfully target institutional reputation however, student-survivors and advocates put themselves at risk of experiencing further harm, being discredited or having their identity exposed.

As such, on the corporatized campus, institutions retain the capacity to convert trauma and activism into a form of capital. This capital becomes the currency through which survivors of violence negotiate institutional change bringing trauma into a pseudo-competitive-market-system or, a *trauma economy*. Trauma economy is "a circuit of movement and exchange where traumatic memories 'travel' and are valued and revalued along the way".[237] Consequently, in order for survivors of sexualized violence at the University of Victoria (and at institutions across the country) to be taken seriously within this trauma economy, they must repeatedly share their stories through multiple avenues,

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[237] Terri Tomsky. "From Sarajevo to 9/11: Travelling Memory." *Parallax* 17, no. 4 (2011): 49. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13534645.201 =true

most commonly (and usually most successfully) through media.[238] These factors collide to create a climate where traumatic experience becomes the political currency through which survivors of violence exchange institutional recognition and action. The more damaging a survivor's story is to the university's reputation, the higher the value attached to it and the more likely a response from the institution will emerge.[239]

In the case of the many student-survivors and advocates who fought for legislative and institutional changes leading up to the 2016 *Policy Act* in BC, connections to institutional reputation and stories of campus rape culture culminated in both provincial and institutional policy changes. For many student-survivors and advocates this was a win; survivors had successfully mediated change through their own voices and their own stories. However as this chapter has thus far shown, at the point of sharing story publically, student-survivors are already stuck between ongoing Institutional Betrayal and the risks associated with speaking out. The success of the advocacy outlined in my thesis therefore cannot be separated from the sacrifices that student-survivors make when taking on a corporatized institution such as UVic.

Presently, the incorporation of sexualized violence prevention and response into the fabric of the corporate university comes with a new set of dilemmas for survivors and advocates. On the corporate campus, bureaucratic processes and neoliberal managerial practices contribute to the depolitisization of the anti-sexualized violence movement, pushing students and advocates farther out of the institutional sphere of influence. This

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[238] Kenya Rogers, "Centring Voices of Student Survivors: Sexualized Violence and Institutional Accountability at UVic", Unpublished Honours Thesis, University of Victoria. 2018.
[239] Ibid.

chapter therefore concludes with an investigation of the neoliberalization of sexualized

violence prevention and response on campus.

The Neoliberalization of Campus Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response

With the development of sexualized violence prevention and response at the

institutional level, student-survivors and advocates now have to negotiate how to

influence administrators within the walls of the institution. Following neoliberal

management practices, institutional processes often reinforce individual doctrines

rather than community narratives when it comes to whose "voices are heard and

legitimised by the university".[240] Institutional focus is shifted to the rights and

participation of individuals, often white, middle class women, attempting to foster a

false sense of empowerment and autonomy.[241] Cory for example, who participated in

the development of UVic's SVPR as a representative on the SVP Working Group,

discusses having to re-tell their experiences and face an institution that had caused

them harm:

> I don't think everyone, wants to be ripped open like that. And they shouldn't have to be, I don't think that that makes me a better person or a better survivor. I think it just means that I have the capacity for that, and I am white, which is a large part of it.[242]

Cory outlines how their whiteness afforded them a certain capacity to navigate

institutional structures, but how they were nonetheless forced to re-share their trauma

repeatedly. Cory goes on to explain how when working within the bureaucratic

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[240] Lipton and Mackinlay, *We Only Talk Feminist Here,* 64.
[241] Ibid, 65.
[242] Cory. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.

environment of policy development, them and other students felt compelled to present themselves as "good survivors":

> A lot of the advocacy work we did for ourselves was representing ourselves as good victims, and worthy victims. To meet our own deadlines, to meet their deadlines. That was hard work…the advocacy stuff that you knew was fucked up and fake. But you had to do in order to get out of it.[243]

Having to conform to the neoliberal management practices of the institution as Cory describes, can limit survivor's sense of agency through "tacit, contextual relations, social mechanisms and power relations as well as formal and informal obligations and constraints".[244] This work is draining, frustrating and demands a certain level of inauthenticity on behalf of student-survivors. Unsurprisingly then, over the course of less than a year three different student-survivors occupied the one seat available for the SVTF on the SVP Policy Working Group.[245]

Similar to the reflections of Cory, Lynn also explained to me how it is important for people in the campus community, especially those with authority, to understand "that there are many conflicts when survivors choose to present themselves"[246] in a variety of contexts:

> In my official narrative to my good friends and in the official narrative to the Chair even, I always insisted that he didn't touch me…but at that point in time I just felt like I didn't want to say. But you can go ahead and write this down…In my official

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[243] Cory. Interview by author. Audio Recording. Victoria, December 3, 2017.
[244] Ibid.
[245] This was also a result of the emotional and unpaid labour that was expected of student-survivors in order to be represented at the policy table. AVP created a paid position specifically for the policy committee, and all other members of the committee were university employees; as such, student-survivors were the only members of the 21-person committee who were not being paid for their participation.
[246] Lynn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2019.

narrative to my other good friends in the department, I've always said that "oh you know he was, he didn't touch me" but that's a lie. That's kind of a lie yeah.[247]

Lynn and Cory both allude to the discursive moves that student-survivors and advocates contemplate when engaging within the institution. Survivors and advocates negotiate to what extent they will remain on the 'outside' occupying oppositional spaces, and when they should "engage with and submit to 'inclusion' within the university's neoliberal system".[248] At the same time, survivors may selectively engage with parts of their story as a means to protect themselves when institutional spaces are simply not safe enough for storytelling.

As student-survivors move in and out of the confines set by the institution they are also faced with retraumatization and the depolitisization of their demands. Universities co-opt language built by and for survivors, and then redefine terminology so that it may be usurped into the continued management of the campus. Many survivors shared with me that while language such as survivor-centred, trauma-informed, and intersectionality are present in SVPR policy, they are wary of how these grassroots and community-driven concepts could ever meaningfully be implemented by a corporatized institution. For example, Jesse said:

> It was really interesting [participating on the Sexualized Violence Policy Working Group] because on the one hand, I think this [sexualized violence] is something that has defined a lot of my experience at UVic. It's something that I speak to a lot with friends and family and co-workers and it's something that really dominated the discussion and the narrative of my degree. And, because of that it is something very personal and also something that I associate with close relationships. So seeing it distilled in a boardroom setting was a little bit weird and it felt kind of detached.[249]

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[247] Lynn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 11, 2019.
[248] Lipton and Mackinlay, *We Only Talk Feminist Here,* 6.
[249] Jesse. Interview by Author, Audio Recording. Victoria, October 27, 2017.

Jesse further explains how she is unsure of the university's capacity to implement a policy driven by survivors when many survivors continue to see the institution itself as a perpetrator of harm; one that is entangled in colonial and neoliberal practices. She notes that even if survivors get to define the language within a policy, implementation remains at the behest of the institution.

The corporate, neoliberal practices associated with modern post-secondary institutions such as UVic have profound impacts on student-survivors. The stories of student-survivors are valued and revalued within the structures of the institution, and student-survivors must often make strategic decisions about the ways that they present themselves and their narratives. Survivors do not move through these spaces with ease, and are not often met with the same kind of support that they find in their own communities. As my thesis has repeatedly shown, the anti-sexualized violence movement has always been rooted in grassroots activism and community-based support networks. These are the spaces that have traditionally been most effective in providing support, education and prevention strategies for dismantling rape culture. The efforts of the anti-sexualized violence movement have given rise to an increasing popular consciousness of the issue, leading to the "widespread growth of organizations designed to address the problem of sexual[ized] violence".[250]

However, Kirsten Bumiller posits that the proliferation of feminist and anti-violence discourse regarding sexualized violence has resulted in the appropriation of the movement through neoliberal state and institutional actors. Sexualized violence in

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[250] Kristin Bumiller. *In an Abusive State: How Neoliberalism Appropriated the Feminist Movement Against Sexual Violence*. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008; 2009), 1. doi:10.2307/j.ctv11vc8wj.

many cases has been transformed into a "social, medical and legal problem", giving

way to an entire "professional apparatus" tasked with codifying, responding and

preventing sexualized violence. This apparatus often exists in tension or at odds with

the grassroots and community-based nature of sexual assault crisis centres, advocacy

organizations and shelters. Effectively, the neoliberal appropriation of the sexualized

violence movement has diminished the extent to which community-based services are

understood as both highly effective and highly relevant to survivors.

Neoliberal ideals become imprinted onto the "success indicators" associated with

survivors, with a focus on individual healing, ensuring capacity to move on with one's

life and continue as both a citizen and worker going forward.[251] This highly

individualized therapeutic approach focuses on "treating" survivors, and thus routing

them through professionals such as doctors, therapists and legal counsel.[252] Focus on

individual treatment of survivors has resulted in a "growth of administrative power

exercised over clients" who experience sexualized violence with the primary goal of

producing "successful survivors".[253] Community-based and grassroots organizations are

"forced to establish themselves within this new network of social service

bureaucracies"[254] and programs are often deemed successful or reputable only once they

ally themselves with professionalized agencies. Community-based organizations are

relegated to the margins of service provision if they are not quantifiably clinical and

therapeutic. As a sector of professionals with expertise in the areas of sexualized violence

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[251] Bumiller, *In an Abusive State,* 64.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Ibid.
[254] Ibid, 71.

grows, so too does the sentiment that volunteer, community and peer-based programming can offer nothing more than "affective" support to survivors of sexualized violence.[255]

On post-secondary campuses in Canada, the professionalization of sexualized violence prevention and response is a relatively new phenomenon. Nonetheless, as institutions such as UVic have sought to meet the requirements set out by provincial legislation over the past four years, a new professional sector has also emerged. Throughout the country, universities and colleges have created positions, offices and services tasked with leading campus sexualized violence strategies.[256] Prior to the implementation of the *Policy Act*, trainings related to on-campus sexualized violence were predominantly delivered by community-based organizations. For example, the Anti Violence Project travelled throughout BC to deliver programming and share workshop outlines through a train-the-trainer model for several years leading up to the *Policy Act*. These trainings brought together frontline community-based workers with campus administrators and student leaders to skill-share through education and prevention strategies. As sexualized violence prevention and response has become part of the administrative network of campuses, it is becoming increasingly common for institutions to purchase training and workshops from other universities and colleges that have marketized programming. For example, the University of the Fraser Valley now sells their own train-the-trainer program that can be found under the "corporate training" tab of their website.[257]

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[255] Ibid.
[256] For example: UVic's "Sexualized Violence Resource Office" within the Office of Equity and Human Rights, University of British Columbia's a "Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office", Simon Fraser University's "Sexual Violence Support and Prevention Office", Thompson Rivers University's "Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Manager".
[257] See: https://www.ufv.ca/training/courses/

The awareness campaigns and educational workshops once solely associated with peer and community-based organizations such as AVP, have been appropriated into the same branding schemes that contributed to the silencing of survivors in the first place. The centralization and professionalization of sexualized violence services on the campus is not done without intention; rather, by embedding response, education and prevention into the pre-existing corporate structure of the campus, institutions can control messaging while maintaining the corporate hierarchies and reputation of the institution.

The training and job descriptions associated with an emerging campus sexualized violence sector are not "value neutral"; they exist as "part of complex sociological processes in which certain forms of knowledge are accepted because of their *usefulness* (emphasis my own) to the status of their professions and their reinforcement of internal hierarchies".[258] On the corporate campus, this assertion materializes most vividly in the investigative and reporting procedures set out by institutions themselves. In answering the call of survivors and advocates to create specific policies, post-secondary campuses effectively become the investigators of their own policies. Those involved in making decisions about cases (even third party investigators who ultimately receive a contract from the institution), "work for the same 'company' and are in hierarchical relationships with one another".[259]

As post-secondary institutions invest in the creation of formal offices and employees to administer sexualized violence prevention and response, institutions divert accountability by placing the burden of healing as the responsibility of survivors. If the

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[258] Bumiller, *In an Abusive State,* 66.
[259] Doyle. *Campus Security, Campus Sex,* 39.

professional and clinical services exist on campus, the onus is on survivors to access

those services and heal accordingly: return to school, complete courses, and finish your

degree. Failure to do so is not the direct result of inadequacies in keeping survivors safe

or addressing campus rape culture; rather, it is a survivor's inability to reintegrate into

campus life despite 'unfettered' access to healing services. Thus, investigating and

adjudicating sexualized violence on the corporate campus means assessing institutional

risk associated with each case. Risk is managed in one sense by ensuring that those who

have clearly violated policy are disciplined, with consequences ranging from written

letters to complete expulsion. Simultaneously, risk is also managed through highlighting

the necessity for professional, medicalized healing strategies for survivors.[260] Focus on

healing works to mitigate the potential risk of a survivor's story once again tarnishing

institutional reputation. Student-survivors (and all those involved in a report) are even

asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement during formal investigations, ensuring that they

will not publically share any new information they receive as a direct result of the

investigation.[261] As Jennifer Doyle explains, this is because a survivor's narrative poses a

threat to the status quo administration of the university:

> Her[262] own discourse is dangerous: her story about her own injury is a problem.
> Within the system the victim is a wound, but a bloodless one. The victim cannot
> know the truth of the situation. The problem is that of sexual difference: her wound
> must be covered up. The wound itself must have no capacity to feel, it must be
> disavowed as itself a source of knowledge. She should not speak it. The hearing is
> confidential; the investigation requires that she keep quiet.[263]

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[260] Bumiller, *In an Abusive State,* 95.
[261] University of Victoria, "Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy", *University of Victoria* 2017. https://www.uvic.ca/universitysecretary/assets/docs/policies/GV0245.pdf
[262] Doyle uses she/her pronouns throughout her book to highlight the ways in which sexual assault survivors are most often portrayed and understood as women.
[263] Doyle. *Campus Security, Campus Sex,* 42.

As Doyle and the participants in my thesis have shown, the stories of student-survivors and advocates rupture the pristine image of the campus, revealing the extent to which rape culture is both prevalent and part of its structures. Because rape culture is upheld by myriad systemic injustices such as racism, sexism, colonialism and capitalism, the assertion that UVic and other post-secondary institutions are active players in the perpetuation of rape culture also indicates their complicity in other forms of institutionalized violence. This assertion is highly volatile for the campus brand as it serves to shatter any semblance of the institution as a safe place to live and learn. Accordingly, the notion of rape culture is treated as an abstracted phenomenon, something that exists outside the institution and the day-to-day administration of the campus itself. Rape culture is conceptualized as something brought to campus through the daily interactions of individuals who are exposed to rape culture in other aspects of their lives; it is an imported phenomenon, the consequences of which are now deemed worthy of institutional action, but not understood as part of the fabric of the campus and its administration. If student-survivors and advocates stories continue to reveal an institution complicit in rape culture, that institution continues to have a vested interest in silencing such stories.

UVic has demonstrated the above assertion most recently when they released information about their upcoming review of the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy. As stated in previous chapters, institutions throughout BC are compelled by legislation to review their sexualized violence policies every three years, though there are no guidelines for how these review are to be conducted. On June 1st, 2020, (amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and a global anti-racist solidarity

movement) UVic President Jamie Cassels released a statement regarding the review of three university policies, the first of which is the Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy. To complete the review, UVic has created an "Advisory Committee" tasked with evaluating and providing critical feedback on the policies. Student composition on this board is limited to one representative from the UVic Graduate Student's Society, and one student from the UVic Undergraduate Student's Society.

However, based on the current information available, this advisory group will not be responsible for the vast majority of the SVPR policy review and consultations; rather, a smaller "technical committee" –made up of members of the university's Equity and Human Rights Office, lawyers, the Human Resources department and the Office of Student Life—will do a significant amount of the review work on the policy. There are no students, no student-survivors and no representation from the Anti Violence Project (the sole peer-based organization running programming and advocacy on campus for nearly 30 years). Currently, the only option for student-survivors to provide feedback to the institution is through a two-question online survey, with no clear indication of how or where the information shared will be used or protected. This review structure is not unique to UVic; in the Fall of 2019 a similar strategy was deployed at the University of British Columbia whereby representation from UBC's student sexual assault centre was absent from their initial review committee.[264]

The decision not to include student, survivor and advocate voices on the technical policy committee is further complicated by recent reports from several survivors and advocates in UVic's student newspaper (The Martlet), who claim that the university has

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[264] Thea Udwadia, "A Nest of bureaucracy: UBC to review sexual assault policy in September", (*Ubyssey,* August 27, 2019) Accessed July 15, 2020. https://www.ubyssey.ca/news/UBC-reviews-Policy-131/

failed to provide an adequate standard of care and support.[265] In April 2020, multiple

former UVSS Lead Student Directors explained that they dealt with multiple cases of

sexualized violence involving UVSS Club members that were not resolved through the

SVPR policy. These student leaders explained to the Martlet that they feel as though

current institutional response to sexualized violence is not working. These students set up

formal meetings with UVic Associate Vice-President of Student Affairs Jim Dunsdon,

UVic Executive Director of Student Services Joel Lynn, and Executive Director of

EQHR Cassbreea Dewis,[266] to discuss their concerns:

> "The reason we wanted to meet with them [UVic administrators] was the general
> consensus among the four of us [from the UVSS] was that UVic wasn't adequately
> addressing the concerns or allegations of students that had come forward to us,"
> Whittla said. "I think Isabella, Sabrina, and I all had different students come
> forward to us at different times, many of whom had already tried to involve UVic
> but were either not responded to or their concerns and allegations were not
> adequately addressed. "The sense I got was that UVic was always looking for ways
> to not be involved, rather than looking for ways that they could help students.
> Rather than giving students options, they gave reasons why they couldn't help and
> only changed their attitudes when the students presented them with options or
> quoted UVic's policy."[267]

The article further states:

> Meeting with UVic administration, Lee said, only made her feel worse about the
> situation as she felt the administrators focused largely on UVic's accomplishments
> and not on the concerns raised. At one point in the meeting, Lee said, one of the
> UVic administrators said that their email inbox was proof of all the people they had
> helped.[268]

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[265] Emily Fagan. "This is not working": Students coping with sexual assault, harassment allege lack of support from university" (*The Martlet,* April 15, 2020). Accessed July 14, 2020. https://www.martlet.ca/this-is-not-working-students-coping-with-sexual-assault-harassment-allege-lack-of-support-from-university/
[266] Ibid.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Ibid.

The excerpts above highlight the extent to which the 'successful' application of policy, prevention and response have become entwined with 'good governance' at UVic. In the face of criticism, administrators attempt to quantify their approach with examples of their accomplishments as an institution, or as stated, the number of emails they receive in their inbox. However, student leaders quoted in this article point to 15 separate cases of sexualized violence that saw no resolution through the SVPR policy due to issues of scope and jurisdiction.[269] Quoted throughout the article are other students who explain feeling as though the processes at the Equity and Human Rights Office were not trauma-informed, with one student noting that her confidentiality was breached throughout the disclosure process. Though the article also highlights one story from a survivor who had positive experiences navigating the SVPR policy and accessing supports on campus, there are evidently many students who continue to fall through the cracks.

The lack of representation from students, survivors and the Anti Violence Project on UVic's policy review committees means that the "company" of UVic will remain sheltered from many potentially dissenting voices at the policy table. Furthermore, these feedback mechanisms are being launched during the summer and in the midst of a global pandemic. Policy evaluation under such conditions appears much more about legislative compliance and the maintenance of high performance ratings and much less about dramatically altering the landscape of endemic campus rape culture.

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[269] Ibid.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the many ways in which increasingly neoliberal and corporatized post-secondary environments impact both student-survivors and institutional responses to sexualized violence. On the corporate campus, institutions are simultaneously encouraged and discouraged to address sexualized violence based on their brand and reputation with investors and consumers. This reality places student-survivors and advocates in a double-bind whereby the choice not to share their story is often met with continued inaction and institutional betrayal; at the same time, the choice to speak out about campus rape culture is a high-risk endeavour, one that involves media attention, highly publicized cases and potential backlash for those who share their stories. In instances where sharing story is successful in mediating institutional change, student-survivors and advocates must also make particular discursive moves in order to navigate neoliberal management practices in the development of policy and response to sexualized violence on campus. As institutions such as UVic continue to build a centralized network of "professionals" with "expertise" in the field of campus sexualized violence prevention, student-survivors and community-based organizations are pushed farther to out of the institutional sphere of influence. In this context, addressing campus sexualized violence is divorced from the systemic violence perpetrated by the institution itself, and campus rape culture is obfuscated by the professional apparatus of campus administration.

The corporate environment and neoliberal professionalization of sexualized violence prevention and response is at odds with the primary assertions of my thesis;

that is, that the experiences of student-survivors and community-based services are integral to meaningfully altering the conditions of campus rape culture. My thesis therefore concludes with an imagining of how—despite the current conditions of the corporate campus—these stories can be not only included, but considered central to the implementation and evaluation of sexualized violence prevention and response on campus. The proceeding final chapter draws heavily on the testimony of five frontline service providers to develop a framework for engaging with student-survivors as subject matter experts while centring trauma-informed practices throughout.

V

Honouring Story: A Trauma-Informed Consultation Guide

I think it can be really hard to engage in any sort of nameless hierarchical institution. For an institution to be like "we have a policy don't worry" it doesn't really say a lot, when at its core, the institution does harm on a regular basis. That's like the big picture, of course capitalism is broken. I guess what my curiosity is, is how do we create systems of care, and community-care within this institution that bring together actual tangible groups of people who are stuck here together, doing their work? I guess it's less of an answer and more of a wondering...how do we operate in this cluster-fuck that we survive in you know?
–Niko

Introduction

I share Niko's quote above in this final chapter, as I believe it serves as a bridge between the critiques presented throughout my thesis and the immediate need to transform institutional mechanisms in order to support survivors and dismantle campus rape culture. At the community level, survivors and advocates continue to forge spaces that foster healing and safety. At the institutional level, for the first-time ever, resources are being funneled into policy and programming related to sexualized violence. The following section therefore takes up Niko's curiosity and wonders how student-survivors and advocates can be considered and cared for as subject matter experts, survivors and students. In recognizing the ongoing harm of the institution, as well as the transformative power of student-survivors and their stories, I understand the following Trauma Informed Consultation Guide as a form of harm reduction.

I do not, however, offer this guide as an antidote to the structures of power and oppression that have sought to silence student-survivors and advocates on campus for

decades. I am well aware from both my own lived experiences and the stories that have been shared with me that an institutional framework for policy evaluation will not directly dismantle the corporatized and neoliberal systems that sustain rape culture on post-secondary campuses throughout the country. However, the inclusion of survivors, advocates and story in policy process demands a level of community accountability not currently present in highly corporatized and hierarchical environment of the institution alone.

I return to the assertion made in Chapter Two that survivors most often participate in research related to sexualized violence because they hope that their stories will contribute to someone else never having the same experience.[270] I conclude my thesis with a similar hope that if the principles and practices outlined below are implemented, student-survivors are more likely to feel heard, to be validated and to have support on campus. As such, the following is offered so that—if considered and applied by institutions such as UVic—student-survivors such as those interviewed throughout this study might have their stories honoured in the continued advancement of sexualized violence policies on campus.

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[270] Rebecca Campbell and Adrienne E. Adams. "Why do Rape Survivors Volunteer for Face-to-Face Interviews?: A Meta-Study of Victims' Reasons for and Concerns about Research Participation." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 24, no. 3 (2009): 399.

Consultation Guidelines

The following consultation guide draws heavily on the testimony of five service

providers who shared with me their own practice and experiences to highlight special

considerations when consulting student-survivors. These reflections from service

providers, combined with my conversations with student-survivors, culminate in five

major consultation themes: (1) Build Partnerships and Multiple Ways to Engage, (2)

Prioritize Safety: Immediate and Ongoing Supports, (3) Centre Consent, Confidentiality

and Transparency, (4) Practice Reciprocity and, (5) Honour Story.

These major themes are meant to be used as a mechanism through which student-

survivors and those who support them are to be treated as subject matter experts

regarding the material, social and affective impacts of sexualized violence. Participants in

my research repeatedly identify the stories of student-survivors as crucial to evaluating

the implementation of sexualized violence policy. Lynn for example says:

> Survivor testimonies of the policy's effectiveness would definitely be the key from
> my perspective. Yeah, because you can't have policy makers who maybe do not have
> an idea of it they were in that position [of being a student-survivor], what they would
> want to have happen…I think the indicators of success would definitely have to be
> what the policy has done for survivors.[271]

Similarly, Quinn states:

> I think [policy review] would need to include a series of consultations for sure, with
> folks who have been impacted by that policy. So for anyone who has been sexually
> assaulted, who has experienced sexualized violence, if there are ways to connect with
> those folks.[272]

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[271] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.
[272] Ibid.

The statements made above by Lynn and Quinn are echoed by participants, scholars and service providers, who recognize that survivors must be involved in designing treatment services and the ongoing evaluation of such services.[273] In order to create space for their stories to inform policy directions, institutions must ground their approaches in methods that actively seek to reduce harm, centre the safety of survivors, and care for their stories. Just as the Trauma-Informed Research Design I outlined in Chapter Two has allowed for the stories of student-survivors to remain central to my thesis, institutions themselves must also implement trauma-informed principles to ensure that the primary stakeholders of sexualized violence policy are given every opportunity to inform policies going forward.

(1) Build Partnerships and Multiple Ways to Engage

Community Partnerships:

In a research context, working with post-assault services has already been identified as useful "when seeking research from survivors specifically".[274] Research endeavours built in partnership with community-based service providers are generally associated with higher rates of consent and completion from survivors themselves.[275] Taking direction from and working alongside advocates and organizations that have been doing anti-sexualized violence work for decades can contribute to stronger feelings of safety for

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[273] Denise E Elliott, Paula Bjelajac, Roger D. Fallot, Laurie S. Markoff, and Beth Glover Reed. "Trauma-informed or trauma–denied: Principles and Implementation of trauma–informed Services for Women." *Journal of Community Psychology* 33, no. 4 (2005): 469.

[274] Rebecca Campbell, Rachael Goodman-Williams, and McKenzie Javorka. "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Sexual Violence Research Ethics and Open Science." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 34, no. 23-24 (2019): 4771.

[275] Ibid.

student-survivors who may wish to provide feedback but who do not feel comfortable doing so in an institutional setting. Thus, institutions must consider relevant community-based partnerships in order to effectively implement structures for feedback.

One participant I interviewed who facilitates UVic's Bystander education programming notes that "interacting with the behemoth university and all its weird bureaucratic pathways is a huge barrier" for students and survivors.[276] This participant echoed all other service providers interviewed by calling for partnerships with groups such as the Anti Violence Project or other student-run organizations to increase safety and make space for student-survivors to share their stores. Quinn for example states:

> I personally would not feel safe to, given my experiences with administration at UVic, to go to some sort of consultation hosted by administration. You know I would want to know that like, the Native Student's Union is involved, the First People's House, advocacy groups. Because those are the folks I feel would prioritize care and that I would trust. I don't trust the administration and I think a lot of folks don't. And I think that's actually a really good indicator of resilience when folks don't trust authority figures, and specifically institutions.[277]

Here Quinn highlights the ongoing ways in which Institutional Betrayal impacts whether or not student-survivors feel safe enough to engage with the university. In order to still provide space for survivors to participate in the review of policy, Quinn demonstrates how partnerships with groups on (or off) campus that have established credibility is likely to foster a greater sense of safety and care for student-survivors.

Sarah echoed Quinn's statements saying:

> I also think not always asking students to come within the institution, but like going to student groups and then allowing them to self-organize. For UVic for example, obviously going to the Anti Violence Project, but then also going to the student of

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[276] Participant, Interview by Author. Audio Recording, November 14th 2019.
[277] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.

colour collective, and like SOFAR (Students Open Forum Against Racism) and also asking if like this is a thing that people in their own work are interested in doing...Not seeking to do the like "we need a diversity of perspective at *this* table", but like that we need a diversity of perspectives, whether those come from people in their own community doing the work. We don't need to ask them to come to our table; we can be like "what are you doing at *your* table, do you have thoughts for us?[278]

Sarah highlights a major theme presented throughout my thesis that there are already student groups and communities who challenge rape culture on campus every day. These are often spaces that survivors seek out and create themselves, meaning that stories of campus sexualized violence are already navigated within these groups, typically in ways that feel safer for student-survivors. Engaging with advocacy groups and other peer-based supports on campus can therefore increase the diversity of voices being consulted during a policy review. This is especially important as multiple service providers mentioned how UVic often calls upon students for participation on committees without much consideration for the relevant experiences of those students. Nathan stated that:

When they [UVic] are looking for students to sit on committees it's really just a shot in the dark. There isn't enough due diligence around finding students who have the positionality to offer impactful insight.[279]

He further explained that:

I noticed that the cases that I was getting were racialized people. And while I was here in the summer, there weren't any other racialized people working in the offices that I've mentioned. And I think that touches on the intersectional approach. Having--*sighs*, sharing a vulnerable experience with somebody who has to navigate the world in a similar way that you do is, comforting is too weak a word for it. But I think that's part of returning the strength to the survivor.[280]

Nathan demonstrates the value in having spaces for survivors to feel represented, and where the intersections of their identity may be readily understood. Similar to Nathan's

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[278] Sarah Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.
[279] Nathan. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 20, 2019.
[280] Ibid.

assertions, another participant affirms the importance of having spaces that are relevant

and reflective of a broad range of experiences:

> Creating spaces that are relevant to people's experiences, whether that means groups of mixed genders, groups that are specific for Indigenous Folks, or trans folks, having those options available. Because some people may feel more comfortable talking in a space of like, everyone with different experiences, some folks might not and that would be really unsafe...having the options for one-on-one conversations available. Having the options for like support people to be available, having those conversations happening in accessible spaces.[281]

The preceding quotes make evident how institutions should recognize self-organized

spaces during pre-consultation planning, and should ask these groups what participation

could look like for them. In doing so, universities and colleges recognize that they

themselves are not necessarily best suited to lead such consultation processes and further

acknowledge the labour of community-based and student groups as both meaningful and

legitimate sources of knowledge.

Create Multiple Ways to Engage:

Service providers also repeatedly highlighted the need for multiple points of entry into

consultation processes. Being flexible to the many different ways that student-survivors

may want to engage in consultation ensures that student-survivors can exercise choice.

One service provider summarizes this point stating:

> One thing I can immediately see is providing like a variety of ways for survivors to give their input or consultation. I don't think there's like a one-size fits all model for consultation and I think that especially if you want to consult with people that are

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[281] Ibid.

survivors of violence about their experience surviving violence, then there should be a lot of flexibility.[282]

They further state that,

I can think for one survivor, filling out a google form anonymously and being able to really carefully craft what their words and what they're saying, that might be the most valuable thing for them to do. Whereas someone else might think like you know, "I can sit down with someone and talk to them for an hour about what I think", or "I would love to talk to someone and explain what I think but I don't want to do it alone", so like focus groups or a peer based group might be the best way to do it. So I think options are the best.[283]

The quotes above highlight a need for institutions to think carefully about what kinds of participation they can offer and to actively develop many different forms of engagement for student-survivors. For example, in the fall of 2019, Ryerson University conducted a two-phase consultation process to review their Sexual Violence Policy. The first round of consultations included eight in-person group sessions for students, staff and faculty, as well as an option to set up one-on-one feedback sessions for students. In Phase Two, an online survey was also made available.[284]

Building partnerships with student-groups and community based organizations as well as creating multiple points of entry for consultation are crucial to a trauma-informed consultation plan. These practices increase the likelihood that student-survivors will feel safe enough to engage in consultation in the first place and makes space for the choice and agency of those survivors to remain paramount. Finally, the presence of partnerships with student groups and community-based organizations serves as an additional mechanism of accountability for institutions as well. Such groups and organizations'

[282] Participant. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 14, 2019.
[283] Ibid.
[284] "Sexual Violence Policy Check In", Ryerson University, accessed July 14, 2020
https://www.ryerson.ca/svp-check-in/

existence is not based on profit but rather solely on the support and healing of survivors; their presence in policy process poses a direct challenge to tokenized or depoliticized action from institutions addressing sexualized violence.

(2) Prioritize Safety: Immediate and Ongoing Supports

A trauma-informed approach to consultation will also consider the ongoing ways in which experiences of sexualized violence impact the daily lives of survivors. Institutions must therefore set up a variety of support structures that actively seek to reduce harm. In order to do so, institutions should ensure that all staff involved in conducting consultations are adequately trained to support survivors, respond to disclosure, and to provide immediate referrals to services. As highlighted by Quinn, options for care should extend beyond that which is offered on campus:

> Follow-up for care, you know like, having counsellors on site, not just from UVic but community liaisons and representatives who do this work, to provide that care for sure. And to be you know. I think there's so much that could be done in terms of that, making sure folks have access to care.[285]

The need for ongoing access to care is repeatedly referenced by service providers throughout my research in recognition that even with the best of intentions, discussing sexualized violence and institutional response may trigger participants. Ensuring that staff conducting consultations are trained and that additional support people are available both during and in an ongoing way demonstrates that the institution understands the complexities of trauma associated with sexualized violence and takes this issue seriously.

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[285] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.

As my own research design has already highlighted, attention to physical space is also essential to increasing the safety and comfortability of student-survivors.[286] In-person consultations should take place in welcoming environments with "sufficient space for comfort and privacy, absence of exposure to violent or sexual material" and access to supports should be made clear.[287] Though in-person methods are commonly associated with best-practices regarding trauma-informed research with survivors, institutions such as UVic are likely to conduct some portion of their feedback and consultation processes online.[288] Therefore, institutions must also consider how to implement immediate and ongoing supports when doing online survey methods as well. To centre safety, choice and support for survivors during surveys, any online formats should allow for a "quick escape" button to be present on all pages of the survey. This permits a student-survivor to immediately exit the survey if they no longer want to participate or if the conditions under which they are participating have changed and they must exit the survey for their own safety. Ideally this option will also clear their browser.[289] Additionally, online formats should provide a button or link to relevant on and off campus resources and how they can be accessed. At the outset of the survey, a content warning providing information about the subject matter and range of content that will be present in the survey should be made available.

Finally, student-survivors must be given the support necessary to engage in policy review in a way that is accessible for a broad range of needs. While this includes several

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[286] Rebecca Campbell et al. "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Sexual Violence Research", 4777.
[287] Ibid.
[288] This assertion is increasingly relevant given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.
[289] For example see the "Ontario Student Voices on Sexual Violence Survey" https://www.info-sv-vs.ca/en/Home

considerations around physical space (eg. is the venue wheelchair accessible and scent free? Are gender-inclusive washrooms available? What kind of transcription and interpretation services are provided? Will money for transportation and childcare be offered?), accessibility also means ensuring that students are supported to navigate dense policy and institutional jargon. Nathan for example recommends that students be given ample time and guidance on the language being used so that they can participate fully in a review process.[290] Similarly Sarah suggests that key areas of the policy be distilled into plain language, rather than asking for feedback on an entire policy all at once.[291]

(3) Centre Consent, Confidentiality and Transparency

In the context of both trauma-informed service provision and research methods, feelings of safety are enhanced for survivors when confidentiality is directly outlined, and clear information is provided to participants. Survivors should be given the maximum amount of control and choice, including the "right to set limits and modify the process".[292] Therefore, the establishment of "clear boundaries and well-defined roles are essential to providing a safe environment for survivors".[293] Quinn expands on these assertions noting that:

> This is something that will take time. It would take time to set up. You have to just take the time to have those conversations, to figure out what you're offering as well, and to be very, very clear. This is something that I have experienced a lot and I would

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[290] Nathan. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 20, 2019.

[291] Sarah Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.

[292] Campbell and Adams. "Why do Rape Survivors Volunteer for Face-to-Face Interviews?", 467

[293] Ibid.

love for this process to be different. Where folks you know, they know why they're there, in terms of something that's actually back from them [the institution] that's like "this is exactly what your answer or what your stories and experiences are going to be building towards".[294]

They further state that:

I think in order to build trust with folks like that's actually really important to know exactly where their stories are going and what going to happen, and how they might be contacted in the future. Because for some folks it might be a matter of like "Yup, this is a one-time only, I'm going to share my story or provide feedback and do this labour for you, but I don't want to be contacted again and that's that" you know? Which I think is also important to give people agency in that process.[295]

Institutions should therefore avoid "vague or deceptive language"[296] when creating communications about the consultation plan. Instead, the development of clear statements about how information from consultations will be used and what levels of participation are being asked of survivors is consistent with a trauma informed approach.[297] The application of these practices contributes to what Elliott calls an empowerment model, whereby choice and autonomy regarding engagement is shifted to survivors. Therefore, trauma-informed consent forms and policy information with detailed outlines of how the institution "will protect participants' safety, privacy, and confidentiality if they intend to share/archive data" should be prioritized.[298]

(4) Practice Reciprocity

The labour of sharing one's story and experiences of sexualized violence within the walls of an institution should be met with care and reciprocity. As noted, student-survivors

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[294] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Campbell and Adams. "Why do Rape Survivors Volunteer for Face-to-Face Interviews?", 467.
[297] Rebecca Campbell et al. "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Sexual Violence Research", 4770.
[298] Ibid, 4782.

such as those who participated in the initial SVP Working Group at UVic repeatedly shared their trauma with figures of authority on campus and were not compensated for their time or labour. Moving forward with policy reviews, institutions have an opportunity to practice reciprocity and demonstrate a new pathway forward that recognizes the labour and knowledge of survivors as legitimate expertise. Overwhelmingly, both student-survivors and service providers interviewed for my thesis demand compensation when being asked to provide feedback and strategic policy directives.

Though reciprocity can be shown through material acts such as ensuring that participants are fed during consultations or monetarily compensated, reciprocity is also demonstrated by the actions of an institution in creating space for survivor's stories. The guidelines shared throughout this section act as a starting place, one that rejects a top-down institutional approach and demands partnership with student-survivors and service providers who live and challenge the reality of rape culture every day. If post-secondary institutions want to work towards campuses that are free from violence, these practices should be considered minimum standards of engagement. As Quinn states, institutions should "always have an offering" because whether or not the offer is taken by student-survivors, institutions should consider "all the ways that care be imbued within" the process.[299]

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[299] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.

(5) Honour Story

This thesis has established the transformative potential of the stories of student-survivors

and those who support them. To return to Sherene Razack, storytelling demands distinct

accountability on behalf of the researcher; that is, the "task of calling into question

knowledge and being of both the teller and the listener, and struggling for ways to take

this out of the realm of abstraction and into political action".[300] The task for post-

secondary institutions therefore, is to embrace story in the evaluation of policy, and to be

prepared for a range of possible outcomes:

> I think an important part is like y'all [post-secondary institutions] have to be willing
> to ask the right questions and get hard answers. So I find in a lot of evaluation
> processes that I've been a part of that I've witnessed, you know the questions kind
> of dance around the subject, and they're very broad and general and then the data
> can be interpreted in a whole host of different ways. I think that to give the
> institution the least amount of opportunities possible to interpret that in ways that
> could potentially go towards boosting their reputation or you know like...and when
> I say willing to be ready to receive a hard answer that could mean "this policy is *not*
> effective". And to really contemplate, if that was an outcome of this process, what
> are the steps after that? Like to really think through, *after* the evaluation process as
> well. Like what happens if it's like "this has been super ineffective, we need to go
> back to the drawing board" or "these aspects seem to be doing great but there needs
> to be a considerable amount of work done.[301]

In the quote above, Quinn points to a need for consultation processes to make space for

emotions, reflections and feedback. As my thesis has shown, many survivors have had

negative experiences of sexualized violence *and* of institutions. Effectively, those

conducting consultations must be prepared to "hear about a wide variety of ongoing

negative impacts of trauma", and to seriously negotiate what range of responses the

institution can implement.[302] As one service provider states, this means demonstrating a

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[300] Sherene Razack. "Story-Telling for Social Change." *Gender and Education* 5, no. 1 (1993): 55-70.
[301] Quinn. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, October 31, 2019.
[302] Rebecca Campbell et al. "A Trauma-Informed Approach to Sexual Violence Research", 4776.

"willingness to allow survivors to say what they want to say, however little or much that is, and trying to get as many voices as possible to the table" including those marginalized in institutional settings.[303]

Honouring story means believing survivors. Here I draw on the work of the Anti Violence Project's "Supporting a Survivor" workshop, which includes a four element model of support called *LISTEN-BELIEVE-REFER-CARE*.[304] In caring for story in the context of consultation I highlight *LISTEN* and *BELIEVE*, which call upon those supporting survivors to practice the following:

> **Listen:** If someone comes to you because they've been assaulted, it is likely they just want you to listen to them. Don't rush them or cut them off. Let them tell you as much, or as little, as they feel comfortable with. Asking prying questions could make a survivor feel that you are disbelieving or doubting them. You don't need to ask for specific details or offer advice, which are often our first reactions but can be unhelpful when someone is in crisis or just looking for emotional support. Being present for someone has so much power. Active listening often involves suspending our own thought processes and making a conscious effort to understand another person's position. This might look like open body language, echoing back what we are hearing, or asking for clarification about how someone feels. There are many ways to listen.

> **Believe**: Believing a survivor and reminding them that the violence they experienced was not their fault is so important in this world where survivors are often faced with disbelief. Many myths exist about sexualized violence in media and elsewhere in our society, which lead to widespread victim-blaming attitudes. Remember that everyone resists violence in different ways. Sometimes, not fighting back, or staying silent is a way to resist more violence. Let the survivor know that whatever they did was what they needed to at the time. No one asks for or deserves to experience violence.

In the context of sexualized violence policy review, listening and believing survivors is demonstrated both in real-time during consultations, and through institutional action. Survivors want to know that their story is going to contribute change. Universities and

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[303] Participant. Interview by Author. Audio Recording. Victoria, November 14, 2019.
[304] "How to Support a Survivor", The Anti Violence Project, accessed July 15, 2020.
https://www.antiviolenceproject.org/how-to-support/

colleges therefore meet survivors with belief, and must then be clear as to how they will

work towards those changes once they have collected stories from survivors.

Table 2. Trauma-Informed Consultation Plan Guideline

Trauma-Informed Consultation Element:	Brief Description:	Examples of Implementation Based on Recommendations from Service-Providers and Student-Survivors:
1. Build Partnerships and Multiple Ways to Engage	Institutions recognize that community and student-based organizations are best equipped to reach student-survivors. Partnerships are built with these groups to ensure that student-survivors feel safe enough to participate in consultation, and these organizations and communities are recognized as both subject matter experts and legitimate producers of knowledge on dismantling rape culture. Diverse and varied opportunities for engagement are developed.	- On-campus sexual assault centres and student advocacy groups are brought into the consultation process from the beginning - Student-groups can self-organize within their own spaces to provide institutional feedback - Consultations include focus groups, one-on-one sessions, and online formats. - Consultations are flexible and can adjust based on needs
2. Prioritize Safety: Immediate and Ongoing Supports	Understanding of ongoing impacts of trauma associated with sexualized violence and Institutional Betrayal are demonstrated. Institutions actively seek out processes and supports that work to mitigate harm and retraumatization including immediate, ongoing and follow-up care. Resources provided are culturally relevant and provide student-survivors	- Consultation sessions have access to in-person supports as well as information about on and off campus resources - Those conducting consultations are trained in response to disclosure, trauma-informed practice and cultural acuity

with options. In-person consultations therefore take place in spaces that are accessible, free from triggering material, and staff are trained to navigate a broad spectrum of traumatic responses. Student-survivors are given ample support to understand university jargon and dense policy language

- In-person consultations take place in spaces that are comfortable and free from triggering material. Boardrooms and bureaucratic spaces are avoided
- Comforts such as tissues, food, tea and colouring are provided throughout consultation
- Escape buttons, content warnings and links to support resources are provided for all online material

3. Centre Consent, Confidentiality and Transparency

Communications regarding the policy review and consultation plan are clear and concise, avoiding vague or deceptive language about the use of student-survivors testimony and feedback. Student-survivors are told where and how their stories are being used and are given the authority to modify processes in ways that feel best for them to proceed. Confidentiality and the limitations associated with it are clearly stated so that survivors can make informed decisions about their participation in consultations.

- Student-survivors are given clear communications about what is being asked of them during consultation sessions including: content warnings, location, duration, accessibility of space, and support options available.
- Communications effectively outline the intentions of the institution, how stories will be cared for and how confidentiality will be protected
- Consultations and reviews are given more time than traditional policy reviews

4. Practice Reciprocity

Student-survivors and service-providers are recognized as knowledge holders and compensated for their labour. The institution demonstrates through both material means and action that they are committed to creating space for the stories of participants to

- Student-survivors and service providers are paid for their labour
- Students are offered course credit or other academic achievements for their labour
- Those participating in consultations receive food,

	inform future policy directions. Institutions make offerings to those who participate in consultations.	bus tickets, options for childcare - Participants are acknowledged as subject matter experts
5. Honour Story	The institution is willing to witness the stories of student-survivors and service-providers regardless of how reputation may be impacted. Ample time and space is given to ensure that participants feel safe enough to share, and the transformative potential of storytelling is centred throughout consultation. Institutions ensure that a diversity of stories are heard. When possible, consultations are led by student-groups and advocates rather than institutional actors. Survivors are met with belief.	- Institutions ask questions that allow for student-survivors and service providers to share their experiences openly, vague questions that could be open to a range of interpretations are avoided - Institutions communicate exactly what will be done with stories, and how feedback, especially that which is negative will be incorporated into new policy directions - Stories are not questioned or interrogated - All emotions that emerge storytelling are accepted in consultative spaces

(Table adapted from Campell et al. "Ten Principles of Trauma-Informed Services: Adapted for Research" and Interviews by Author)

A Note about Analysis and Review Prior to Consultation:

Though the guidelines listed above focus predominantly on the consultative aspects of policy review, I note that these principles and practices are also relevant to other stages of policy development such as the review and analysis that typically takes place prior to the creation of a consultation plan. If student-survivors and those who support them are to be considered subject matter experts, their presence is also crucial on the institutional committees tasked with the more bureaucratic aspects of policy review. Institutions that have community or peer-based sexual assault centres (such as the Anti Violence Project at UVic or the Sexual Assault Support Centre at UBC) should make space for representatives from these organizations to have a seat at the policy making table, alongside student representatives.[305] If there are no student or peer-based organizations specifically on campus, institutions should consider partnering with an organization in the community that provides frontline services and programming. An example of such partnership can be found at Thompson Rivers University, which works alongside the Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre (KSACC). A community based victim services worker from KSAAC is available on campus weekly for students to access support separate from the institution as well as information about other resources and reporting options.[306] Once these kinds of partnerships are established on campus, community organizations such as KSACC should be brought into the review and analysis

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[305] As has been shown, the inclusion of student-survivors and student voices was part of the development of UVic's Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response Policy in 2016.
[306] "Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response", Thompson Rivers University, accessed July 15, 2020 https://www.tru.ca/current/wellness/sexual-violence.html

of sexualized violence policy as they have direct frontline experience both relevant to analysis of policy and creation of consultation plans going forward.

Conclusion

The guideline offered above is not meant as a cure-all for institutional mistrust and wrongdoing, nor is it a checklist that will guarantee student-survivors will ever feel safe enough to discuss their experiences within the walls of an institution like UVic. This guideline remains grounded in an understanding that to date, post-secondary institutions have done little to earn the trust and relationship of student-survivors and service providers. However, this lack of trust does not mean that institutions should not do everything in their power to make it possible for student-survivors and service providers to inform prevention and response efforts moving forward.

As my thesis has repeatedly shown, student-survivors and those who support them have and continue to be at the forefront of demanding structural change *and* carving out spaces where survivors feel supported and validated. I know from both my research and my own experience that imagining campuses—and broader communities for that matter—free from rape culture is both hopeful and heartbreaking work. As the stories shared in my thesis affirm, the burden of shaping a violence-free future has always fallen to survivors and advocates. What I have personally learned writing this thesis is that when survivor's stories are taken seriously, and cared for when told, lessons on dismantling rape culture can be drawn again, and again.

Honouring story reduces the burden and labour placed on survivors who often face disbelief, thus valuing the contributions of those closest to this kind of violence. Post-secondary institutions such as UVic have an opportunity to alleviate some of this burden by centring the stories of student-survivors, advocates and supporters in future policy directions. In order to do so, institutions must resist traditional policy practices, reject of the depolitiziation and neoliberalization of our movements and let community take the lead. Campus sexualized violence policies remain in their infancy, they can still grow alongside the voices of those who fought for them; but this is only possible if institutions relinquish some of their power to us. The implementation of the guidelines above are one-step towards a culture of care and solidarity with those who experience and challenge sexualized violence on-campus.

As I reflect on the innumerable hours and tears that this research has involved, I am in many ways left with more questions than answers. I wonder if institutions will be compelled to implement trauma-informed processes without binding provincial mandates. Will institutions ever issue a public apology for years of inaction and silencing towards survivors? How will institutions account for their own staff and faculty who both experience and perpetuate sexualized violence on campus? I don't yet know the answers to these questions. But, what my research has repeatedly affirmed is that survivors will continue to push institutions to do more, to do better. We will build spaces of our own, where we can hold on to our stories and the stories of others. We will do this because we believe that an alternative future is possible.

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