Political Documents and Political Dissonance: An analysis of the meaning created through student engagement in the revision of sexual violence policies at universities in Ontario

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in Social Justice Education

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This thesis investigates student engagement in the revision of sexual violence policies at universities in Ontario. Through case studies, this research analyzes the social and political meaning created through the requirement of Bill 132 for universities and colleges to consider student feedback when the policies are reviewed or amended. Document analyses were completed on the publically available documents pertaining to student engagement and consultations that Brock University, Lakehead University, and Carleton University had available on their institutional websites. By interrogating the power dynamics present in policy consultations, this research problematizes how students and sexual violence are understood within policy frameworks. This thesis calls for universities to challenge the hierarchy inherent to consultation processes and to engage with communities beyond their campuses to work against sexual violence in a comprehensive manner.

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I

1. Introduction

1.1 Background, Study Design, and Methodology

Passed in 2016, Bill 132 requires that all colleges and universities in Ontario must have stand-alone policies pertaining to sexual violence in place by January 1st, 2017. Bill 132 specifies that students must be involved with the revision of these policies, a process that must be undertaken at least once every three years (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1). Institutionalized responses, including sexual violence policies, are essential in establishing social norms and delineating what is acceptable behaviour at university campuses (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Shariff, 2017). Further, anti-discrimination policies and policies responding to violence can be tools for addressing histories of deliberate exclusion and violence at universities and thus be an intentional statement that an institution is attempting positive change (Pitcher, Camacho, Renn, & Woodford, 2018). These policies seem indicative of an important shift in the cultural, social, and political zeitgeist surrounding sexual violence at universities and colleges in Ontario (Ahmed, 2012; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). These policies, therefore, make crucial formal statements about where colleges, universities, and Ontario stand on sexual violence.

This study examines the involvement of students in the making of these policies at Ontario universities, focusing on the following question: How do documents produced by universities in Ontario regarding their student engagement in developing sexual violence policies create meaning? This research finds that, though sexual violence policies are essential for shifting campus cultures and providing a document to which universities can gesture when responding to sexual violence within their communities, a focus on policy as the only legitimate means of addressing sexual violence within universities misses the very nature of sexual violence. Within this policy model, formal student consultations are constructed as the only respectable method for students to engage with higher administration on campus. This accomplishes two results: Universities, and the governments that they act on behalf of as educational structures, develop a façade of being socially-just and proactively engaged with their student bodies. It also makes other forms of student advocacy, such as sit-ins, protests, and public expression in print media, seem unnecessary, immature, or even dangerous (Ferguson, 2017). As the universities, through the requirements of Bill 132, require student engagement,

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these large institutions are understood as making available a respectable method of communication between students and universities (Higginbotham, 1993). These means of communication are, as my research found, directed by the universities and are entrenched in inequitable power dynamics that privilege the results favoured by universities.

Further, policy-based understandings of sexual violence are limited by the definitions provided within the policies. A student's experience of sexual violence, therefore, may not be recognized as such if it does not align with how the university has defined sexual violence in their documentation. From a prevention standpoint, sexual violence policies at universities miss the mark almost entirely. Given the rates of sexual assault that occur before students reach universities, there is a clear need for education on sexual violence and consent from a young age (Schneider & Hirsch, 2018). Furthermore, many people do not attend college or university, and so waiting until students are in post-secondary schools to introduce education and interventions on sexual violence goes to demonstrate whose safety is prioritized in Canada's neoliberal modelling (Brown, 2015; Quinlan, 2017; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018).

Though having stand-alone sexual violence policies specific for universities is important, and so is having avenues for students to engage with policy creation and revision, these responses to sexual violence lack any true depth when they only respond to particular student needs and restrict their resources to campus communities. To do comprehensive work in preventing sexual violence, universities and student advocates must engage with the communities that exist beyond the ivory tower of institutional privilege within which they operate. The classism, racism, colonialism, and xenophobia embedded in access to higher education informs access to education and resources on sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Brown, 2015; Quinlan, 2017). This illustrates the hypocrisy of Canada, Ontario, and the universities located within when they profess their own identities as inclusive spaces with ideological values rooted in equality. Further, the experiences of students and university community members are not limited to their time spent on campuses or as university participants. Thus, to prevent sexual violence in university communities, action against sexual violence must extend beyond campuses.

The findings of this thesis are based on data collected by surveying the digital and online publications created by each university in Ontario regarding student engagement in the consultation processes for their sexual violence policies. After establishing an understanding of

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the general landscape of these documents, I selected three universities to act as case studies in this research. Case study investigations recognize that social phenomenon can be observed and thoroughly understood by investigating an event, setting, or group and how the case under investigation operates and is impacted by the phenomena (Schutt, 2012). Through a comprehensive understanding of a case researchers can better understand the particularities of the larger social world.

Given the scope of this research as a Master's thesis, it would have been impossible to complete a deep analysis of the documents produced by every university in Ontario pertaining to their consultation processes. Using three universities as case studies allowed me to examine critically the online and digital content produced by these schools at great depth. I chose to analyze information that was publically available on the websites of each of the organizations, as the purpose of this thesis project was to engage with how universities curate their public images. Content presented by the respective institutions on their own websites indicates that the institutions are referring interested parties to these documents and that the documents reflect how the institution wants to be perceived. Therefore, I sought out documents that would be available to potential stakeholders, students, and survivors without a request to an administrator or an office within the schools.

In my research, I investigated what meaning was produced by the provincial requirement for students to be consulted in the reviews of university sexual violence policies. This thesis project addresses how this requirement impacts how university leadership upholds public-facing façades through documenting consultation processes. Universities are important signifiers of the Canadian national image on a global scale and thus often reflect Canada's formal values (Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). Due to this, examining the publically available documents created by universities is important for understanding the meaning produced by a government calling for student engagement in responses to sexual violence while not having any outlines regarding what that engagement should look like. Given the lack of direction for considering student feedback in the policy revisions, universities have creative liberties regarding what that process would look like at their institutions. As each university has nuances unique to its geography and community, along with a myriad of other variables, it makes sense that they would engage with their student bodies in different ways. This thesis thus engages with the cultural context surrounding the

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universities, including media reports of responses to instances of sexual violence on campus as well as within the broader context of Canada.

I surveyed and analyzed the online information that universities had made publically available regarding their consultation processes. Given the scope of this Master's thesis and limitations concerning time, financial resources, and the document length, I focused on Brock University, Lakehead University, and Carleton University as illustrative case studies of university consultation processes. These universities were chosen because they represented three different levels of documentation. Brock had a dearth of information on their consultation process, Lakehead had a modest document, and Carleton had multiple lengthy and meticulous reports. Further, the universities have differing geographical locations and different population sizes. Lakehead University has a main campus in Thunder Bay in northern Ontario and a second campus in Orillia, Ontario. Brock University is located in St. Catharines, which is a mid-sized city in the Niagara region. Carleton University, contrastingly, is located in Canada's capital city, Ottawa. Lakehead University's campuses are more geographically isolated from the political and social services to which a large capital city has access. Brock has a student population of 19,100, whereas Lakehead has a student population of 7, 848 between the two campuses, and Carleton has 30, 416. These campuses offered this study an opportunity to investigate how campuses of different sizes communicate internally. The small sample size of universities is a limitation in this thesis; however, the use of case studies provides a rich discussion of the meaning produced by student consultations as well as the purpose of sexual violence policies at universities (Schutt, 2012).

I completed this document analysis using grounded theory. This research coded and analyzed the reports produced by three universities in Ontario. A document analysis was selected because, although Bill 132 calls for the consideration of student input, it does not specify how this input should be gathered and how it should be assessed for inclusion in the sexual violence policies. As a result, university administrations, who are in charge of creating and remain in charge of revising the sexual violence policies at their respective universities, can set the standard for successful student inclusion where they see fit with little accountability. The publically available reports that were produced to document and respond to the consultation processes signal the ways that these institutions want to be presented and the values of these

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institutions. These reports also speak to how these institutions understand sexual violence at universities in Ontario.

As Bowen (2009) argues, document analysis is an "iterative process [that] combines elements of content analysis and thematic analysis" (p. 32). It is iterative in that document analysis requires engaging with the document through multiple passes. These passes through the document will begin as more superficial, then become a thorough reading, followed by the process of interpretation (Bowen, 2009). The use of a content analysis in a document analysis allows the data to be organized according to categories established by the guiding research questions (Bowen, 2009). In the thematic analysis stage of the research, themes are identified, and these themes are used as categories during the analysis phase of the document analysis (Bowen, 2009).

Grounded theory is an inductive methodology that establishes meaning from within the document itself, rather than a deductive approach that would seek to see particular themes within the document (Bowen, 2009). I chose to engage with grounded theory because, in investigating what meaning was created by these documents, I wanted to investigate *how* the reports were articulating what the institutions were trying to communicate about themselves. Given that the reports are easily available online and presented by the universities, it follows that the schools have a great deal of control regarding what the documents look like and what they contain. For this project, the curated nature of the documents was crucial. As much as possible, I wanted the documents to speak for themselves.

1.2 Significance and Limitations

No university wants to be recognized as having a sexual violence problem (Linder & Myers, 2018). Universities, accordingly, produce their responses to sexual violence in very particular ways. The motivating curiosity behind this thesis is to understand why the Province of Ontario requires that "a college or university described in subsection (2) shall ensure that student input is considered, in accordance with any regulations, in the development of its sexual violence policy and every time the policy is reviewed or amended" (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1). If there is no instruction or accountability from the Province on how student feedback is facilitated or treated, then why incorporate this stipulation? This thesis accordingly investigates what meaning is produced by the requirement to consider student

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feedback. This is done by examining the digital and online documents that universities publically released pertaining to their policy review processes. These publically available documents are a tool through which universities can intentionally compose how their engagement of students is presented. Just as universities have power in defining and responding to sexual violence on campuses, they have power in representing their actions through these documents. Hence, these documents are key to understanding how universities want their relationships with sexual violence and with students to be perceived.

There are a few limitations to the current study. Its nature as a Master's thesis limited the time and financial resources that could be spent on the project. All research is temporal, and thus the actions and documentation produced by universities need ongoing analysis. All document analyses can be limited by low retrieveability, meaning that some documents may be difficult or impossible to access (Bowen, 2009). The "Report on the Consultation Process: Lakehead University Sexual Violence Response Policy" (Lakehead University, 2016), references a "Sexual Violence Policy Consultation Process" document dated November 4th, 2016, which I was unable to locate. Bowen (2009) also identifies biased selectivity as a potential limitation in document analysis. I only analyzed documents that the university's websites delineated as being specifically relevant to the student policy consultation process, so it is not a comprehensive analysis of all of the information that these universities have on their sexual violence policies; however, given that this study investigated the image that universities worked to create with public-facing documentation, this was a sound choice for this project. It is important to note further that the study includes only three universities, which lowers the generalizability of the study. A full analysis of all documentation produced by all of the universities in Ontario regarding their consideration of student feedback would be a worthy research project, but it is beyond the scope of this Master's thesis.

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II

2. Conceptualizing Sexual Violence in Higher Education in Canada

Having only been passed in 2016, and with many universities having only created their first sexual violence policies for the January 1st, 2017, deadline outlined in Bill 132, the impacts of the new sexual violence policies at universities in Ontario have yet to be seen (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1). The nascence of these policies means that there are multiple potentials for the direction that they can take. There is no way yet to measure whether they operate primarily to support survivors or whether they will be used to protect universities from accountability in addressing sexual violence. In addition, the literature in the field tends to be based on schools in the United States. These methods and arguments have significantly impacted recent policies on sexual violence in higher education in Canada (Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). While the Canadian legal system and judges are not legally required to follow precedent of cases in the US, they do often refer to such cases in their arguments (Shariff, 2017). This makes the prevalence of the United States' practices and policies relevant to this thesis. Much of the existing research on sexual violence at universities is also focused on the experiences of white, cisgender, straight women, and so Hong and Marine (2018) caution at taking this research as comprehensive.

The literature on sexual violence notes that, though feminist grassroots work against sexual violence has been ongoing for decades, there has been a recent increase in the amount of attention that universities and their communities have been paying to the issue (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Linder & Myers, 2018; Moylan, 2017). In the Canadian context, much of this increased attention is in response to the surge of media attention to sexual violence at universities in Canada and the United States as well as in spheres beyond higher education (Linder & Myers, 2018; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). This media attention on sexual violence, in and beyond higher education, has raised concerns among the general public and has instigated vocal public support for resources for survivors of sexual violence (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). In response to media attention as well as the advocacy work done by students, staff, and faculty, universities and government bodies have implemented strategies to address sexual violence on university campuses (Jessup-Anger, Lopez, & Koss, 2018; Moylan, 2017; *Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). The public responses to sexual

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violence at universities has resulted in the work that universities have done to address sexual violence in their communities also being very public.

Universities, in charge of their own sexual violence policies and having only broad provincial guidance, are allowed to define sexual violence in a manner that is convenient for them (Shariff, 2017; Todorova, 2017). There is consternation from staff and community members that the focus of these resources has been on producing products rather than on university administration and leadership interrogating how their campuses harbour climates that allow for sexual violence (Moylan, 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2013). As Sharrif (2017) states,

> What needs to be further researched is why and how professors who take such advantage of students are allowed to remain in positions of power. It is disturbing that predatory professors are allowed to continue supervising and working closely with students even after successful claims of sexual violence have been brought against them. (p. 49)

This is an example of universities sidestepping the imperative work needed to undo the complicated systems underlying rape culture while still proclaiming themselves to be doing as much as they can. None of this is to say that universities should not have sexual violence policies. Rather, I would like to expand on Todorova's (2017) question regarding why administrations are in charge of their own responses to sexual violence. I will do this by specifically addressing the ways that sexual violence policies operate to benefit universities and create power dynamics that stagnate the work of university leadership concerning responses to sexual violence.

As institutional representatives of the province and country, Ontario and Canada also have an investment in the image of universities (Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). Universities in Ontario also depend a substantial amount on provincial and national funding and approval to operate (Quinlan, 2017). Correspondingly, their actions are constrained by the politics and requirements of these governmental bodies (Quinlan, 2017). Policy documents act as formal responses for each of these institutions and are a tool by which universities can represent their values, and thus these documents create social and political meaning that is relevant to understandings of the broader social and political standings of Ontario and Canada (Ahmed,

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2012). Given the role that these policy documents have in establishing meaning for the universities, province, and country, they will be analyzed according to critical theories pertaining to national identity.

Sexual violence in Canada is supported by cultural contexts of patriarchy, racism, and colonialism, none of which can be separated from the rest and all of which contribute to national identity (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Palmater, 2016). It is crucial in researching sexual violence policies to understand the meaning of formal, state-required policies and what purpose these serve in terms of national identity. Canadian national identity, and thus the identity of its universities which serve an essential role in representing Canada in the international stage, values a documented commitment, if not action, to diversity, equity, multiculturalism, inclusion, and violence prevention (Breton, 2015; Walcott, 2016). Sexual violence policies do valuable work in formalizing these commitments (Napolitano, 2015; Shariff, 2017). Considering Canada's vested interest in establishing itself as "progressive", there is a need for feminist work to not rely on the state to undo its own work in normalizing patriarchy, colonialism, xenophobia, and racism (Alexander, 2005; Palmater, 2016; Razack, 2007; Walcott, 2016). Just as "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house," feminist scholarship cannot rely on the legal requirements put forth by a province in a nation built on colonialism which uses sexual violence as a deliberate weapon against Indigenous communities, to dismantle the rape culture that it continues to foster (Bourassa et al., 2017; Lorde, 1984/2007, p. 112; Palmater, 2016).

Situated next to the United States, Canada is overshadowed by an enormous economic and political superpower (Raney, 2010). Much of Canadian national identity is consequently formed in response to the United States. Rather than addressing issues in Canada, Canadians construct themselves as "not American" and frequently focus on how the social issues in the United States are constructed to be worse than those in Canada (Breton, 2015; Raney, 2010). Despite the success of passing Bill 132, the self-congratulatory nature of Canadian identity runs the risk of erasing potent social problems (Razack, 2007). Deliberately curated images of multiculturalism, national support of LGBTQ communities, and other progressive movements painted with Canadian values of diversity and equality imagine a haven that does not exist (Kahn & Alessi, 2018; Walcott, 2016). As Pamela Palmater (2016) states, all levels of government are aware that Canada's racism is killing Indigenous people. All levels of government are thus aware that Canada's progressive image is a façade that distracts from

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ongoing violence. This is why any supposedly progressive legislation requires vigilant and ongoing analysis regarding how it constructs national identity.

Though there are a variety of resources available to survivors of sexual violence, many of these do not adequately address the needs of more marginalized survivors, who also face disproportionate rates of sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Girshick, 2002). Critical race theory is imperative to understanding how sexual violence impacts Black, Indigenous, and racialized people in particular as well as how Canadian colonialism uses sexual violence as a tool of white supremacy (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016; Wooten, 2017). All of this is conceptualized within neoliberalism, which asserts sexual violence to be the fault of the survivor and thus removes responsibility from institutions such as universities, the Province of Ontario, and Canada (Brown, 2015; Quinlan, 2017). Understanding these theories is fundamental to understanding the meaning produced by publically available documents on university responses to sexual violence, including documents on student engagement in the revision process.

This study is also framed by critical queer, feminist, anti-oppressive theories and practices that dissect the ways that power permeates interpersonal, institutional, and systemic social relations. In particular, the current study engages with Jennifer Freyd's theory of institutional betrayal, Sara Ahmed's critical work on institutional documents, critical race theory, and queer of color critique. A brief introduction of each is provided below.

The frameworks developed here reflect the program of study within which this thesis was written: Social Justice Education. Central to educating for social justice is engagement with theories that are critical of socially oppressive structures (Hytten & Bettez, 2011). For this reason, it is essential that this project be based on frameworks that interrogate the institutional power dynamics within which universities and their responses to sexual violence exist. Social justice education, which Bell (1997, p. 3) describes as "both a process and a goal," aims to instill in its learners the skills to critically engage with the social, political, educational, and structural world within which they live (quoted in Hytten & Bettez, 2011, p. 8). The values, frameworks, and methodologies of social justice education are vital for a research project regarding student engagement in revising the policies of the educational institutions that they attend. This thesis, thus, examines a social justice issue within an educational context while also adhering to foundational principles of the discipline of social justice education.

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2.1 Researcher's Self-Positioning

Though not a formal framework, this qualitative study is also impacted by my own personal social positioning as a cisgender, able-bodied, white settler woman. My work is informed by my experiences as an undergraduate and graduate student at universities in Toronto, where much of my time has focused on anti-sexual violence advocacy and working within university structures on preventing and responding to sexual violence. Though I believe there is a need for responses to sexual violence that specifically address university communities and I do believe that sexual violence policies and student engagement are a part of this, this research has encouraged me to look beyond campuses and address the nuanced roles that policies inhabit. Through the social justice work I have done thus far, I have learned largely through the grace of those around me and I anticipate engaging with this learning process reflexively as I move forward.

2.2 The Politics of Institutional Betrayal

Institutional betrayal is a feminist psychological theory that interrogates interpersonal power, trust, and betrayal within that trust (Freyd, 1997). Institutional betrayal is based on Freyd's work on betrayal trauma theory, which posits that abuse within close relationships is more harmful than abuse by a stranger because the betrayal of trust and dependency in these relationships can make victims "blind" to the abuse they are subject to (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Betrayal blindness, therefore, refers to blocking painful memories or otherwise minimizing experiences of abuse by a person in power in order to survive (Linder & Myers, 2018). Betrayal trauma results in higher rates of PTSD, dissociation, anxiety, depression, and borderline personality disorder than stranger-perpetrated violence (Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019). Smith and Freyd (2013) found that experiencing betrayal by an institution upon which an individual is dependent or in which they bestow trust could similarly cause posttraumatic symptoms. This illustrates the need for institutions to reflect on how they reproduce systems of power that facilitate violence.

Freyd has since expanded upon betrayal theory and betrayal blindness to introduce institutional betrayal, wherein individuals within an organization may ignore or minimize the abuse that they experience at the hands of the institutions that they trust or upon which they depend (Linder & Myers, 2018). Institutional betrayal theory has been taken up regarding sexual violence on university campuses and the ways in which university institutions act to betray survivors (Linder & Myers, 2018; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2018; Quinlan, 2017; Smidt, Rosenthal,

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Smith, & Freyd, 2019). These scholarly investigations have primarily focused on relationships between universities, institutional betrayal, reporting processes, and resources responding to sexual violence provided by universities.

Institutional betrayal requires at least one of either trust or dependency on an institution (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Universities suit this model perfectly because students often trust the intentions of their universities and those who hold positions of authority as faculty or in administrative work (Smith & Freyd, 2013). Students have a dependency on university institutions for general services, healthcare, living spaces, and an education, for which they are often paying substantial amounts of money. Importantly, institutional betrayal does not require both trust and dependency and can operate with only one of the two. This is particularly relevant for marginalized students who may not trust their institutions but nevertheless rely on their universities for services and education (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Though there is disagreement within scholarship as to whether certain groups of students – LGBTQ, disabled, Black, Indigenous, racialized, and younger students in particular – are more vulnerable to institutional betrayal, all students in universities are vulnerable to some degree to institutional betrayal (Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014; Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019).

Trust or dependency may be requirements for institutional betrayal, but Smith and Freyd (2014) identify five characteristics that increase likelihood and rates of institutional betrayal. These characteristics are membership requirements, such as membership at a university wherein adhering to specific social norms is valued and deviance from these norms is punished; prestige, of either the institution or the perpetrator or perpetrators themselves which may enable the obfuscation of abuse; priorities that differ from the welfare of survivors, such as a prioritization of institutional reputation; institutional denial by distancing perpetrators from the institution and thus negating the need for institutions to investigate how their structures reproduce circumstances and cultures wherein sexual violence takes place; and barriers to change that exist within the institution (Smith & Freyd, 2014).

The barriers to change that Smith and Freyd (2014) discuss are critical to understanding student engagement in the revision of sexual violence policies. The authors identify three specific barriers to change: a lack of language, a lack of awareness, and experiences of trauma by the system itself. The lack of language creates the illusion that each time an instance of betrayal or abuse occurs, it is the first time. Without being able to name what is occurring, it is difficult to

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identify patterns and connect common issues, strategies, or solutions. Instead, as Smith and Freyd argue, each act of sexual violence appears as a surprise to the institution and those within it (2014).

Similarly, a lack of awareness disrupts continuity and momentum in movements against sexual violence. Experiences of trauma by the system itself refers not to the trauma experienced by an individual within the university, such as a sexual assault against a student, but rather to the institution's own experience of trauma (Smith & Freyd, 2014). An institution may experience "cultural trauma" after the assault of a student, but the traumas are distinct from one another (Smith & Freyd, 2014, p. 582). Further, it would be wrong to conflate the trauma of a student surviving sexual assault with the trauma experienced by an institution. Unfortunately, institutional experiences of trauma often lead to institutional memory losses that exacerbate institutional betrayal (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Universities, which may experience public scrutiny or a loss of a good reputation as a trauma, experience a similar pattern of trauma and memory loss to that of survivors of betrayal trauma. Through a lack of language and lack of awareness regarding the prominence of sexual violence combined with membership ideals, use of prestige to obscure the abuse, prioritizing the reputation of the institution over truth and transparency, and institutional denial used to distance itself from perpetrators, institutions experience memory loss as both a strategy and coping mechanism in response to sexual violence (Hong & Marine, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

Wendy Brown (2015) asserts that neoliberalism extends beyond specific economic policies and carves out "novel ways of conceiving and relating state, society, economy, and subject and also inaugurate[s] a new 'economization' of heretofore noneconomic spheres and endeavours" (p. 50), meaning that neoliberalism manifests beyond the precision of policies and exists in all the ways that humans relate to one another. Within neoliberalism, all relationships and interactions are framed within a lens of transaction (Brown, 2015). Universities as institutions, operating within neoliberal systems wherein their values are increasingly corporate and their funding is increasingly private, precarious, and based on marketing strategies, benefit from institutional memory loss wherein their leadership can claim ignorance to the severity of sexual violence on campus or can attribute damning statistics to other schools or isolated incidences (Quinlan, 2017). For university institutions, therefore, institutional betrayal and

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memory loss can be beneficial, as they allow administration to claim ignorance or act as though they have not been seeing pervasive issues, such as sexual violence, on their campuses for years.

Unfortunately, student social justice work in Canada also experiences institutional memory loss. The scope of this thesis is not enough for an exhaustive examination of institutional betrayal within student-run organizations, though there would certainly be merit to such an investigation. Rather, I will examine how student activists are hindered by the barriers to change that Smith and Freyd (2014) identify as being produced by university institutions.

Since the 1970s, Canadian universities have become increasingly corporate as intense national and provincial funding cuts have persisted since 1990, intensified by the financial crisis in 2008 and facing further dramatic cuts since Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario won the provincial election in 2018 (Quinlan, 2107; The Canadian Press, "Funding for Ontario Colleges and Universities to be Tied to 'Performance Outcomes'", 2019). Individuals entering universities are making their decisions about which schools to attend based increasingly on their understandings of what will help them procure paid work after graduation (Brown, 2015; Quinlan, 2017). In this corporate model, students are what Quinlan (2017) refers to as "revenue-generating units" instead of "learners" and their roles are more economic than educational (p. 62). In the corporate education model, students are consumers of their university education rather than being in a position to influence what this education looks like, which limits the institutional power that students have to initiate change on university campuses (Quinlan, 2107). Despite this, for generations, students have been speaking back to institutional power and pushing their universities to improve their social justice work (Ferguson, 2017; Linder & Myers, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

Studies consistently found that students have a strong sense of trust, loyalty, and pride in their universities (Linder & Myers, 2018; Pinciotti & Orcutt, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014). These feelings are present before students even move to campus or begin classes and are often motivators for students to engage in activism, even after experiencing institutional betrayal following sexual assault (Linder & Myers, 2018). Linder and Myers (2018) found that students often chose to do activist work against sexual violence on campus with the hope and intention of improving the experiences of future students and because they believed that their universities could do better.

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Universities, even those with a legal mandate to respond to sexual violence, such as the mandate created by Title IX in the United States, often constructed individuals and groups organizing against sexual violence as a problem because bringing public attention to sexual violence on their campuses threatened the reputations of the schools (Linder & Myers, 2018; Phipps, 2017). Ferguson (2017) similarly found that universities would construct student movements as violent or as a threat to social justice or the values of the country, even when student groups were organizing for social justice causes such as anti-racism or civil rights.

Work on university campuses against sexual violence has been ongoing for generations of scholars and activists (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Despite rigorous research, social organizing, activism, protests, media attention, and advocacy, there has been no notable change in rates of sexual assault on university campuses over the last 30 years (Smith & Freyd, 2014). This is not to say that awareness campaigns and educational initiatives on sexual violence have been for nothing; there has been an uptake in media attention given to sexual violence on campuses and beyond, and governmental actions such as Bill 132 exemplify the importance of this work. Though far from perfect, these are important steps in the right direction, and it may be of some comfort to survivors to see at least a formal condemnation of sexual violence.

2.3 The Politics of Making Documents

Institutional consultations with stakeholders and communities, as cautioned by Sara Ahmed (2012),

> can legitimize the document as collective without necessarily being collective. When consultation becomes a routine, it does not mean organizations actually use it to change what they are doing (you can receive feedback without engaging with the feedback you receive). In other words, organizations can consult in order to say they have consulted. Consultation can thus be a technology of inclusion: you include ‘‘the others’’ in the legitimizing or authenticating of the document whether or not their views are actually included. (p. 94)

The consultation process thus reinscribes power dynamics between those who have the power to dictate what is included in a document and those who depend on this power to be heard, all while

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giving the institution credit for a performed communication with communities. Further, the experiences of those being consulted only become legitimate should the institution see it as fit.

Policies are a preferred method of institutional response as they mark a formal compliance and act as statement that the institution cares about the issue. Ahmed (2012) cautions of the ways that documents may be fetishized as "doing" the issue being addressed when, in fact, a policy is just a document unless it is actionable and engaged with in a meaningful manner by the communities that it impacts (p. 86). Accordingly, the current study is cognizant of the ways that documents can reproduce power structures within institutions while simultaneously concealing this very power through technologies of consultation. As Ahmed (2012) argues, auditing processes are an administrative exercise at which institutions can succeed without accomplishing the task, such as addressing sexual violence, that the audit it supposed to assess. Given the lack of accountability in the mandate of student engagement set out by Bill 132, I will investigate what the purpose of including this clause is and analyze the meaning produced by this requirement.

2.4 Critical Race Theory and Sexual Violence

Black, Indigenous, and racialized women and trans people, and Indigenous two-spirit people experience rape culture differently than white women and trans people, who are privileged by systems of racism (Bourassa et al., 2017; Razack, 2007; Wooten, 2017). Critical race theory examines the ways that whiteness is made invisible and how the experiences of people of colour are measured against white experiences that are constructed as objective and universal (Iverson, 2007). Sexual violence is thus removed from the cultural context of racism and made to be an individual issue rather than a systemic one. The nation thereby does not interrogate how it facilitates disproportionate rates of sexual violence against Black, Indigenous, and racialized groups. Thus, the fault is presented as that of Indigenous, Black, and racialized people because white people, as the default measurement, do not experience violence at the same rates and in the same ways (Iverson, 2007).

In reality, racism, colonialism, ableism, homophobia, and transphobia cannot be separated from sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016; Porter & Williams, 2011; Serano, 2016; Wooten, 2017). Despite this, work against sexual violence in mainstream institutions rarely takes into adequate account the ways that racism and colonialism impact

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sexual violence and the ways by which this work has actively harmed Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities. For example, Black feminist and womanist work against sexual violence has been critical of how Black men have been constructed as dangerous and have faced much harsher punishments than white men (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Wooten, 2017). Further, work done by Black scholars, activists, and professionals in the field have highlighted how response services are catered to the needs of white women and that Black survivors face more skepticism and scrutiny when they come forward than do white survivors (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Iverson, 2007; Wooten, 2017).

Sexual violence is not an issue of desire or love; it is a violent expression of power and a deliberate tool used in Canada's colonization efforts (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016). In Canada, colonialism has positioned Indigenous women to be disproportionately vulnerable to sexual violence while also erasing and dismissing this violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016). Indigenous women, trans people, and two-spirit people thereby have needs that are different from those of non-Indigenous people and, accordingly, policies and consultations regarding sexual violence must take the feedback of Indigenous students, community members, and scholars seriously (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016). Though Indigenous feminist scholarship has been outlining specific needs and ways forward for years, policy makers have yet to adequately take action on what has been so clearly spelled out for them (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016).

Through framing other countries as oppressive, Canada constructs its national identity as a progressive haven, particularly in comparison to the United States (Kahn & Alessi, 2018; Raney, 2010; Walcott, 2016). To disrupt the xenophobia and erasure of colonialism central to this national narrative, feminist work must examine the racism, colonialism, transphobia, and homophobia within Canada's own practices. Taking into account Canada's investment in a progressive public image, it is thus imperative to not depend on the state to determine measures of success in dismantling patriarchy, colonialism, xenophobia, and racism (Alexander, 2005; Razack, 2007; Walcott, 2016).

2.5 Queer of Color Critique and Sexual Violence

Queer of color critique was developed by Roderick Ferguson (2004) and builds on Kimberlé Crenshaw's 1989 work on intersectionality and integrates women of color feminisms,

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postructural theory, and queer theory to address the experiences of queer people of colour (Manalansan, 2018). The critique investigates how constructions of race, gender, sexual orientation, and class structures inform, support, and conflict with nationalist agendas (Manalansan, 2018). Given the focus of this thesis on how university responses to sexual violence inform Canadian national identity, this critique is essential. Queer people of colour in Canada face particular nuances and are disproportionately at risk for sexual violence (Giwa & Greensmith, 2012). As Manalansan (2018) argues, queer people of colour do not observe the oppressive structures that academic theory addresses. Rather, they exist within them. Queer of color critique is thereby vital for any issue pertaining to sexual violence as it addresses the experiences of those most vulnerable to this violence.

In analyzing the politics of university policies, it is essential to consider how powerful institutions, from the state to individual universities perpetuate violence through ignoring the needs of marginalized people and how policies operate within these circumstances. When policies are constructed as a sufficient response to violence, universities can distance themselves from further supporting survivors since their role is seen as complete (Ahmed, 2012; Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012). Survivors for whom the policy is inaccessible, irrelevant, or inadequate are left without resources in an institution that rescinds responsibility for support (Iverson, 2007; Linder & Myers, 2018; Wooten, 2017).

Sexual violence is constructed as an act done by a straight cisgender man against a straight cisgender woman (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002). Violence between same-gender partners is consequently assumed to be impossible (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Ristock, 2002). Women who are sexually assaulted by women often are often dismissed as there is an assumption that women are inherently non-violent (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; VanNatta, 2005). Hassouneh and Glass (2008) describe this as the "myth of a lesbian utopia" (p. 318). The utopian myth is also applicable to queer men and masculine-presenting people. Patriarchy constructs queer men as devoid of legitimate masculinity, which is further constructed as a central component of sexual violence (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). Thus, sexual assault by queer men is often dismissed because of the assumption that queer men are incapable of violence. Gendered and cissexist codings of violence rely on the presence of feminine cisgender women and masculine cisgender men (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Iverson &

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Issadore, 2018). For this reason, trans and non-binary survivors, and those in a position to help them, may not recognize their experiences as violent at all (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). Physical and sexual violence do exist in queer relationships, as do other kinds of violence that are specific to queer identities and pose additional threats to queer survivors. For example, an abuser may threaten to out a survivor to their guardians, employer, or peers if they attempt to report or seek support (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016).

Transmisogyny is a term that Julie Serano coined to describe the ways that transphobia and cissexism intersect with misogyny to facilitate violence against trans women (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Serano, 2016). Trans people have been found to experience disproportionate rates of violence and discrimination, including sexual violence, when compared to the already disproportionate rates experienced by the larger queer community (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). Bisexual people experience a particular discrimination called biphobia wherein they are stigmatized by both straight and queer communities and may experiences negative attitudes from both (Obradors-Campos, 2011). Rates of internalized stigma, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse are higher for bisexuals, trans people, and gender non-conforming people, which then creates circumstances wherein they are more vulnerable to sexual violence (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Any policies and awareness campaigns run by schools with the intention of raising awareness of what sexual violence can look like must consider gender as a spectrum and how patriarchy permeates all gender relationships (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). Narrow understandings of sexual violence make invisible the violence that exists beyond these identities and thus erases the experiences of queer, trans, and non-binary survivors, as well as those of cisgender men (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Queer of color critique requires that analysts begin with an understanding of the experiences of queer people of colour. With this as a starting place, it is evident that resources that have been set up for the needs of white, cisgender, straight women are inaccessible to queer people, people of colour, and do not adequately meet the needs of queer people of colour who exist at the intersections of these social locations (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Giwa & Greensmith, 2012; Ristock, 2005; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010).

Through queer of color critique, it becomes clear how Canadian national identity, which is formally framed through constructions of multiculturalism, diversity, equality, and social

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progression, benefits from presentations of queer communities as cisgender men who are white and wealthy because this allows white settler Canadians to pride themselves on being progressive without challenging their racist, transphobic, and patriarchal ideologies (Gentile & Kinsmen, 2015; Razack, 2007). Ahmed's (2012) caution regarding the ways that "diversity is incorporated as an official term insofar as it is made consistent with the organization's goals" (p. 57) is exemplified through how particular forms of sexual violence and violence against particular groups can be ignored by official state-endorsed bodies while the official values of Canada remain superficially intact (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016). The needs of survivors may require resources and accommodations that Canada and universities are hesitant to offer, particularly should they require addressing ongoing legacies of violence within their communities (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). The goals of educational organizations should, however, be for healthy and safe communities rather than for performative documents that commit to care with no action (Ahmed, 2012).

Clearly, this impacts all survivors and their allies and advocates; however, for marginalized survivors, the stakes are even higher as they are positioned further from access to policies and resources developed for more privileged identities and survivors (Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2005; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010). When queer survivors, survivors of colour, disabled survivors, trans survivors, immigrant survivors, those marginalized by other social structures, and those who exist at the intersections of these identities are unable to access the limited supports that are available to them, the role of sexual violence policies is clear: Policies protect institutions from public accountability by acting as a stand-in for action (Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2005; Ahmed, 2012).

Policies must thus be more than a performance of document creation for them to have adequate impact on the experiences of survivors of sexual violence (Ahmed, 2012; Shariff, 2017). These policies should not be a self-congratulatory moment for universities in Ontario, but rather an opportunity to reflect on both the circumstances that necessitated the policies as well as on how higher education institutions can work in meaningful ways with their communities to ensure that the policies are operating to their best potential (Ahmed, 2012; Shariff, 2017; van der Velden, 2012). For Canadian education to provide safe and healthy learning environments for all students, the value of learners must be considered beyond their neoliberal status as consumers in

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a transaction, and their individual and intersectional needs must be valued (Ahmed, 2012; Brown, 2015; Shariff, 2017; van der Velden, 2012).

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III

3. Review of the Literature on Sexual Violence in Higher Education

A comprehensive understanding of student engagement in the design of sexual violence policies at universities in Ontario demands examination of the existing literature pertaining to the issue. Importantly, much of the literature in the field is based in the United States. The context of Canada and the United States is by no means identical, but the programming adopted within the two countries is fairly similar, though education and office supports are adapted based on the relevant laws (Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018; Hutcheson & Lewington, 2017; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). Much of the literature that was written within a Canadian context cited works based in the United States, demonstrating the influence of American scholarship. There are also certainly cultural similarities within North America that make American work deeply relevant to that done in Canada. For example, both countries are based on colonialism and ongoing legacies of white supremacy, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and ableism, to name a few (Bourassa et al., 2017; Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019; Palmater, 2016). These legacies are not identical in Canada and the United States; however, they nonetheless have a substantial impact on both countries and have fostered social, political, and cultural contexts that facilitate sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Ferguson, 2017; Palmater, 2016). Though the existing literature on sexual violence in Canada is filled with rich and rigorous analysis, the comparative dearth to that of the United States speaks to a gap in Canada's understanding of how its own cultural nuances impact sexual violence, particularly as they differ from those of the United States. Accordingly, I have dedicated much of this thesis project to investigating that ways that Canadian national identity fosters the institutional betrayal of survivors of sexual violence within Canadian universities (Bourassa et al., 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2013; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

3.1 Responses to Sexual Violence in Higher Education

In reviewing existing literature on responses to sexual violence on university campuses, various themes emerged. Identifying these themes led me to assess the ways in which sexual violence is understood and approached on campuses, both by institutions of higher education and by current scholarly thought. There is a substantial amount of rigorous, high quality research done by scholars which identify ways in which universities can improve their climates and cultures to

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prevent and respond to sexual violence as well as to support survivors on campus, whether they be students, staff, faculty, or community members, (Hong & Marine, 2018; Jessup-Anger, Lopez, & Koss, 2018; Lalonde, 2017). This research is supported by the decades of work that has been done by grassroots anti-violence, feminist, anti-racist, and anti-homophobia groups (Lalonde, 2017; Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Wooten, 2017). The conversations had in the literature build on generations of feminist work against sexual violence. Much of this work is publically available and is certainly on the radar of universities in Canada, both through the scholarship produced by the institutions themselves and through community partnerships that have been developed in efforts to curate university responses to sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Lichty, Campbell & Schuiteman, 2008; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011).

The literature consistently calls for the elimination of the root causes of discrimination and violence at individual, institutional, and systemic levels through addressing dominant narratives that normalize sexism, racism, homophobia, and other violent social systems (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; de Heer & Jones, 2017; Griner et al., 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Porter & Williams, 2011; Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019; Todorova, 2017; Wooten, 2017). Research on effective leadership practices consistently demonstrates the necessity of upper administration engaging with and modelling the behaviours that university communities seek to establish on campus (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). Additionally, the literature continuously articulates a need to engage with students regarding prevention and response to sexual violence on campuses and regarding the creation of meaningful cultural changes on campuses (Banyard, Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009; Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019; Gunraj, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018).

Within existing research, working with student leaders and peer educators is identified as a best practice for effectively preventing sexual violence and changing campus culture (Banyard, Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009; Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). Students are considered to be experts in their peer communities and are expected to hold unique perspectives and skills related to conversations, collaborations, and programs regarding campus communities (Ferguson, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018; Linder & Myers, 2018). Peer education in particular is identified as an inexpensive, well-received, and engaging aspect of sexual violence prevention

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and response (Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). Through conversations, collaborations, and consultations between students, university staff, and administration the literature posits that creative and effective approaches to sexual violence prevention and response can be developed in a manner that suits the unique spaces and challenges of individual universities (Ferguson, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018; Linder & Myers, 2018).

The literature is also consistent in its calls for "meaningful" engagement with students. This requires more than simply inviting students to offer feedback on policies and programs that have already been developed, but rather creating spaces for collaborating on university responses (Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018). Furthermore, the literature is in agreement that sexual violence response teams within an institution should consist of a diverse body of people from across the institution with varying degrees of power (Ahmed, 2012; Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008; Monahan-Kreishman & Ingarfield, 2018).

Popular with universities are programs meant to empower bystanders to intervene when they identify instances of sexual violence (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). The notion here of "empowering" is removed from reality as it proposes the only thing to come between bystanders and preventing sexual violence is awareness and a will to act. This ignores the social privilege that those who perpetrate sexual violence often have, either in terms of race, gender, ability, social status, or physical strength and size. Further, these approaches present sexual violence as occurring only in public spaces where someone could intervene, ignoring the vast majority of sexual violence that occurs in private settings between people who know each another (Gunraj, 2017).

Improved secondary school education on relationships, consent, and sex is a common focus for many articles and reports. This education has been shown to counter some of the normalization of rape culture that students are taught through gendered socialization as they grow up and learn what is and is not acceptable in their social worlds (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018). Though this secondary school education is not positioned as replacing post-secondary efforts to reduce and address sexual violence, it is recognized as a potential space to address the

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systemic normalization of sexual violence (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018).

Much of the literature also acknowledges the scarcity of resources that offices addressing sexual violence are allowed (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018; Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010). The lack of funding, staff, visibility, and the lower organizational positioning of these offices often creates a competitive environment for the staff performing anti-violence work, which limits opportunities for collaboration and inter-office organizing. Most significantly, it also detracts from the resources and supports available to survivors of sexual violence, which negatively impacts students and limits the effectiveness of these offices (Ahmed, 2012; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018).

3.2 Health, Legal, and Feminist Framings

Hong and Marine (2018) highlight that sexual violence is often investigated as an issue of public health, legality, and as the result of patriarchy. These three themes are investigated in the current section of this thesis project. Garcia and Vemuri (2017) contend that the educational, legal, and social systems that institutions use to try and respond to sexual violence are all deeply steeped in rape culture, which normalizes sexual violence. Given the power that medical and legal frameworks have in providing affirmation and support to survivors, survivors are made to depend on these systems for help (Smith & Freyd, 2014). Thus, there is a need to investigate the nuances within these systems and frameworks. In this section, I examine medical, legal, as well as feminist and power-based frameworks and the debates within each theme.

3.2.1 Health Framings of Sexual Violence in Higher Education

Sexual violence is often presented through a lens of public health (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013; Lippy & DeGue, 2016; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018). This framework has been important in legitimizing the need for resources, responses, and the eradication of sexual violence, though the need to rely on medicalization to legitimize the experiences of survivors is disturbing. Public health narratives officially brought sexual violence to international attention with the 1993 Vienna Accord and the 1995 Beijing Platform urging national governments to take action against all forms of violence against women (Hossain, Memiah, & Adeyinka, 2014).

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Despite the visibility of the issues, rates of sexual violence at universities have not improved since before these international proclamations were made (Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018).

Given the potential physical consequences, there is an acute need for medical professionals to be trained to respond to sexual violence (Plichta, 2004). There are numerous psychosomatic health consequences that can result from sexual violence, including shock, fear, anxiety, guilt, withdrawal, shame, depression, PTSD, low self-esteem, avoiding or loss of interest in sex, substance abuse, OCD, bipolar disorder, and/or suicidal ideation (Humphreys & Joseph, 2004; Plichta, 2004; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018; Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019). Somatic consequences may include pregnancy, STI or HIV transmission, genital injuries, migraines, chronic pain, nausea, fatigue, sleep trouble, cardiovascular complication, gastrointestinal issues, gynecological complications, and/or attempted or completed suicide (Moylan, 2017; Plichta, 2004; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018; Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019).

Carter (2007) highlights how racism, which is deeply connected with sexual violence, impacts the emotional, psychological, and physical health of Black, Indigenous, and racialized people. This may include difficulties with focus, memory, and concentration as well as anxiety, depression, nausea, chronic pain, substance abuse, self-harm, numbness, grief, anger, and migraines (Bryant-Davis, 2007; Carter, 2007). Race-based traumatic stress may also result in internalized racism, distrust, intrusive thoughts, hypervigilance, disassociation, feelings of hopelessness, a sense of loss of control (Bryant-Davis, 2007; Carter, 2007). Co-occurrences of classism, sexism, transphobia, homophobia, religious intolerance, and ableism may further exacerbate these psychosomatic experiences (Bryant-Davis, 2007; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018).

Students balance busy school and work schedules as well as relationships with family, friends, and partners while also dealing with trauma (Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). Survivors who had negative experiences with disclosing to professionals such as service providers, law enforcement, and medical staff had higher rates of PTSD (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010). Depression and anxiety can both have intense impacts on information retention and can negatively impact academic performance for students (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018).

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Students are at the highest risk for sexual violence during the first semester of their first year (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018). Past experiences of sexual assault are a strong predictor of sexual assault during the first months of university and can double the risk of re-victimization (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018). The high rates of sexual violence at universities have not seen a decrease since the 1980s; these rates were not adequately studied before the 1980s to allow for any claims of improvement from prior to that date (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018).

Mental health frameworks are also often used in addressing sexual violence. Research on response programs have found that creating social spaces that affirm survivors can mitigate self-blame and distress in survivors, both of which can be detrimental to one's mental health (Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009; Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018). The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-5 (DSM-5), which is often used in mental health care, is not a neutral tool and is often critiqued for pathologizing survivors of trauma (Humphreys & Joseph, 2004). There are, however, important resources that medical framings can give to people in need of support. For example, advocates initially sought to have PTSD recognized in survivors of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, as a means of having the issue taken seriously in public conversations and connecting survivors with mental health care where necessary (Humphreys & Joseph, 2004).

Freyd (2013) urges medical and psychological professionals to reflect on the ways that their fields betray survivors of trauma through pathologizing language and treating trauma as a disease. Feminists have also critiqued DSM terminology, including PTSD, as pathologizing but also as placing the power to diagnose with clinicians rather than allowing survivors to heal and recover on their own terms (Humphreys & Joseph, 2004). Humphreys and Joseph (2004) thus argue that some medicalized trauma interventions colonize or ignore alternative methods of trauma intervention.

Humphreys and Joseph (2004) argue that medical frameworks have largely ignored the roles of social connections, social affirmation, and the ability to seek justice in recovering from violence. This is particularly pertinent to healing from the shame that survivors of sexual violence are made to feel by patriarchy and rape myths (Humphreys & Joseph, 2004). The article emphasizes the role that being a part of social movements can have in supporting survivors in

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recovery. This is supported by the findings of Marine and Trebisacci (2018), who found that survivors found a sense of community in campus movements against sexual violence.

3.2.2 Legal Framings of Sexual Violence in Higher Education

A purpose of proactive responses to sexual violence on campuses is to avoid legal actions against the university (Shariff, 2017). Sexual violence policies are generally written by university staff, administrators, and institutional agents with guidance from legal counsel (Iverson, 2007; Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Iverson (2007) uses critical race theory to highlight how these power dynamics erase the importance of experiential knowledge and counter-stories, particularly those of people of colour.

The broad-sweep that all institutions of higher education in Ontario must have policies specific to sexual violence creates a curious set of circumstances. Though certainly a step in the right direction, as the policies do signal an institutional awareness and formal sentiment of care regarding sexual violence on university campuses, they also abstract sexual violence to a legal matter so that universities are accountable only to the scope of the policy (Ferguson, 2017). Sexual violence becomes a legal spectre that Ontario and universities acknowledge and have a formal platform to condemn without needing to admit their own culpability or address how the institutions were built in ways that facilitate violence. The required acknowledgement in the existence of a policy does not necessitate a rigorous self-examination on the part of universities. Rather, it necessitates the creation of a document-product meant to formally proclaim an institutional commitment to addressing sexual violence on campus (Ahmed, 2012). Though these statements of commitment are necessary for universities to address and prevent sexual violence, they are not sufficient.

When universities have fulfilled the legal requirements of Bill 132, they can essentially absolve themselves of any further responsibility regarding sexual violence while still benefitting from the image of a commitment to responding to sexual violence. A focus on compliance as the main goal of sexual violence policies means that the actual culture and value-changing potential of the document is stifled (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Moylan, 2017). In fact, Iverson and Issadore (2018) argue that policies that seek to only demonstrate compliance will not reduce rates of sexual violence. Should these policies be constructed as a sufficient response, they risk becoming a superficial tool to which universities can gesture. As Sara Ahmed (2012) explains,

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policies are products, and institutions may present them as evidence that an issue, such as racism or sexual violence, has been successfully dealt with.

In the legal-based framings of sexual violence, policies are also meant to be a tool of deterrence that outline potential punishments for offenders (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Specific deterrence acts to deter an offender from perpetrating violence again in the future whereas general deterrence is meant to deter the general population from perpetrating violence through punishing or sanctioning those who have already offended (Schrage, 2014). Sexual violence policies at universities act in both of these ways. Despite this, Iverson and Issadore (2018) argue that policy does not address the chronicity of sexual violence but instead offers an intervention to an ongoing issue. The capacity of policy as a deterrent, which is the strongest argument for policy as a preventative measure, is limited to the scope determined by the policy makers. Consequently, its potential to prevent sexual violence within, and certainly beyond, the university is limited by the semantics of the document.

Justice systems that currently exist in response to sexual violence are often retraumatizing for survivors of sexual violence, particularly marginalized survivors (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Girshick, 2002; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010). Legal processes recreate the loss of control and power that survivors experience in sexual violence and often have unanticipated consequences for survivors (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner & Kafonek, 2017). In response, recent legal cases have resulted in calls for the reformation of justice systems to be survivor-centric and trauma-informed (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Shariff, 2017; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). Survivors, allies, and advocates emphasize the need for survivor agency and institutional transparency in responses to sexual violence, be they legal or conducted through institutions such as universities (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). This reform would be a shift for systems that blame survivors and deny them agency in accountability when their sexual agency has already been breached (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010).

3.2.3 Concern for Due Process

As Sisneros and Rivera (2018) argue, there is a false dichotomy between universities supporting survivors and engaging in due process. Arguments founded on “free speech” and “men’s rights”

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have been taken up to oppose anti-sexual violence work (Phipps, 2017). The cowardice of universities becomes evident in consent campaigns and policy workshops that are framed by discourses of due process – rather than supporting survivors – in an attempt to present the institutions as complying with their responsibility to be fair (Moylan, 2017). Many students, however, come to universities as survivors of sexual violence and may need support from the university but do not engage in reporting processes (Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). Indulging in excessive conversations on due process thus puts the needs of these students up for unnecessary debate and legitimizes the blame and villainization of survivors.

Despite claims that sexual violence policies overstep the role of universities, the Supreme Court of Canada has a history of respecting the decisions of administrative tribunals, such as decision-makers in sexual violence investigations at universities (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017). Further, universities have a responsibility to provide safe environments for their communities and facilitate a resolution for those who have experienced violence by community members (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017). Accordingly, it is not beyond the scope of universities to have resources for survivors of sexual violence as well as accountability procedures.

3.2.4 Focus on Reporting Sexual Violence

Encouraging survivors to report has become a trend at universities (Hong & Marine, 2018; Moylan, 2017; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). There is, however, concern that the "problem" universities are trying to solve has become under-reporting rather than sexual violence itself (Lalonde, 2017). Constructing the lack of reporting as the issue that universities need to address also places the blame for not reporting on survivors, as opposed to considering the barriers that survivors face in reporting or reasons that they might not want to report at all (Lalonde, 2017). Addressing these barriers is important and can lead to key changes being implemented into policy, such as tools like amnesty for the use of alcohol and drugs which can reduce the blame that survivors may have internalized (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Nevertheless, encouraging survivors to report does not end sexual violence.

In the literature, reporting is often discussed in the context of making the reporting process more accessible for women on campuses (Streng & Kamimura, 2017). This demonstrates how coding survivors as cisgender women erases the prominence of violence against trans and non-binary students who face disproportionate rates of violence (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard,

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2016; Serano, 2016). These statistics can be reported on, posted online, and analyzed as a means of measuring success, and thus they fit the neoliberal zeitgeist that seeks to abstract experience into data (Hong & Marine, 2018). Legal and police systems have presented this data as crucial in responding to sexual violence, as though these numbers are what prove that fighting against sexual violence has value. Reporting, however, can be retraumatizing for survivors who may experience institutional betrayal and often cite feeling that university responded poorly to their needs (Linder & Myers, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

There are also discrepancies in what kinds of sexual violence are reported. For example, rape with a weapon, with high levels or resistance, and with high levels of physical force are more likely to be reported (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). The significance placed on reporting ignores the reality of how trauma impacts the responses of survivors and puts responsibility on them to respond in a particular way, lest their experiences be dismissed (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). Assaults that do not fit these narratives are more likely to result in self-blame on the part of survivors (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). Survivors who were using drugs and alcohol have also been found to be less likely to report than those who were not (Lippy & DeGue, 2016). Though it is sometimes presented as a way of preventing future violence by the same perpetrators, reporting does not prevent the sexual violence that has already happened to survivors who do report (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013; Hong & Marine, 2018). Further, the narrative that survivors have a responsibility to report is cruel to survivors already dealing with trauma and social stigma. Constructing reporting procedures as the most important response to sexual violence places the importance of a formal process, which is statistically unlikely to result in perpetrators being held accountable, above the well-being of survivors (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013). For survivors who do chose to report, however, it is crucial that this process be supportive and affirming.

Experiences of self-blame also impacted if survivors decided to report (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). As demonstrated by the earlier discussion of medical narratives and sexual violence, self-blame can have an immense impact on the health of survivors. Accordingly, it is important for university reporting procedures to connect with mental health providers, medical care, and for administration to handle reports in a sensitive and affirming manner (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011).

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Decisions regarding whether survivors report are also impacted by social locations. Student sex workers; Black, Indigenous, and racialized students; queer students; and Mad students have faced continual violence from police, legal systems, and security services (Bruckert & Hannem, 2013; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; LeFrançois, Menzies, & Reaume, 2013; Palmater, 2016). Even if they have not experienced this personally, survivors are often hesitant to engage with systems that have committed violence against their peers and communities (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). For international students in Canada, there are additional concerns of how legal, as well as institutional reporting, processes will be complicated by visa restrictions (Hutcheson & Lewington, 2017; Shariff, 2017). After enduring sexual violence, it makes sense that survivors would want to avoid further victimization. The very students facing disproportionate rates of sexual violence subsequently have the most to fear with legal approaches to sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bruckert & Hannem, 2013; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; LeFrançois, Menzies, & Reaume, 2013; Wooten, 2017). Smith and Freyd (2013) argue that, rather than focusing on encouraging students to report after an incident of sexual violence has occurred, universities should put resources into addressing how the campus environment allowed for the incident to occur. The researchers found that the perception that the university could have prevented the violence led to increased trauma in survivors, thus highlighting the importance of critically addressing university contexts (Smith & Freyd, 2013).

Nevertheless, reporting does signal the magnitude of the problem of sexual violence on campuses in a manner that is palatable to institutions. Students recalled university administrators attempting to dismiss the presence of sexual violence on their campuses by arguing a lack of evidence – as few students had reported experiences of sexual violence – or by stating that sexual violence was worse at other universities (Lalonde, 2017; Linder & Myers, 2018). These examples demonstrate a use for reporting; however, the need for a quantification of trauma, especially when research consistently shows that sexual violence is one of the most underreported crimes, to justify making changes to campus structures speaks clearly to the values of universities and their funding bodies. In an example documented by Linder and Myers (2018), an administrator claimed that the reporting process at their university was not intimidating because of all of the resources that the school produced. What this response does not consider is the trauma produced by sexual violence as well as student knowledge of how deeply institutional

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betrayal is tangled into the practices at their universities. This sort of administrative response reduces sexual violence into something that universities can solve with a document and process while simultaneously abstracting it into a spectre that does not exist at the university because the documents and processes are not being used (Linder & Myers, 2018).

3.2.5 Feminist and Power-Based Epistemologies

Social powers such as racism, colonialism, ableism, and homophobia are central to sexual violence. As Calton, Cattaneo, and Gebhard (2016) explain, patriarchy is present in sexual violence even if the perpetrator is not a cisgender man because patriarchal power structures determine the way that hegemonic cultures in North America construct certain bodies as deserving of violence and abuse. These structures primarily privilege cisgender, straight, white men and encourages violence as a means of controlling marginalized people. These structures are also internalized and perpetuated within marginalized groups even when cisgender, straight, white men are not present (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016). Feminist and power-based epistemologies recognize that not all members of a campus have equal resources and social privileges (Smidt & Freyd, 2018).

It is essential to examine power structures in resources responding to sexual violence. Heteronormativity and cisnormativity, which centralize the experiences of heterosexual and cisgender people, respectively, have been found so powerful that staff working at sexual violence resource centres and shelters may not anticipate the presence of queer clients and may turn away queer survivors or not provide adequate care (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Pyne, 2011).

Gender-neutral resources and responses to sexual violence ignore the ways that patriarchy positions women, trans, and non-binary people to be more vulnerable to sexual violence (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). By not accounting for these circumstances, these resources engage in victim-blaming discourses wherein people marginalized by their genders are held to account for their social vulnerabilities (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Professionals working within gender-neutral frameworks were also found to be more accepting of rape mythologies and to apply them to their clients (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Resources modelled from feminist frameworks with an understanding of gender-based power differences were found to make a

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deliberate effort to disrupt rape myths. They also recognized women as capable of making rational decisions rather than as passive victims who required protection (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017).

Younger students and those from marginalized social positions experience particular vulnerabilities in speaking out to high-level administration (Renn, 2007; Wooten, 2017). The feedback from these students is, however, crucial for universities to develop effective and inclusive practices and policies for their campuses (Ferguson, 2017; Shariff, 2017). It is in the best interests of universities to reach out to these groups in particular and to ensure that these students have access to policy revision processes. Should universities truly wish to become spaces wherein survivors feel they are safe, can thrive, and can attain the education that they seek, universities should be grateful to students who are willing to step forward and speak about how the university could improve.

Power-based framings of sexual violence also understand that sexual violence takes away control from survivors, and thus feminist interventions seek to restore control through survivor-centred approaches that work to re-establish a sense of power to survivors (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). These feminist-based resources were rated as having the highest survivor-rated satisfaction (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). These programs do not focus on changing the behaviour of perpetrators but nonetheless demonstrate the necessity of supporting survivors and centring them as experts in their needs and their experiences (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017).

Lichty, Campbell, and Schuiteman (2008) emphasize the importance of high-level administrators taking leadership in matters related to sexual violence, including sexual violence policies, because the status associated with these actors lends legitimacy to the universities' commitments and provides role modelling to students. Though this is an important strategy for working within institutions, the notion that efforts against sexual violence require validation from hierarchies of power – which are modelled on neoliberal structures that blame survivors for their own assaults – reproduces power dynamics that create circumstances of vulnerability for marginalized people and communities. Thus, there is a need to move beyond the constraints of institutions.

Todorova (2017) questions the very basis of why university administrators are given leadership positions on programs and policies pertaining to sexual violence,

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> especially in light of research identifying university administrations as major perpetrators and accomplices of sexual violence by intimidating students who are victims, protecting perpetrators (e.g., influencial professors or male athletes), and refusing to acknowledge and deal with the issue fearing that public exposure will diminish the university's reputation and revenue (p. 7).

This quotation brings forward some substantial issues with the manner by which sexual violence is currently being addressed by both the Province of Ontario and by universities in the province. As discussed previously, universities have a vested interest in curating an image that presents a commitment to addressing sexual violence while also distancing themselves from any culpability for sexual violence within their communities (Linder & Myers, 2018). Bill 132 making demands of universities to create policies that delineate their own responses to sexual violence, within broad guidelines, places the power for accountability within the very institution that is meant to be held accountable (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1).

All of the universities that I surveyed had their administrative team in a leadership positon in the process of creating the policy. Major responsibility, for example, was given to the Vice-President, Students and Enrolment at Carleton University, the Vice Provost of Student Affairs at Lakehead University, and the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning at Brock University. Those who were in charge of the process, and will be again as the policies are reviewed at least once every three years, are given the power to select the feedback from staff, students, and faculty that they want to integrate into the policy and to decide what feedback will be discarded. My intention is not to vilify individual administrators. Many that I have met are doing the best that they can for students and do truly care about responding appropriately and preventing sexual violence; however, the roles that they occupy as administrators within universities limit how they can do this work. Operating within a capitalist society and as the figureheads of neoliberal institutions, the vocational loyalties of administrators adhere to the needs of the university (Quinlan, 2017). That being said, the best steps for any university would be to reduce violence on campus and create a culture where all community members feel safe to engage with their learning and living environments in a productive fashion. Contrastingly, experiences of sexual violence, trauma, and retraumatization often have a negative impact on

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academic outcomes and the reputation of universities (Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Schuck, 2017; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011). If the purpose of universities is to teach, research, and train future scholars, which are the goals reflected by the mission statements of many of the universities that I surveyed for this project, then addressing and responding to sexual violence in a comprehensive manner that centres the experiences of survivors and the knowledge of experts in the field is a clear necessity.

3.3 Sexual Violence Prevention and Support Programs at Universities

Beyond Bill 132 and the legal requirement for all universities and colleges in Ontario to have sexual violence policies in place, universities have a responsibility to provide safe learning and working environments for their staff, faculty, and students through the Ontario Human Rights Code and other existing legislation (Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008; Napolitano, 2015; Shariff, 2017; Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2018). As Shariff (2017) and Strout, Amar, and Astwood (2014) document, this requires that certain accommodations be made for survivors, such as guaranteeing that they do not have to attend classes with their perpetrators. Should survivors not have the accommodations that they need, they may not be able to access a safe learning environment. It is thereby the responsibility of universities to be sure that their sexual violence policies and resources are accessible and relevant to the needs of their students (Bourassa et al., 2017; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018).

University responses to sexual violence are modelled following the structures of existing sexual violence resource centres, which often adhere to the experiences of privileged women (Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). Often, university resources for survivors consist of telephone support lines, legal support and advisement, community workshops and outreach, and policies (Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). Though these resources are important, scholarly literature has documented the inaccessibility of these services for queer people should they not be deliberately inclusive (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002; Ristock, 2005).

Gendered policy language, inadequate staff training, and constructed versions of ideal survivors of sexual violence as cisgender, straight women often isolates queer survivors or creates hostile environments when they do access support (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Ristock, 2005). Queer university students have also

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been found to face higher rates of physical dating violence, sexual violence, and unwanted pursuit than straight students (Edwards et al., 2015). Queer students may be targeted for sexual violence by homophobic peers but also face difficulties when coming forward regarding violent relationships (Edwards et al., 2015; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008). This can be due to internalized homophobia, abusive partners threatening to out a victim, or the fear that their abuse will not be taken seriously because sexual violence is coded as heterosexual and cisgender and thus as non-existent within the construction of the queer relationships as utopias (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Ristock, 2002). Resilience is fostered by positive social relations and queer survivors may be afraid of being isolated from their communities if they seek help or expose their abuser, which exposes them to more violence (Edwards et al., 2015). Bisexual survivors face additional vulnerabilities to sexual violence as they face a particular stigma as sexually available and are made to feel that they do not belong in queer or straight relationships (Edwards et al., 2015; Obradors-Campos, 2011). As this demonstrates, there is a need to investigate the experiences of queer survivors not as homogenous but as distinct identities that change individual experiences (Edwards et al., 2015). Universities must, therefore, do active work in dismantling these systems to ensure that their supports are for all survivors and do not disregard the lives and experiences of marginalized survivors (Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011).

Linder and Meyers (2018) found that students in the United States with more privileged backgrounds and at more prestigious schools tended to garner more media attention and to challenge the university in more public ways. In their discussion, Linder and Meyers (2018) question whether this is because more privileged students are socialized to believe that they are more deserving of a safe environment. It is, however, worth noting that Black, Indigenous, and racialized students have been at the forefront of social justice and grassroots campus organizing for decades (Ferguson, 2017). Accordingly, it is necessary to interrogate how the work of different students is, and is not, recognized and respected (Wooten, 2017).

A popular response to sexual violence on university campuses has been educational campaigns, often presented during orientation week at schools and targeting first-year students (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Lopes-Baker, McDonald, Schissler, & Pirone, 2017; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). These are a preferred method because they can be presented as proactive while

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not requiring universities to do the difficult work of inspecting their own rape cultures (Hong & Marine, 2018). Further, the number of workshops facilitated is quantifiable and acts as a deliverable in reports and in cases of public scrutiny (Hong & Marine, 2018; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). "Social marketing campaigns" with postering and social media features are popular for their cost-effective nature (Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010, p. 148). Some literature recommends ensuring that social marketing campaigns are reflective of the student body as students are more likely to respond when they recognize themselves in resources (Banyard, 2014); however, social marketing campaigns have not concretely been found to reduce sexual violence (Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010).

Often, educational programs are presented as a means of preventing sexual violence (Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008). The first-year demographic has been identified as key to prevention efforts as first-year students are considered to be in a "red zone" of vulnerability for victimization (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018; Edwards et al., 2015; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). This statistic is often cited in relation to first-year straight, cisgender women on campus with straight, cisgender men being the perpetrators (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Edwards et al., 2015). While this remains an important statistic, campuses and scholars must be vigilant of the increased risk that queer, trans, and non-binary students are at for victimization (Edwards et al., 2015; Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002; Ristock, 2005).

Education on sexual violence is important for campuses, but university communities should be critical of the role and limitations of these educational initiatives. Workshops and prevention programs have been found to have a low dose of effectiveness in preventing sexual violence for university-aged young adults (DeGue et al., 2014; Iverson & Issadore, 2018). The goal of these educational programs often surrounds formalized definitions of consent, the impacts that sexual violence can have on survivors, bystander intervention strategies, risk reduction strategies, and information on campus resources such as sexual violence offices and policies (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). The learning from these sessions tends to be superficial, and, generally, conversations on social power and the root causes of sexual violence are not adequately interrogated, if they are addressed at all (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Therefore, to construct these sessions as the university doing its best to prevent sexual violence is misinformed. Despite the lack of evidence that these educational programs are effective in the

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long term, they remain a popular strategy for universities because the number of programs and workshops facilitated, as well as the number of attendees, can be quantified and used as evidence that a campus is committed to ending sexual violence in its community (Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). The educational programs are thus products that universities buy to demonstrate their commitments and increase their neoliberal market value as a trustworthy institution from which to purchase a university education (Brown, 2015; Quinlan, 2017).

That being said, workshops can set the tone for what a university expects of its students and communities (Streng & Kamimura, 2017). Educating students on rape culture mythologies can also assist students in responding in helpful ways to peer disclosures and can thus mitigate the retraumatization of survivors (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013; Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Further, this education can assist survivors in naming their experiences and seeking help (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Comprehensive education on sexual violence also encourages students to think critically about how power dynamics impact sexual violence (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). These programs can further offer a space where information on support resources and reporting procedures can be distributed (Streng & Kamimura, 2017). Zinzow and Thompson (2011) found that survivors whose experience did not align with the scripts presented in rape myths may not recognize their experiences as sexual violence and thus may not seek support, even if they are experiencing trauma. These scripts dismiss the experiences of survivors who do not fit the narrative of a white cisgender woman assaulted by a cisgender man that she does not know (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). As most sexual violence occurs between people who know each other and queer, Black, Indigenous, and racialized people face disproportionate rates of sexual violence, this narrative erases the experiences of those most vulnerable to sexual violence (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011).

Many university campuses have integrated bystander intervention programming into their orientation weeks as an accompaniment to their sexual violence policies (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Lopes-Baker, McDonald, Schissler, & Pirone, 2017; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). While sexual violence is certainly an issue that impacts whole communities and requires community-wide approaches to prevention, response, and support for survivors, these programs are not adequate interventions. Bystander interventions are proactive responses to sexual violence in that they aim to train students and community members to recognize harmful behaviours or discomfort in their peers and to intervene to prevent sexual violence (Banyard, 2014; Banyard,

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Moynihan, & Crossman, 2009). There are a variety of ways that these programs may be presented. An example of this would be intentionally engaging with cisgender men on campus, particularly those who participate in activities constructed as traditionally masculine wherein sexist behaviour may be cultivated, such as in fraternities or on sports teams (Coker et al., 2017; Corboz, Flood, & Dyson, 2016; Elias-Lambert & Black, 2016). There are also programs that are presented to campuses with the intention of engaging the population broadly and giving students examples of how to intervene with friends, peers, and roommates (Iverson & Issadore, 2018).

Edwards, Shea, and Barboza Barela (2018) cite that university conceptualizations of consent expect students

> to be able to identify unhealthy patterns and behaviors in their own and others' relationships. Not only should students be able to communicate what they do not want, they should also be able to communicate their sexual desires about what they *do* want (p. 49).

These are educational goals that may be accomplished through life-long socialization, but research has found that this kind of comprehensive education on social and self- awareness cannot be completed by the educational programs that universities are currently running (DeGue et al., 2014; Smidt & Freyd, 2018). Given the existing scarcity and frequent disparities in sexual education at secondary schools, it is also unrealistic to expect all students in university to suddenly possess the knowledge and language to articulate their sexual desires (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). Further, expecting that students "identify unhealthy patterns and behaviors in their own and others' relationships" (Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018, p. 49) is asking for students to complete the role of a social worker in their own lives and those of others. This also removes responsibility from perpetrators and expects students to prevent and respond to violence against themselves and others without considering any power relations that exist between students, particularly when violence is present (Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018). For prevention education to be effective, Edwards, Shea, and Barboza Barela (2018) argue that it must address perpetrators before they commit violence. As the literature emphasizes, this should be done before students enter university (Schneider & Hirsch, 2018). Banyard (2014) speaks further to this and contends that more research needs to be done

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on connecting the information on sexual education that students are given in secondary school with what they receive in university. There is a need for long-term high dosages of education that are developed for the different ages and developmental stages of students, as attempting to apply educational programs to a different context can adversely impact their effectiveness (Banyard, 2014).

Streng and Kamimura (2017) advocate for education programs that increase awareness of sexual violence, combat rape myths, allow students to contact university officials, and promote "female-focused programs" (p. 140). These responses are not, however, preventative. Educational programs targeted towards women, which often ignore the existence of trans and non-binary people, teach women that it is their responsibility to prevent their own assaults and that the behaviour of men cannot be changed (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017). Women are placed in the position of "gatekeepers to sexual violence" (p. 6), which reproduces and legitimizes the discourses central to victim-blaming (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017).

Discussions of the roles of faculty in responding to sexual violence generally focus on conducting research on sexual violence and the effectiveness of prevention and response programs, teaching content related to sexual violence, mentoring students in advocacy and research pertaining to sexual violence, and service work such as participating in task forces and implementing prevention and education programs (Graham, Mennicke, Rizo, Wood, & Mengo, 2019; Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). Women faculty do much more service work related to sexual violence, and Graham, Mennicke, Rizo, Wood, and Mengo (2019) contend that they should be compensated and credited appropriately, given the need that universities have for this work. Given their position in the university, faculty may also be able to advocate in a way that students and staff cannot (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017).

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There is also a need to educate policy makers on sexual violence. Iverson and Issadore (2018) highlight the importance of those in leadership positions bringing a social justice lens to their work. Further, these institutional leaders must do the work to examine their own biases in who they invite to participate in consultations (Monahan-Kreishman & Ingarfield, 2018). As survivors who have negative disclosure experiences face higher rates of PTSD and retraumatization, training those in charge of policy to respond in an affirming manner to survivors is crucial, particularly if they will be facilitating consultations (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010).

3.4 Sexual Violence Resource Offices

In their 2010 study, Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, and Cohn found that 97% of the surveyed student survivors did not use formal services after experiencing sexual violence. Of the total surveyed 154 students, 2 of the participants accessed the sexual violence resource centre on campus, 1 contacted police, 2 used the campus health centre, 1 contacted a residence staff, and 1 contacted campus ministry. When survivors are asked why they don't report or access services, many respond that they did not consider the incident to be of high enough severity (Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). This demonstrates a space where educational initiatives at the university level can be useful in terms of encouraging survivors to seek support (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). As Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, and Cohn (2010) found, there is also often a study design flaw with assessing this answer to the question of why survivors do not seek support. Frequently, research does not take into account that students may not define their experiences as serious enough to merit support because they may not consider the assault "that bad" *or* because their lives are full of other stressors, such as school, work, and families, that feel more urgent to survivors (Walsh, Banyard, Moynihan, Ward, & Cohn, 2010).

Regardless of what reason survivors have for not finding their experiences serious enough to require support, these resources not being used demonstrates a dissonance in the

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resources provided by universities and the needs of students. Consultations with students are one way of addressing this (Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019), but this dissonance also indicates a need to reconceptualize how sexual violence is understood at universities. Leadership on campus must also consider how social locations may impact the ways that survivors access services. For example, Black women and white women often have different ways of accessing support after an assault (Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009; Wooten, 2017). Helplines, resource centres, and administrators established and trained with the needs of white women in mind may be irrelevant or retraumatizing for Black women who experience racism in these spaces (Wooten, 2017).

Schools in the United States have Title IX officers and coordinators whose job it is to ensure that universities are in compliance with Title IX (Hutcheson & Lewington, 2017). Though universities in Ontario do not have the exact same regulations, their sexual violence offices are one aspect of ensuring that universities are in compliance with Bill 132 (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1). University sexual violence offices engage in a delicate balance of what administrators identify as the needs of the school based on market trends, the reputation of the university, and the needs of survivors (Lalonde, 2017; Phipps, 2017). This limits much of the work that the offices are allowed to do. Given how nascent the offices are in comparison to the universities as a whole, they have a relatively precarious position within the politics of the institutions (Lalonde, 2017). Sexual violence is a highly political issue with roots deep in social and cultural norms (Bourassa et al., 2017). Responses to sexual violence require counterhegemonic approaches that are critical of the ways by which social forces such as racism, homophobia, misogyny, and ableism – to name a few – structure the ways that people experience the world and their inter-personal relationships (Bourassa et al., 2017; Edwards, Shea, & Barboza Barela, 2018; Gunraj, 2017; Humphreys & Joseph, 2004). Much of this work requires critiquing the social systems that that universities have been developed to reproduce (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Jessup-Anger, Lopez, & Koss, 2018). University sexual violence offices are thus limited in the work that they can do, as they may be hesitant to call to attention the ways in which the university is maintained on the same misogyny, colonization, and racism that feeds rape culture (Lalonde, 2017; Linder & Myers, 2018).

Furthermore, these offices are often expected to run with very limited resources which places them in competition with other groups on and between campuses that are doing complimentary work (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). Opportunities for collaboration may

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therefore be avoided (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). These offices tend to be isolated from other parts of the university, which limits their resources, the transformative power that they have on campus, and their abilities to support survivors (Sisneros & Rivera, 2018). Students who access support from these offices and are not met with affirming responses or appropriate resources may experience institutional betrayal since sexual violence response offices are presented as being worthy of the trust of survivors (Linder & Myers, 2018).

3.5 Bystander Intervention Programs

Literature supporting bystander intervention programs at universities base their claims on social cultures motivating perpetrators (Hong & Marine, 2018). There are many studies that focus on specific peer groups, such as fraternities and athletic teams, that are understood as fostering rape myths and breeding toxic masculinity (Banyard, 2014; Coker et al., 2017; Corboz, Flood, & Dyson, 2016; Elias-Lambert & Black, 2016). Wooten (2017) argues that this literature focuses on sexual violence perpetrated by primarily white cisgender men against primarily white cisgender women and that university responses focusing on this work obscures the experiences of Black students.

Iverson and Issadore (2018), however, note that bystander intervention programs are considered a best practice at The State University of New York. The authors describe the program as "an example of an institution deploying more 'lifeguards'" with the intention of encouraging social norms on campus wherein sexual violence is non-existent (p. 61). Iverson and Issadore articulate the complicated nature of programs that place men in charge of safeguarding or "lifeguarding" women and the how this narrative reproduces gendered hierarchies in which women are victims and men are saviours, thus perpetuating patriarchy and men's power over women. The language of "lifeguards" in the above question is of particular interest. Iverson and Issadore (2018) use the image of a river for the need for interventions on sexual violence. Policy is described as a "tertiary response" that mitigates an ongoing issue, and education efforts such as bystander intervention trainings are "secondary responses" as they are "risk reduction" tools (p. 61).

My interest in this quotation is the interpretation of students as potential lifeguards for other students. Iverson and Issadore (2018) use a powerful image to articulate the ways in which universities export responsibility for violence prevention to communities. Though sexual

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violence is a community-wide issue, lifeguarding can be a dangerous profession and requires ongoing training and supervision with support from an employer in the event of a drowning. If universities have been put in charge of their own section of a river and the devastating waters of sexual violence that run through it, how are universities supporting students who they are training to be lifeguards? The students at highest risk for being victimized are first-year students in their first few weeks on campus (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson, & Carey, 2018; Edwards et al., 2015; Zinzow & Thompson, 2011) as well as Black, Indigenous, racialized, and queer students who are already isolated from support services that have been developed for straight, cisgender, white students (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009; Carter, 2007; Wooten, 2017). Edwards, Shea, and Barboza Barela (2018) argue that students should intervene to prevent sexual violence and that they should also "be able to support survivors of sexual violence and assist those in unhealthy relationships" (p. 51). As discussed earlier, this description of what are meant to be student responsibilities reads like the job requirements of a highly-trained social worker. These are certainly noble goals for a community, but I am hesitant to accept them as a solution. I worry that scholarly arguments and policies idealize students in a way that alleviates universities from the responsibility of interrogating how their structures create circumstances wherein students are vulnerable to sexual violence. Given the impact of vicarious trauma, particularly on students who endure the chronic traumas of racism, ableism, transphobia, and homophobia, universities must be cognizant of the ways in which bystander intervention programs rely on students, who may be as young as 17, to respond to an issue by which administrators themselves are often perplexed (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010; Linder & Myers, 2018).

Though bystander intervention is certainly important in responding to sexual violence and naming a commitment to community learning in sexual violence policies is essential, university leaders should be cautious of how they assign responsibility for preventing sexual violence to students who are already dealing with stressors pertaining to moving away from families for the first time, adjusting to university classes, and undergoing immense personal development (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010; Smidt, Rosenthal, Smith, & Freyd, 2019). When universities implement programs that train students to respond to sexual violence as bystanders, they must also be prepared for the impacts of this initiative. Those concerned with sexual violence on university campuses must be attentive as to whether

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university policies are exporting responsibility to vulnerable and marginalized communities under the guise of recognizing the need to orchestrate community-wide shifts away from the normalization of rape culture.

Bystander interventions deserve a nuanced and critical approach. They can certainly be effective when done well and in the right circumstances, but relying on them too heavily risks making students, who may have their own traumas, responsible for protecting one another and internalizing blame should they not perceive their efforts as successful (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010). Bystander intervention programs should be realistic about sexual violence on university campuses (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010; Wooten, 2017). Programs should address, for example, sexual violence between intimate partners (Banyard, 2014). They should also incorporate an understanding that upper-year students, who have been on campus for a longer time and are more comfortable with both their internal sense of self and their social standing, are more likely to intervene versus new students who may be more anxious about social ostracization (Banyard, 2014). This understanding of social relations is essential for effective work against sexual violence (Banyard, 2014).

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IV

4. Broader Socio-Political Contexts of Higher Education in Canada in Relation to Sexual Violence

4.1 Neoliberalism

Conversations on neoliberalism are important to my research, as concerns of cost and resources are often centred in discussions pertaining to sexual violence resources on campuses (Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012; Shariff, 2017; Quinlan, 2017). Universities are more likely to accept feedback that can be addressed at a low cost and with less effort than expensive shifts in campus cultures that require transformative and innovative work on the part of the institution (Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008). Phipps (2017) argues that universities are essential to neoliberalism wherein the state is tasked with preserving the free market. Universities thus favour product-based solutions to social issues such as workshops, speaker series, and documents, as these can be quantified and presented as evidence of action, even if they are the extent of the work being done (Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). The documents created by universities regarding student engagement in policy revisions are accordingly produced and consumed in a very specific way by neoliberal universities.

Neoliberalism has had a stark impact on the ways that education is valued. Wendy Brown, expanding on Foucault, asserts that neoliberalism extends beyond specific economic policies and carves out "novel ways of conceiving and relating state, society, economy, and subject and also inaugurate[s] a new 'economization' of heretofore noneconomic spheres and endeavours" (2015, p. 50), meaning that neoliberalism manifests beyond the precision of policies and exists in all the ways that people relate to one another. Within neoliberalism, all relationships and interactions are framed within a lens of transaction (Brown, 2015). This economization creates a need for people to assert their value in a competitive manner (Brown, 2015; Kahu, 2013). Foucault established the notion of "market veridiction," whereby the market economy is constructed as "the new site of truth" (Brown, 2015, p. 57, 67; Foucault, 2008). In this frame of thinking, the market, therefore, decides the true value of people and education.

Neoliberal systems require that universities be marketable (Quinlan, 2017). Sara Ahmed contends, in *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (2012), that diversity

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is used as a marketing tool. This leads to the formalization of commitments to diversity through the creation of institutional policies that support what are formalized as inclusive practices. Given Canada's commitment to a progressive national identity (Breton, 2015; Kahn & Alessi, 2018; Walcott, 2016), it follows that Canadian universities, tasked with the maintenance of Canadian national identity on a global scale, should adhere to popular standards for responses to sexual violence (Ahmed, 2012; Shariff, 2017; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). Policies are an obvious institutional preference, as they mark a formal compliance and statement of commitment but are not themselves an action requiring resources or change (Ahmed, 2012; Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012; Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008). Ahmed (2012) cautions of the ways that documents may be fetishized as "doing" the issue being addressed when, in fact, a policy is just a document unless it is actionable and engaged with in a meaningful manner by the communities which it impacts (Shariff, 2017). Iverson (2007) investigates the ways that diversity has become a marketing tool at universities in North America. Training students for job markets wherein they will work in increasingly global settings, universities' commitments to diversity have become a new marketing strategy that Iverson (2007) argues commodifies students of colour in particular. When documents pertaining to social justice are produced, there is therefore a need to question, as Iverson (2007) does, who benefits from the documents that universities publish on their relationships with students.

Ontario's Bill 132 requiring all colleges and universities in the province to have a sexual violence policy is certainly significant. The bill has the potential to create meaningful changes on campuses and to create transparent, accessible, and supportive means for survivors of sexual violence to access accommodations and accountability. Bill 132 also, as Ahmed's work suggests, has dangerous potential. If sexual violence policies are constructed as an adequate response to sexual violence on university campuses, then they may be seen as the fulfillment of university responsibility to survivors (Ahmed, 2012). Creating a policy, however, does not solve the issue at hand and should not be made into a marketing strategy for schools aiming to distance themselves from the violence that they foster (Shariff, 2017; Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012).

Policies responding to sexual violence are an effective way of formalizing commitments to eradicating sexual violence and supporting survivors. They are an important resource for campus communities and must be managed responsibly. Relationships between higher education

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institutions and their communities must thus exist beyond the neoliberal conceptualization of contractual agreements wherein the student is a consumer completing a transaction for an education (Brown, 2015). The McNay typologies of organizational structures proposes four models for relationships between people and institutions (van der Velden, 2012). These are the colloquium model, which values debate and consensus between students and high-level administration; the bureaucracy model, wherein students are regarded as statistics, and consultations are facilitated through formal committees; the corporation model, wherein decisions are made by central senior staff, and students' unions occupy the role of a watchdog for student interests; and the enterprise model, wherein students are clients, and universities are businesses that operate in anticipation of market and client needs (van der Velden, 2012). Neoliberalism shifts higher education organizations towards the enterprise model, wherein those with power can dictate the assumed needs of those relying on the institution for support (Brown, 2015; George, 1999; Portelli & Konecny, 2013). This does not function with the distinct needs of survivors, which require comprehensive and nuanced attention (Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002; Shariff, 2017; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010).

In the 2018 work by Linder and Myers, an interviewee recalled a time when she asked for academic support after experiencing sexual violence and was told by an academic advisor that she was simply not suited for the calibre of school she was attending. This conversation demonstrates just one component of how neoliberal universities are able to construct the needs of their communities. When a student faces a barrier, the fault becomes that of the individual student instead of the fault of systemic violence and thus the university is immune to responsibility to provide support. Rather than universities showing gratitude for the feedback of survivors (particularly those who are historically, and contemporarily, marginalized from support resources), using the vast research available from scholarly work against sexual violence, and taking leadership from professionals working in the anti-sexual violence field, universities understand their own needs and purpose in relation to a commodified marketplace where those who do not succeed only do so because of their individual shortcomings (Quinlan, 2017).

Within these neoliberal systems, universities do not want their market reputations discredited by public scrutiny for sexual violence (Linder & Myers, 2018; Phipps, 2017). Further, abusers who financially benefit the institution, such as tenured professors with large amounts of grant money, may have built-in job security. Even with reports of sexual violence

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against them, abusers may be privileged with institutional power as the university may not consider campus safety to be worth losing financial capital and academic prestige (Phipps, 2017). In neoliberal systems, survivors are constructed as disposable when compared to the reputational and monetary value of, for example, popular athletes and professors (Phipps, 2017; Todorova, 2017). This is exemplified by Brock University failing to take a transformational stance against a legal system that requires the return of a professor found to have sexually harassed a student (Clementson, 2019).

4.2 Responses to Sexual Violence in Canada

Second-wave feminism in particular has had a focus on institutional recognitions of, and responses to, sexual violence (Ristock, 2002; VanNatta, 2005). Within this movement, important work has been done on anti-violence supports and legislation (Napolitano, 2015; Strout, Amar, & Astwood, 2014). Work to raise awareness on sexual violence at universities is often credited to second-wave feminism; however, this work was based on the experiences of white, cisgender, straight, formally educated women, whose experiences were taken as universal (Jessup-Anger, Lopez, & Koss, 2018). Feminist organizations that created formal support systems for survivors of domestic and sexual violence are no exception to this, and white, cisgender, heterosexual, able-bodied, and otherwise privileged women were those who most often had the access to the institutional resources to establish these support services such as shelters, resource centres, and phone lines (Girshick, 2002; Jessup-Anger, Lopez, & Koss, 2018; Ristock, 2005; VanNatta, 2005). These resource centres are thus built on the experiences and needs of these socially privileged women, which often creates supports that are inaccessible, irrelevant, or exclusionary of more marginalized survivors (Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl, & Barnes, 2001; Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2005; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010).

In the 1970s, Black feminists in Boston published the “A Black Feminist Statement”, which is also often referred to as the “Combahee River Collective Statement”, which highlighted how, despite their essential contributions, Black women were not included in mainstream feminist movements and called for collective action (Combahee River Collective, 1977/1983). The “Combahee River Collective Statement” emphasizes how sexism, racism, and homophobia intersect and produce unique circumstances for women at the intersections of different social locations (Combahee River Collective, 1977/1983; Wooten, 2017). In 1989, Kimberlé Crenshaw

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coined the phrase "intersectionality" in reference to the unique ways that racism, classism, and misogyny impact the everyday lived experiences of working-class Black women. This work has been foundational to feminist understandings of solidarity and support in the United States as well as in Canada (Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Crenshaw, 1989).

Wooten (2017) highlights that it is revealing that campus movements against sexual violence have not adequately taken anti-Black racism into account "given the scholarship produced by Angela Davis, the Combahee River Collective, Mary Ann Weathers, the Third World Women's Alliance, Audre Lorde, bell hooks, and countless others on sexual violence perpetrated against Black women" (p. 407). With all of this scholarship so readily available, it is telling that campuses do not yet have sexual violence supports and responses that effectively address anti-Black racism. Economic and political power remain aligned with privilege and those who exist with privileged identities (Bourassa et al., 2017; Cho, Crenshaw, & McCall, 2013; Crenshaw, 1989; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010). Accordingly, racism, homophobia, xenophobia, and transphobia remain prominent in non-critical anti-sexual violence movements and non-critical feminist work.

The prioritization of these privileged identities has resulted in what Monahan-Kreishman and Ingarfield (2018) refer to as a "coding" of the term "sexual assault survivor," wherein survivors are assumed to only ever be middle-class or wealthy, straight, white, cisgender women (p. 76). This coding makes impossible the existence of survivors who exist beyond these categories. Resources are not built for these survivors, and so the most marginalized survivors are the very ones for whom there are no relevant resources (Monahan-Kreishman & Ingarfield, 2018).

Sexual violence against women of colour in the United States occurs within a context of societal traumas, which are systemic assaults against marginalized groups conducted by those with power (Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009). This may be embodied as racism, intergenerational trauma, classism, historical trauma, political terror, and cultural trauma, to name a few (Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009). Systems that have power over the well-being, livelihood, healthcare, and childcare of marginalized people position them in circumstances where they are vulnerable to sexual violence and without the resources they need to respond by making these survivors invisible, blaming them for their own abuse, and keeping them silent. These societal traumas are also active in Canada, which does its best to keep them

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hidden under the guise of a polite and multicultural national identity (Kahn & Alessi, 2018; Walcott, 2016).

For queer people who experience same-gender violence or violence within queer relationships, this manifests in myths of queer relationships as utopias that are free from violence (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008; Ristock, 2002). This myth asserts that sexual violence is only ever exerted by cisgender straight men against cisgender straight women and makes invisible the ways that patriarchy, homophobia, and transphobia are internalized and exerted within queer communities and relationships (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2005). The experiences of queer survivors are obfuscated through pinkwashing, which further feeds into myths of queer relationships as utopian (Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002; Puar, 2017). "Pinkwashing" refers to the use of political action, laws, or policies that support queer people, particularly white and middle-class queers, to obstruct public knowledge of human rights violations within the nation (Puar, 2017, p. 96). For example, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau being considered progressive for attending Pride parades is used on an international stage to credit Canada for being proactive about human rights while communities in Grassy Narrows still do not have clean water (Prokopchuk, 2019). Though political support is certainly important and is crucial for the safety of queer people, it does not eliminate the transphobia and homophobia that can contribute to violence in queer relationships and, when utilized as pinkwashing, also facilitates further violence (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Puar, 2017). Thus, it is necessary to be critical of the context and intentions of political support.

In Canada, there is a social hesitation to acknowledge violence in queer relationships lest this criticism be perceived as homophobic (Giwa & Greensmith, 2012; Ristock, 2002). Thus, it is often presumed that sexual violence also does not exist in these spaces (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Girshick, 2002; Ristock, 2002). This is not, however, the case. Queer people of colour, for example, exist at intersections of racialized and homophobic and/or transphobic violence, which may be further enhanced by misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, and transmisogyny both within and beyond queer communities (Nero, 2005; Serano, 2016).

As demonstrated, it is critical to engage with Shohat's (2001) caution against “sponge/additive” (p. 1270) approaches to feminism where the specific needs of marginalized groups are considered optional additions to what white cisgender straight women, particularly

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those who are American in Shohat's work, have dictated to be the central mission of the movement. These approaches take Western conceptions of feminism and apply them as defining narratives to other contexts without critically examining differences and nuances within political, power, and social structures (Shohat, 2001). This demonstrates how non-critical theory, action, and engagement can erase historical and ongoing feminist and anti-sexual violence efforts, often robbing agency and credit from those who have been long-engaged with these struggles and understand the nuances inherent to the social contexts in which these issues are present (Brubaker & Mancini, 2017; Shohat, 2001; Wooten, 2017).

4.3 Student Vulnerabilities

University students face unique vulnerabilities to sexual violence. Lichty, Campbell, and Schuiteman (2008) point to peer socialization, early adulthood, and alcohol use as contributing factors to both victimization and perpetration. These risks are particularly high for students who are socially marginalized (Graham, Mennicke, Rizo, Wood, & Mengo, 2019). Universities have a responsibility to curate safe learning spaces and thus they have a responsibility to provide equitable support to survivors of sexual violence and to combat rape culture, which facilitates sexual violence (Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018).

Sexual violence can have a significant impact on the well-being of survivors and the reverberations of sexual violence are felt by entire communities (Banyard, Moynihan, Walsh, Cohn, & Ward, 2010). Many students entering into university are already survivors of sexual violence and statistics indicate that four out of five undergraduate cisgender women report enduring sexual violence in a dating relationship, though the number is likely much higher given how frequently sexual violence is unreported (Bourassa et al., 2017; Lalonde, 2017). Though there is a comparative shortage of research on sexual violence against queer university students, what research does exist is in agreement that queer, trans, and gender non-conforming students face even higher rates of sexual violence than straight cisgender women (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Edwards et al., 2015).

While the well-being of students and community members would hopefully be enough motivation for university leadership to take a meaningful action against sexual violence, many universities chose to draw the line of their responsibilities at the academic attainment of their students (Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018). Interestingly, this often includes sports

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amenities and programming that supports school spirit while services for mental health and supporting survivors of sexual violence are a point of contention for university involvement (Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018) despite the demonstrated impact of sexual violence on the academic attainment of university students (Carey, Norris, Durney, Shepardson & Carey, 2018; Moylan, 2017; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Streng & Kamimura, 2017; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011). Survivors of sexual violence exist at every university in Ontario, and in order for these schools to claim to be welcoming for students who demographically face disproportionate rates of sexual violence, schools need appropriate prevention and support services (Bourassa et al., 2017; Hong & Marine, 2018; Porter & Williams, 2011).

Though the federal *Criminal Code* in Canada covers sexual assault, Canada does not have federal legislation specific to sexual violence at universities (Lopes-Baker, McDonald, Schissler, & Pirone, 2017). This is because education, including higher education, is dealt with provincially in Canada. Though the federal Minister for the Status of Women is situated to assist provinces and post-secondary institutions with their responses to sexual violence, there are major discrepancies between provinces, and there is no uniform response to sexual violence at universities across Canada (Lopes-Baker, McDonald, Schissler, & Pirone, 2017).

Universities in Ontario were not required to have stand-alone policies regarding sexual violence until 2017. This speaks volumes to the social powers at play on campuses, who universities were built for, and what behaviours were expected of the communities (Ferguson, 2017; Pitcher, Camacho, Renn, & Woodford, 2018). Sexual violence policies, particularly those required by law, indicate an important shift in how universities in Ontario conceptualize and understand their communities (Pitcher, Camacho, Renn, & Woodford, 2018). Giroux and Penna's 1979's work on "hidden curriculum" is important in understanding whether survivors and those particularly vulnerable to sexual violence are truly welcome at university campuses and who these campuses have really worked to accommodate (Wooten, 2017). In the context of sexual violence, an example of a hidden curriculum is the lack of institutional respect for those reporting sexual violence. This teaches students, including survivors themselves, that sexual violence is not a serious matter (Linder & Myers, 2018; Shariff & Eltis, 2017; Quinlan, 2017).

University policies face a unique set of challenges in responding to the needs of their communities. Universities contend with a variety of stakeholders including students, businesses,

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investors, and government bodies (Shariff, 2017). They also operate as employers for staff, faculty, researchers, and, oftentimes, students (Napolitano, 2015). Canadian provinces, as well as the country itself, have an investment in the images of universities, which reflects on how they are perceived as political and social powers (Ahmed, 2012; Brown, 2015; Portelli & Konecny, 2013; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). For many institutions, formal performances of equality are a measure of success (Ahmed, 2012). This has been leveraged by student activists and advocates against sexual violence who have had a crucial role in bringing sexual violence on campuses to the attention of the public by lobbying universities for sexual violence policies, preventative measures, and appropriate resources for survivor support and community accountability (Napolitano, 2015; Shariff, 2017). Social accountability has also been established through shifting media narratives surrounding sexual violence and the increased presence and platform of feminist narratives in response to victim-blaming, unjust legal systems, and the structural protections given to abusers (Napolitano, 2015; Shariff, 2017; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010). As a result of this public pressure, national and provincial governments have made efforts to address sexual violence (Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). This has included actions like the passing of Bill 132 (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1; Shariff, 2017). This political and social motivation has been productive in formalizing commitments to condemning sexual violence, though more work must be done to prevent sexual violence and support survivors.

4.4 Students in Neoliberal Canadian Universities

Universities occupy a unique educational space (Napolitano, 2015; Shariff, 2017). They offer classes, placements, practical learning courses, and other methods of formalized education. They are also often a space for young adults living on their own for the first time (Brown, 2015; Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008; Napolitano, 2015). Subsequently, the roles and responsibilities of universities are often in contention.

Universities in Canada entered into closer relationships with corporate markets to offset governmental funding cuts that resulted from increased conservativism in the 1970s and 1980s (Quinlan, 2017). This trend of increasingly corporate universities was exacerbated in the 1990s and following the financial crisis in 2008 and has continued with Ontario Premier Doug Ford's policy changes (Crawley, 2019; Quinlan, 2017). Rather than being run as a public resource,

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universities are increasingly being run as businesses and function according to market trends (Quinlan, 2017). The zeitgeist of market competition has been imported into university systems and is evident in the competition and intensive marketing campaigns between universities for funding, prestige, and students. Students are understood as “revenue-generating units” for universities, who sell education as a quantifiable product which is marketed on its ability to secure students the well-paying employment that they need to survive (Quinlan, 2017, p. 62). Thus, rather than having the democratic rights of citizens, students have the contractual rights of a consumer (Quinlan, 2017). Democratic participation in shaping their universities through protest or advocacy is thereby only welcome if students are contractually invited to be involved, though the university is under no obligation to include any student feedback (Quinlan, 2017). Breaches of contracts are therefore the method coded as most legitimate for student complaints (Quinlan, 2017). Sexual violence policies, as a contract between community members and the institution, offer powerful potential for survivors to seek accountability from universities. Universities, thus, cling to the power that they have in defining sexual violence on campuses, as these definitions delimit the resources that they must expend in responding to sexual violence.

“Student engagement” is sometimes considered to be a buzzword within educational spheres (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014; Milburn-Shaw & Walker, 2017). Engaging students in educational contexts is understood in Milburn-Shaw and Walker’s (2017) work as (a) academic engagement in classrooms and formal educational settings or (b) in how educational institutions structure their campuses and curriculums to engage students in activities that research has found to be conducive to student learning (Milburn-Shaw & Walker, 2017). Policy consultations, which offer students a direct means of engaging with formal university structures, demonstrate exactly the second component of Milburn-Shaw and Walker’s (2017) definition of student engagement. To the credit of universities in Ontario, many of them present their consultation processes as eagerly engaging with students. Despite this, students in universities are understood as receiving knowledge rather than producing it, and so student attempts at university reform can be easily dismissed by university leadership should they not align with the goals of the institution (Ferguson, 2017; Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018; Quinlan, 2017). Sexual violence policy consultations, however, should be more than a pedagogical tool, as research and scholarly literature demonstrates that student feedback should be taken as expert opinion on student

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experience and integrated into the policies rather than being a mere institutional exercise (Shariff, 2017; Wooten, 2017).

When students are critically engaged with making social changes at their universities, they are constructed by the institutions as immature at best and as dangerous at worst (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014; Ferguson, 2017). Ferguson (2017) found that progressive student movements in the United States have historically been constructed as working against the very causes, such as civil rights, for which students were advocating. The fact that students who are engaged in political and social advocacy are presented in these framings demonstrates the power that post-secondary institutions have in dictating what legitimate and respectable student engagement looks like (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014).

Though students engaged in the classroom are celebrated, Danvers and Gagnon (2014) are critical of the ways that neoliberal education practices steeped in market-based values and the commodification of learning celebrate these students as consumers of knowledge while not celebrating knowledge producers who are critical of the very systems by which they are educated. As revenue-generating units, students are meant to consume their education as a product from which they can get a job (Quinlan, 2017). This consumption leaves no room for students to contribute to or critique their universities in a socially or politically charged manner (Quinlan, 2017). Student engagement in classroom content is valued and considered more legitimate than student engagement in political and social work that is critical of university structures (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014). Further, social identity constructs the political engagement of some students as more legitimate than others (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014).

4.5 The Importance of Student Voice

The concept of "student voice," that students have valuable feedback on their schools and should have the opportunity to shape their education, is documented primarily in Australia, Canada, England, and the United States (Cook-Sather, 2006). Though Cook-Sather's 2006 article pertains primarily to formal curriculums in high schools, their analysis is valuable in assessing the power dynamics present in the post-secondary school engagement of students in responding to issues of social and political climates on campuses, such as consultation processes for sexual violence policies. Cook-Sather (2006) emphasizes that students and school staff, faculty, and administration do not meet as "equals" in conversation, as those in positions of institutional

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leadership, by the nature of their roles, have more power over student experience and how conversations are conducted. Students further cite a sense of fear or apprehension that they will be punished for advocating against sexual violence on campus (Linder & Myers, 2018). Rather than viewing sexual violence as the problem, students and advocates who draw attention, particularly public attention, to institutional betrayal are constructed by the university as the problem (Ahmed, 2012; Ferguson, 2017; Linder & Myers, 2018; Phipps, 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2014). The four to five years that students typically spend at universities is much shorter than the decades for which staff, faculty, and administration may be employed by the institution. Hence, university leadership can often lean on the adage of "wait until they graduate" and rely on a lack of institutional memory in student activism to impede the strategic continuity of student work (Lichty, Rosenberg, & Laughlin, 2018, p. 632).

Cook-Sather (2006) also cautions against glorifying student voices as progressive, critical, and inventive because students and student movements can be platforms for status-quo values, just as administrative voices can be. Student voices should not be assumed to be homogenous (Cook-Sather, 2006; Wooten, 2017). Students who are cisgender, men, white, upper-middle class, heterosexual, and able-bodied are also privileged with greater access to resources and platforms with which to present their feedback. Assuming a universal student experience thus marginalizes the experiences of students whose identities are not included in this construction of a student (Wooten, 2017).

These power dynamics are also present within grassroots student activism and institutionalized student movements. For example, in their 2009 work, Westbrook found that the full-time staff hired to provide students with leadership in activism were sometimes hesitant to offer assistance to students whose identity they did not share. Alan, a cisgender man running the LGBTQ centre at U.C. Berkeley, stated that he was uncomfortable giving too much leadership to the women at the centre because he did not want it to seem that "a man [was] telling women what to do" (Westbrook, 2009, p. 384). Though Alan demonstrates an understanding of patriarchy within queer communities, Westbrook argues that this lack of leadership actually hindered the work done by queer women in the campus group, as they experienced a lack of support (2009).

Within neoliberal framings, university students are consumers of education (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014; Quinlan, 2017). When they step beyond this role and speak out against university

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policy or process through advocacy, protests, or other political activity, they are constructed as the enemy of the very institution that they are seeking to improve (Danvers & Gagnon, 2014; Milburn-Shaw & Walker, 2017). Student activism also holds different degrees of risk for different students. For example, when queer students participate in activism on campus, they are often put in a position of publically being "out" (Renn, 2007). Pitcher, Camacho, Renn, and Woodford (2018) make an important point in highlighting that when queer students spoke positively about their campus climates, the standard for these students was not affirmation, support, or positive experiences but, rather, a lack of hostility and physical violence. This demonstrates the ways that queer people are socialized to expect fear and discrimination from schools. This further speaks to universities not being designed for queer students to attend (Ahmed, 2012; Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005).

Linder and Myers (2018) found that students who engage in activism pertaining to sexual violence often do so because of a loyalty to the institution and because they believe that the school can do better for future students. Students engaging in anti-sexual violence work on campuses typically do so through multiple methods ranging across protests and sit-ins at administrative offices, creating petitions and social media content, involvement in policy work and advocacy for survivors, and peer-based educational workshops (Marine & Trebisacci, 2018). Students may also be involved in broad community-based initiatives including organizing for SlutWalk and Take Back the Night (Marine & Trebisacci, 2018). Students who are involved in anti-sexual violence work on university campuses are often also active in other social justice work. Banyard makes reference to the work of Hamby and Grych (2013) and the "web of prevention" that this intersectional organizing creates (Banyard, 2014, p. 341). For example, in addition to advocating against sexual violence, students may be involved in anti-racism work and/or in advocating for the needs of queer students on campus.

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5. Study Findings

5.1 The Case of Brock University

I have included Brock University because its public-facing information on their consultation exemplifies a theme that I noted from a few universities, notably Western University and Algoma University. Some schools, including Lakehead University, present modestly-sized documents describing their consultation processes that describe the general nature of their meetings with faculty, staff, and students and broadly address primary issues brought forward by these groups. Brock University presents very limited information on their consultations and does not have a document on their consultation publically available through their website.

Brock University has committed to reviewing of its sexual violence policy at least once every three years and their website currently offers a space for students to submit feedback. The university does not have a stand-alone document pertaining information on this consultation process, nor on student involvement in past consultations. On the *Brock News* site located within Brock University's official website – but distinct from the page specifically pertaining to sexual violence – is an archived invitation for students to attend a policy consultation town hall that took place in April 2017.

Information on student engagement in the 2019 process is available on Brock University's website on a page that also connects readers with the university's *Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy*. The page consists of three sections: a statement that consultations for the policy is being undertaken in the current year, a list of when open town halls will be taking place, and an online form through which students are invited to submit feedback.

The prefacing statement is relatively short, so I have included it as a quotation:

> Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy Consultation
>
> Brock Human Rights and Equity Department is currently completing a biannual review of the Sexual Assault and Harassment policy. This open consultation process is intended to give the opportunity for feedback on the policy to all Brock Students, Staff, Faculty

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> and the greater Brock Community. Feedback can be provided through the online form below, email, Town Hall consultation meetings, and in person when requested.
>
> The Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy can be found here. [a hyperlink to the Brock University *Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy]*
>
> We thank you in advance for your time and consideration when providing feedback and we look forward to your input. (Brock University, "Sexual Assault and Harassment Policy Consultation", 2019)

As evidenced by the text, the consultation process is being undertaken by the Human Rights and Equity Department, signaling the use of legal frameworks that prioritize discourses of human rights. As discussed in Sections 3.2.2 and 4.2 of my investigation of the literature surrounding sexual violence in Canada, there are limitations to the effectiveness of this framing, as the law and discourses of human rights are designed by hierarchical social systems steeped in colonialism, racism, and other oppressive structures that create social obstacles for those not positioned to access these framings (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bruckert & Hannem, 2013; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; LeFrançois, Menzies, & Reaume, 2013; Palmater, 2016).

As is the case with almost all of the schools that I surveyed, Brock offers an opportunity to provide feedback through online mechanisms such as email and online forms. The questions asked on the online form provided by Brock are a combination of Likert scale and open-ended, which provides those interested the opportunity to offer a wide range of feedback on different aspects of the policy.

There are six dates for open town halls that span from the end of January until the beginning of March. They all take place in the same room on campus, and there are no notes on the website inviting people to request accessibility accommodations for these meetings should they need them. All of the meetings are scheduled to take place for about an hour and a half. The website does offer in-person meetings upon request.

The information given on the website delineates ways in which the university will accept feedback and thus presents these as the legitimate methods through which students can engage with revising the sexual violence policy. This demonstrates the power that Brock University has in curating the sexual violence policy. These already limited methods require a certain amount of

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institutionally required respectability from those wanting to engage in the revisions, as they must participate in the bureaucratic process on the university's terms (Higginbotham, 1993).

Brock University's Sexual Violence Prevention Committee, which is chaired by the Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, has a sub-committee dedicated to engaging students in the revision of their sexual violence policy and the associated website provides contact emails for those interested in joining the committee (Brock University, "Sexual Violence Prevention Committee," 2019). The terms of reference for the committee are explicitly feminist and make deliberate note of power dynamics and social locations impacting individual experience. This note on power dynamics is specific to how social oppression impacts experiences of sexual violence (Brock University, 2015). While this is important, there is a notable lack of reflexivity on how these power dynamics impact how students can engage with revising the policy.

The need to continue to analyze university responses to sexual violence is exemplified by a 2014 complaint filed by a former student regarding sexual harassment by a Brock University professor. In 2016, the gag order that this student was placed under while an internal investigation took place came to light through a CBC investigation on the matter (Sawa & Ward, 2016). Faculty, staff, and students expressed outrage at the actions of the university in allowing the professor to continue to teach during this time and requiring the student to remain silent about the experience (Clementson, 2019). Brock University then created their Human Rights Task Force to review all policies pertaining to human rights at Brock, including those covering sexual violence and harassment. The university also hired someone into the position of Sexual Violence Response and Education Coordinator (Clementson, 2019; Lightstone, 2016). The Brock University Human Rights Task Force comprised of students, staff, faculty, and community members and would incorporate the goals and recommendations of the Sexual Violence Prevention Committee, which already existed and was chaired by university administration (Lightstone, 2016). Though these actions display an institutional response that was presented as student- and survivor-centred, updates on the impact of this response in January 2019 reveal how legal and policy structures, even with formal strategies through which students were consulted and invited to give feedback, failed students and survivors.

As of January 2019, the same professor about whom the complaint was placed in 2014 was allowed to recommence teaching at Brock University, despite statements against this decision by students and the staff person hired as the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator

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(Clementson, 2019; Sawa & Ward, 2016). Legally, the university cannot fire the professor, which demonstrates how legal frameworks of sexual violence fail survivors and their communities (Clementson, 2019). As demonstrated by this case study, legal frameworks, including policies, do not solve sexual violence. Rather, they protect institutions from responsibility for taking action against sexual violence by delineating their roles and actively preventing transformative actions from being taken.

The dearth of information on Brock University's website regarding their consultation process means that there is also a complete lack of context regarding how this high-profile case elicited outrage, open letters, protests, and other forms of direct action from faculty, staff, and students (Sawa & Ward, 2016). As Shariff (2017) argues, "What needs to be further researched is why and how professors who take such advantage of students are allowed to remain in positions of power" (p. 49). Sexual violence policies that allow for exactly what Shariff outlines, and are supported by a legal system wherein a professor who has been found to have sexually harassed a student cannot legally be fired, demonstrate a deep flaw in how sexual violence is understood by universities, legal systems, and the political and social contexts in which they exist.

Students, faculty, and staff from across disciplines and departments being incredibly vocal on this example of sexual violence and still not having their feedback incorporated into the university's response demonstrates how detrimental the institutional power of universities can be to communities. If even the needs of faculty who, though dependent on universities for employment, occupy a privileged position in the university can be dismissed by how sexual violence is legally framed, then the transformative action required by universities to address how their racist and colonial foundations support sexual violence against Black, Indigenous, and racialized students is even less likely to be taken up. The consultation processes being run, which ignore the clear and well-established needs of a community, thus function to appease public perceptions and avoid scrutiny. They do not function for universities to gather information on how they can change deeply entrenched practices, but rather act as a strategy from which products, such as additional task forces also lead by those with administrative power, can be created and presented as a substitute for difficult and reflexive action. This response to sexual violence illustrates that, though policies can make an important formal statement about the

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values and expectations of a university, the policies do not guarantee that these values exist as anything more than a façade (Ahmed, 2012).

5.2 The Case of Lakehead University

I have included Lakehead University as a case study in this thesis because it demonstrates a second way that universities documented their consultation processes. Lakehead has a PDF document that outlines the practices that they used in their consultation process, landing them in the middle ground of the relative scarcity of information that Brock University has made available and the meticulous documentation of Carleton University.

In December 2016, Lakehead published the "Report on the Consultation Process – Lakehead University Sexual Violence Response Policy". Though this 13-page document is "written as a companion document to the Lakehead University *Sexual Violence Policy Consultation Process (November 4, 2016)* document" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 3), this second report is no longer available online. The "Report on the Consultation Process – Lakehead University Sexual Violence Response Policy" document consolidates the information that is available elsewhere on the website, such as a page that documents when policy consultation and information sessions will be taking place at each campus. By making the "Report on the Consultation Process" easily accessible on the official Lakehead University website and often presenting links to it immediately following the *Lakehead University Sexual and Gender Based Violence Response Policy*, the university has put effort into making this document available for public consumption.

The document is divided into the following sections: "Background, Purpose and Structure of this Report," "Review of Consultation and Sources of Feedback," "Review of the Process in General Terms," "Conclusion," and two appendices which include the Google Form used in the consultations as well as the scripts that facilitations used when leading public review sessions. Throughout the document, recommendations for the next set of reviews are also included. The report provides some specific information, such as the dates and times of public information sessions and a list of the groups and departments that comprised the task force. Feedback provided through the consultation process on the actual policy was not included, nor could it be found online.

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During the document analysis, five themes were identified as particularly important in how Lakehead presented its consultation process. These were legal responsibility, communication and clarity, institutional power dynamics, diversity, and emotive language.

5.2.1 Legal Responsibility

As mentioned in previous sections, documentation of student consultations fulfills the provincially mandated requirement for universities to consult students when sexual violence policies are created or reviewed. On the first page of “Report on the Consultation Process” (2016), under the “Background, Purpose and Structure of this Report” heading, the university quotes Bill 132 directly to cite the legal necessity of the consultations. Consequently, the entirety of the document is framed as a legally required document. Though a legal requirement to consult students on a policy is not a negative thing, it does safeguard universities from any scrutiny that they may endure from consulting with students, particularly those who are survivors, who are often framed as unreliable or as overly passionate, as though an emotional distance somehow makes feedback more legitimate (Phipps, 2017). This requirement aids universities in creating an illusion of listening to students, rids them of responsibility for instigating this requirement, and does not oblige them to do anything with the feedback they do receive (Ahmed, 2012).

Furthermore, the document lists the offices that were a part of the President’s Sexual Assault Taskforce, who are described as the “first stop in consulting with this policy,” and thus are of high priority within the consultation process (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 4). Of the 15 listed offices, 5 have largely legalistic responsibilities: the Office of Human Rights and Equity, Human Resources, Orillia Associate Vice-President, Student Affairs, and Legal Counsel.

Though the document is framed, from the first paragraph, as a legislatively mandated response, the word “legal” only appears in the document twice, once in reference to Legal Counsel (as described above) and once under the heading “Sensitivity & Inclusiveness.” The document describes that “much of the emotional conversation during public information meetings focused on legalistic wording in the draft Sexual Violence Policy” (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 4). Though the document does not describe the nature of the expressed emotions, the next sentence credits the moderators of the sessions for curating spaces that would feel “safe” for participants. That this credit was felt necessary to give suggests that the emotions felt were ones that necessitated support, such as distress. Furthermore, the legal system in

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Canada is well documented as being distressing for survivors of sexual violence (Bourassa et al., 2017; Bruckert & Hannem, 2013; Lalonde, 2017). Hence, negative reactions to legalistic language from survivors and allies would be well supported by history and scholarly understandings of sexual violence and the legal system. Though Lakehead University and Brock University do not provide a database of the feedback that students brought forward, Carleton University provides this information online. Carleton's consultation process documents students' worries that universities may take a legalistic approach that would be unfair to those accused of sexual violence (Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback", 2019, p. 17, 18-19). Regardless of what the emotional response during the consultations was, the presence of any emotion in response to "legalistic wording" is worth noting and may indicate a dissonance between what students want from their university's sexual violence policies and what those policies are actually meant to provide.

5.2.2 Communication and Clarity

Much of the reflection of the document pertained to issues in communication as a means of improving the consultation process. The first goal identified within the purpose of the report is "to provide the opportunity for as many members of the Lakehead University community (students, staff and faculty) to provide feedback on a draft policy document" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 2). Issues in access to methods by which to provide feedback were noted, and much of the document is dedicated to documenting and addressing these barriers. There were options for people to engage in the consultation process through public information sessions, emailing the human rights office at Lakehead, and by submitting feedback through a Google Form, which was utilized by one person.

There were four in-person consultations run by Lakehead total. Three were on the Orillia campus, including one which was requested as an additional session from the original plan of having two on the campus. The other one was at the Thunder Bay campus. These were facilitated between November 15th and November 30th. The document notes that this timeframe was limiting, as students were busy with exams and final assignments during this time, and some student groups were not present on the campuses during these dates. These are clear barriers that the university has documented as needing to be resolved for future consultations by ensuring that public sessions are run while all student groups are on campus (Lakehead University, 2016).

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Though this concern merits a resolution, the focus on communication in the document does not take into account that certain students may feel apprehension about public meetings and thus that there may be merit in running closed consultations, as other schools have done.

5.2.3 Institutional Power Dynamics

By documenting feedback that was given to the university regarding the consultation process, Lakehead University disrupts the notion that the processes established by institutions are the only way of accomplishing a goal. This shows some reflection by the policy makers that their consultation process is limited and could be made better by engaging with the needs of their communities. The report documents that

> the purpose of this report is to reflect on the process of consultation with the goal to identify what worked for the students of Lakehead University and provide recommendations, moving forward, as we consult and revise this policy annually. (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 2)

Schools, including Brock University, that have not engaged in this reflection so publically maintain their power in facilitating consultations and thus do not allow for paradigm shifts in how they conduct their institutional exercises. Despite this, the recommendations set forward in the document are broad and lack actionable items or clear methods through which they will be integrated. For example, “Recommendation 1” in the report, which pertains to methods through which students could submit feedback and documents that only one person submitted feedback through the online Google Form, states,

> Recommendation 1: As this is an important aspect of the consultation process, providing students, staff and faculty the opportunity to provide anonymous feedback, it is recommended that future invitations to use proactive measures in being able to engage more members of the university community. (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 4)

While it may seem positive that the university at least acknowledges that the low number of people using the online function may be reflective of a lack of accessibility rather than a lack of

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interest or a lack of areas requiring revision in the policy, this recommendation does not provide any information on what these "proactive measures" might look like. In upcoming revision processes, it will be interesting to see how Lakehead does and does not change its processes, as those in charge of the process may have a solid proactive measure that will improve the reach of the consultation process. As of yet, however, this remains to be seen.

The language of invitation within the report is also revealing because it signals that, despite the university taking feedback on the consultation process, the process is something that belongs to the university and that students are invited to, which also means that they can be uninvited. Though there are certainly students who do not attend consultations in good faith and may have feedback submitted with the intention of reinscribing rape culture, conferring the power to dictate what feedback is necessary to the very institution that is being impacted by the policy is not without its issues (Todorova, 2017).

That being said, there may be reasons of personal and collective trauma that may make individuals and groups unsafe in accessing the consultation process. An invitation which has the implied options of accepting or declining is a respectful way of allowing people and groups who may not want to participate in the process to make their own decisions regarding involvement. The dynamic of invitations is therefore key to consent during the consultation process, and this dynamic has the ability to disrupt power dynamics wherein individuals and groups exist to provide free labour to the university institutions of which they are a part (Ahmed, 2012).

By publically documenting their internal recommendations regarding future consultations, Lakehead interrupts the power dynamic of the consultant/consultee that Ahmed (2012) describes by acknowledging the ways that the university could improve. Though these conversations may have happened at other schools, their online appearance is certainly more reticent to divulge any weaknesses in their consultation processes.

5.2.4 Diversity

The document speaks multiple times to a desire to have "input from a diverse selection of students" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 2). The President's Sexual Assault Taskforce is described "as a diverse and representative group" (p. 2), and Recommendation 7 in the report states that "in future consultations, it is vital to utilize the diverse representation of the task force to make connections to marginalized voices" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 9). The verb

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"utilize" is intriguing because it suggests, as Ahmed (2012) and Iverson (2007) caution, that diversity is a tool that institutions use to improve their images while not engaging with communities in a meaningful way. Thus, tokenization is enmeshed with the neoliberal marketability of diversity discourses (Ahmed, 2012; Walcott, 2016; Quinlan, 2017). This is further exemplified by the statement that "by surveying groups that speak for many students, we can ensure that feedback can be considered from the diversity of Lakehead students" (p. 6). Both of these quotations demonstrate a constructed homogenization of marginalized people (Wooten, 2017). Individuals have unique needs and priorities, and tokenizing student groups and the President's Sexual Assault Taskforce members as representing and speaking for the needs of entire communities, which are filled with individuals, is not an effective way of ensuring that a wide range of students have their feedback heard.

5.2.5 Emotive Language

A theme that I found particularly interesting in the document was the use of emotive language. This was most prominent in the "Conclusion" section of the report, which is quoted as follows:

> One of the most rewarding aspects of a consultation process is the opportunity it provides to speak with students. What one student is passionate about may not interest another. Though this process received feedback from a small percentage of the Lakehead University student body, those who provided their thoughts did so with conviction, honesty and trust that they are making a difference. Their wise, thoughtful feedback will not only enrich Lakehead University's Sexual Violence Policy but it has had a positive on many who participated in the consultation process. (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 9)

The diction that particularly speak to this theme from the above quotation are "rewarding," "passionate," "conviction," "honesty," "trust," "wise," "thoughtful," "enrich," and "positive impact." Each of these terms places a judgement on the action to which it speaks. By prefacing that the process was rewarding, the text speaks in favour of the passion that students brought, which is later referred to as "wise" and "thoughtful". By doing this, the university formally makes a statement that denotes respect to those who brought forward their insights. Consequently, even if the university were to decide that the feedback was not worth including,

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they have formally established that they respect the students involved. The university would portray this image despite holding the power to dictate the reality of the policy in the end. Doing so anticipates a rhetorical defense for the institution. This sets students, and readers of the document, up to trust the institution, which is a key element of institutional betrayal (Smith, & Freyd, 2014). This trust is acknowledged within the conclusion, as it notes that students brought forward their insight "with conviction, honesty and trust that they are making a difference" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 9). The institution thus acknowledges the power differential, which in turn makes the university seem more trustworthy.

Policies, and the documents pertaining to them, are often employed as a tool to which institutions can appeal to justify a decision, which allows actors within the institution to avoid staking personal claims in contentious matters (Ahmed, 2012). As exemplified by inexpressive language in the website documenting the consultation process at Brock University and the documents presented by Carleton University, not all institutions chose to include this level of emotive language in documents, even when they pertain to emotionally charged issues like student and survivor involvement in sexual violence policy revisions.

These emotive statements act to reassure readers of the document that the feedback given by students is valued, at least emotionally if not to the degree that it would be integrated into the policy. Formally documenting that the university considers the insight of students to be "wise" and "thoughtful" (Lakehead University, 2016, p. 9) sets a diplomatic tone. Whether or not the policy makers value the insight provided by students enough to integrate it into the policy, this document positions the university as sincere and grateful. Any potential student condemnation thus appears as obtrusive and uncalled for, thereby disparaging student advocacy (Ferguson, 2017).

5.3 The Case of Carleton University

Carleton University faced backlash from their student population when, in drafting their first sexual violence policy, they refused to include the term "rape culture" in the body of their policy and address the ways that the university curates this culture on campus (Laucius, 2017). Scholarly literature is clear that in order to address sexual violence in a meaningful way institutions must interrogate their own practices and actively work to dismantle those that uphold rape culture (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017). Of the three institutions that have been presented as case

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studies, Carleton University has the most information available online regarding their consultation process. Hence, I have selected this university as a case study into a third approach to documenting the consultation process: presenting meticulous documentation online.

In their call for institutional courage, Smidt and Freyd (2018) recommend accountability, working for justice, reparations where needed, and transparency. Upon first glance, Carleton University's precise documentation of their consultation process appears to embody transparency; however, a deeper look at the context of these documents reveals that important information has been left out of the reports.

There are a number of reports, and so this investigation will be broken down according to each document.

5.3.1 "Sexual Violence Policy Consultation" Webpage and "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review" Document

Like the other two case studies, Carleton University has an entire webpage dedicated to the consultation process for its sexual violence policy. This webpage outlines the consultation process and includes direct links to PDF documents and other webpages with more information on the process as well as a link to the newest version of the Carleton University *Sexual Violence Policy*, which was released on April 25th, 2019. Much of the same information is available in a PDF document titled "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review."

The "Sexual Violence Policy Consultation" webpage includes a link to all of the feedback received during the review process, which the university states is a part of its commitment to a transparent review process. The page also links to a "Community Outreach Record" which documents all official public communications sent from the university regarding the review process. The page commits to producing a "user-friendly flowchart" to make information on the policy, related process, and options for informal and formal reporting accessible (Carleton University, 2019, "Home: Sexual Violence Policy Consultation"). The page also pledges to developing educational and training materials for the community. Additionally, the university states that their Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee is consulting key stakeholders to develop Carleton's "Campus Sexual Violence Prevention Strategy", which they aim to implement and have publically available by the end of 2019 (Carleton University, "Home: Sexual Violence Policy Consultation," 2019).

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The next section of the webpage is titled “About the Consultation Process” and outlines general feedback received and documents that the university used in their consultations with key stakeholders to develop the working plan that is presented in the next section. The text states that

> while the Policy has allowed enough flexibility to support survivors, so far, while balancing the requirement for procedural fairness, there are opportunities to further clarify policy language. (Carleton University, “Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review,” 2018, p. 1)

Given that Carleton University’s *Sexual Violence Policy* had only been implemented at the university for one year at the time that this document was published, the textual acknowledgment that the policy has “enough flexibility to support survivors, *so far* [emphasis mine], while balancing the requirement for procedural fairness” shows an awareness that the policy has likely not been put through enough cases to offer a complete understanding of how it will operate. The language of the policy having the capacity to support survivors “while balancing the requirement for procedural fairness” reveals an important aspect of what this text is working to convey. Positioning procedural fairness as a requirement while making no mention of supporting survivors being a requirement suggests that the university’s policy is doing the work of supporting survivors on its accord rather than because it is a legal requirement of Bill 132. Sisneros and Rivera (2018) argue that there is a false dichotomy between supporting survivors and supporting procedural fairness. The positioning of these as each requiring flexibility for the other to be accomplished reproduces this narrative and presents a “balancing” of these as an accomplishment for a policy.

As with the document produced by Lakehead University, this text presents clarity as the primary issue with the document and situates itself as working to resolve this missing clarity. “Clarify[ing] policy language” is the first change to the policy that readers of the webpage are introduced to (Carleton University, “Home: Sexual Violence Policy Consultation,” 2019). Interestingly, while the document commits to changing language that might foster the false impression that the “Complainant and Respondent [would have] to face each other in a formal hearing” as well as clarifying issues pertaining to FIPPA and confidentiality, the document only addresses a “clause or statement which protects Complainants or those seeking help from

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punishment for minor violations relating to alcohol or drug use" as a *possibility* (Carleton University, "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review," 2018, p. 1). This is worrisome given the prominence of alcohol-related sexual violence at universities and the consistent calls for alcohol and drug amnesty clauses from evidence-based scholarly literature (Richards, Branch, Fleury-Steiner, & Kafonek, 2017). This should be a fairly basic requirement for supporting survivors, and thus the earlier claim that the document does support survivors can be held with some contention.

The document further includes feedback that the university understands as stakeholders "ask[ing] the University to consider" (Carleton University, "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review," 2018, p. 1). The language of the university being "asked" to "consider" this feedback is revealing because, rather than feedback being understood as concerns that the university is being asked to *address*, the feedback is understood as only needing to be *considered* for the university's due diligence to be complete. That this includes aspects pivotal to the wellbeing of many survivors, such as accommodation processes, is somewhat alarming.

Collaboration and transparency are key themes throughout this document. The university deliberately states that Equity Services and the Office of the Vice-President, Students and Enrolment developed the work plan that is presented on the page with the intention of facilitating the consultation process in "the most collaborative way possible" (Carleton University, "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review," 2018, p. 1). The document then connects the user to links for the "Feedback Received" webpage, with the stated intention of providing a transparent process.

The next section of both the webpage and the document outline the work plan and timeline in a chart broken into the following phases: "Process Consultation," "Listening," "Tactical," "Drafting," "Fine-Tuning," and the "Finalization." The chart breaks down tasks under each heading, documents the office responsible for the task, provides a timeline, and on the webpage it denotes whether the task has been completed.

That there is a specific phase for consultations on the process of revising the sexual violence policy is quite interesting. As with Lakehead University, this does disrupt the notion that whatever system the university sets forward is without flaw. This phase formally breaks from the idea that universities must have ultimate control of how the process is facilitated,

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though, of course, the feedback from this phase would ultimately be evaluated by the Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities and the Office of the Vice-President, Students and Enrolment.

Within both the "Listening Phase" and the "Drafting Phase," the website outlines the use of "design-thinking workshops" with students, staff, and faculty. Additional closed sessions were created for "racialized students, Indigenous students, students with disabilities, international students, graduate students, residence students, [and] LGBTQ+ students" as well as for student groups and governments upon request (Carleton University, "Home: Sexual Violence Policy Consultation," 2019). Contact information to request closed sessions was provided in the form of an email denoted within the relevant section of the chart. Recognizing that racialized, Indigenous, LGBTQ+ students, and students with disabilities may be more comfortable providing feedback when they have their own spaces for conversations on sexual violence where they do not feel as monitored by whiteness, heterosexuality, cissexism, and ableism is important in making revisions accessible to marginalized students. As these students may have needs that are not reflected in the normalized white, heterosexual, cisgender, able-bodied coding of survivors, it is crucial that universities do the work to engage these students in an accessible manner.

These chart sections also link directly to a webpage describing the design-thinking workshops. These workshops are described as follows:

> The objective of these workshops was to host a supportive, creative space wherein members of the community can provide their feedback about the policy by "thinking like a designer." Participants in the facilitated session used hands-on methods to co-create feedback that focuses on the users of the policy, and how it can best serve them. (Carleton University, "Design-Thinking Workshops," 2019)

This description does not state who runs the sessions, nor does it offer an in-depth description of what these "hands-on methods" consist of, nor does it clarify with whom the feedback is co-created. Though these workshops have the potential to provide students with the tools they need to speak in strategic ways that may be more likely to result in their feedback being approved for the policy, the workshops may also result in facilitators having greater control on what feedback

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students provide. Though the workshops may seem like a product created by the university to appear collaborative, they may actually be an effective way of gathering student feedback and facilitating difficult conversations on potentially triggering topics.

The final section of this webpage includes links to PDF documents that the university has created regarding the revision process as well as a link to a PDF of the Carleton University *Sexual Violence Policy* itself (Carleton University, "Home: Sexual Violence Policy Consultation," 2019).

5.3.2 "Community Outreach Record"

The "Community Outreach Record" documents the date, subject, and type (email, tweet, Facebook post, newsletter, etc.) of communication sent out as well as the phase (process consultation, listening, drafting, and finalization) of each communication sent out by the university regarding the review of the sexual violence policy along with the date, type (open or closed session), audience, and phase of the design-thinking workshops and the date, union or group, and phase of each consultation meeting.

There were 45 communications, 19 design-thinking workshops, and 20 consultation meetings. This greatly outnumbers the four public information sessions conducted by Lakehead University and the six town halls run by Brock University. The scale of the universities may have impacted this, but Carleton's thorough documentation of their communications and facilitating of so many meetings for specific groups suggests that the university has a desire to be seen as communicating openly with students.

Interestingly, there was an open session design-thinking workshop for an audience identified as "Male-Identified Community Members" but no documentation of a similar designated space for only women or trans-identified community members. This closed session was the result of anonymous feedback highlighting the particular stigmas and shame that men who have been sexually assaulted face in disclosing their experiences (Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback," 2019, p. 25). Though this is important, it does call to question why closed sessions for women and trans people were not included, as they face disproportionate rates of sexual violence (Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Porter & Williams, 2011; Stermac, Horowitz, & Bance, 2017).

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5.3.3 "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback"

This report was published by the university on January 30th, 2019, and it contains information pertaining to consultation meetings, design-thinking workshops, and online feedback that was received by that date. During the consultation meetings, the Sexual Assault Services Coordinator, Equity Services; the Director of Housing and Residence Life; and the Office of the Vice-President, Students and Enrolment met with 11 groups consisting of multiple student governments; Our Turn, which is a student-led initiative for addressing sexual violence on campuses across Canada; and employment unions. Thirteen design-thinking workshops were run by this date, with a total of 22 participants. The online feedback received included 14 anonymous forms, 4 emails, and 1 editorial from the Charlatan, an independent student-run newspaper. All of the online feedback received was published, with any identifiable information redacted, in the "Online Feedback" section of this report. One of the recommendations put forward through an anonymous form that is included in the "Online Feedback" section of "Feedback Report on the Revised Sexual Violence Policy Draft" suggested including recommendations in a public space and addressing the reasons for incorporating or not incorporating feedback in the policy for the sake of transparency (Carleton University, "Feedback Report on the Revised Sexual Violence Policy Draft," 2019, p. 18). Given the heavy emphasis that Carleton has put on transparency, this decision follows from the values that they profess. Responses to the feedback provided through online channels as well as summaries of feedback provided during the consultations and at the design-thinking workshops were provided in the report.

As articulated by the document, the report was organized according to three themes that surfaced during this listening phase. I have quoted these themes and the concerns that they include in their original list form below:

- Policy Administration
  - Accommodation process
  - Composition of the Sexual Violence Review Committee
  - Immunity clause for drug and alcohol use
  - Off campus and non-Carleton community member processes
  - Accessibility of the Policy
  - Question of false claims and due process, including restorative or educational options
- Response
  - Communication around timelines including the appeal time limit
  - Faculty-student relationships

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    - Confidentiality constraints, including speaking publicly about the experience
    - Face-to-face meetings
    - Fear of reprisal
- Education and Continuous Improvement
    - Role of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Education Committee
    - Support services offered

(Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback," 2019, p. 2).

In reviewing the online feedback that was submitted by the Carleton community, the themes of "Policy Administration," "Response," and "Education and Continuous Improvement" are clear. The themes illustrate the ways that the roles of sexual violence policies are understood by both students and the universities. The themes of policy administration and response are generally relevant to the scope of the policy as well as how it is governed. These two themes also address institutional processes. The theme of education and continuous improvement speaks to the theme of education as an intervention that I found frequently in reviewing the scholarly literature on sexual violence at universities. As noted in the literature, education programs for university-aged students have a low dosage of effectiveness in preventing perpetration (DeGue et al., 2014; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018). Thus, calls for more education in feedback from students illustrates an example of institutional memory loss in student movements against sexual violence (DeGue et al., 2014; Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2014). Universities are more likely to select solutions that are quantifiable and product-based, such as educational workshops. This means that when they are called for in student feedback universities can engage in a strategy of accommodation wherein they choose a simple and ineffective solution to a problem instead of following the lead of scholarly literature and making deep transformational changes (Ahmed, 2012; Phipps, 2017; Quinlan, 2017; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018).

The "Online Feedback" section including the verbatim online feedback from students is interesting as it allows student feedback to be heard in the words that students submitted rather than as an interpretation by the school. Including the editorial from the Charlatan is also worth noting, as it demonstrates the legitimization of a platform for students beyond what the university has offered in meetings and online options. That being said, student newspapers are their own institution, and their online presence means that they are relatively easy to find by any interested reader. That is why it makes sense for universities to address them directly. Other forms of presenting student needs, such as protests and sit-ins, are easier for universities to

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misrepresent as students being immature and disruptive and thus are not often given the same credence by universities because they do not fit the same constructed standards of respectability (Ferguson, 2017; Higginbotham, 1993).

A particular piece of information contained within this report that merits discussion is the third question posed during the "Answering Key Questions" section of the design-thinking workshop agenda. In 2016, when the first sexual violence policy as Carleton was being created, students, staff, and faculty called for the term "rape culture" to be integrated in the body of the policy beyond a definition and to have the policy address rape culture on campus (Laucius, 2017). The university refused, arguing that the presence of rape culture on campus was a contentious issue (Laucius, 2017). This document demonstrates some kind of shift, as one of the questions asks, "How do we challenged rape culture on campus?" (Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback," 2019, p. 31). The presence of rape culture on the university campus is acknowledged by the diction of this question. The inclusion of the question in the workshop additionally demonstrates some effort to address rape culture on campus. Further, in response to feedback regarding accommodation processes, the report states that

> every member of Carleton's community is responsible for preventing sexual violence by challenging misogyny and rape culture. Under the Sexual Violence Policy, when a member of the university community receives a disclosure of sexual violence, the person to whom it is disclosed is to ensure that the person who has disclosed sexual violence is referred to the Sexual Assault Services Coordinator at the Department of Equity Services. (Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback," 2019, p. 4)

The statement that "every member of Carleton's community is responsible for preventing sexual violence by challenging misogyny and rape culture" recognizes rape culture and misogyny on campus and makes clear a community-wide duty to support survivors through referral to professional support provided by the university (Carleton University, "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback," 2019, p. 4). This does not require, as some bystander intervention programs suggest, placing students in the roles of social workers but, rather, offers a concrete step through which peers can show support for survivors (Edwards, Shea, & Barboza

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Barela, 2018). The accessibility of sexual violence offices for all survivors, however, is often not equitable, which does indicate another piece of work that universities must engage with (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Wooten, 2017). Actionable steps and acknowledging rape culture are, as found in the literature, crucial in addressing sexual violence on campus (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; Stermac, Horowitz, & Bance, 2017; Wooten, 2017). Though follow-up actions remain to be seen in their entirety, this inclusion does document a shift since the 2016 hesitancy to address rape culture on campus (Laucius, 2017).

5.3.4 "Feedback Report on the Revised Sexual Violence Policy Draft"

This report followed the drafting phase of the consultation process and was published on March 29th, 2019. The document is structured in a similar format to that of the "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback" and outlines the groups that attended the consultation meetings and/or the design-thinking workshops. It additionally includes the feedback submitted online, an editorial from the Charlatan, and the "Carleton Graduate Students' Association and Canadian Union of Public Employees 4600 Joint Response to the Carleton Sexual Violence Policy". There were 10 groups at the consultations as well as individuals by request. Six design-thinking workshops were held with 15 participants total. Eighty anonymous forms were submitted, 62 of which were form entries that contained identical information. Five emails were submitted. The same three themes of policy administration, response, and education and continuous improvement as in the 2019 "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback" by Carleton University were identified in the present document. As in the "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback" file, the "Online Feedback" section of the current document included verbatim online feedback as well as agendas for the design-thinking workshops.

Some of the feedback included in both this report and the "Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback" demonstrate why policy makers should not assume all student feedback to be homogenously progressive or as speaking for the benefit of student survivors. For example, one piece of feedback states that "a large portion of rape victims were never in danger of death. They are therefore not survivors. They should be classified as rape victims and not survivors" (quoted in Carleton University, "Feedback Report on the Revised Sexual Violence Policy Draft," 2019, p. 16). The term "survivor" comes from communities of people who have survived abuse and for many is a way of reclaiming power and agency. In this instance, the

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university defends its use of the term. This illustrates the need for a mediating body to make decisions about what feedback is included, though there is certainly room to question who should be making these decisions (Todorova, 2017).

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VI

6. Discussion of Study Findings

6.1 Policy as Saviour

Policies are a preferred method for dealing with institutional discrimination and violence within universities; however, they often exist more to signal the formal values of institutions (Ahmed, 2012; Pitcher, Camacho, Renn & Woodford, 2018). Iverson (2007) uses critical race theory to reveal the ways that anti-discrimination policies and diversity action plans use whiteness as the invisible norm and position people of colour as being outside of the norm of the university. Through this analysis, we can better understand what reality is created on campuses by these documents. The articles brilliantly states that "the problem that the policy seeks to resolve is accepted as an unquestioned, objective fact, and attention is instead focused on identifying solutions to the given problem" (Iverson, 2007, p. 589). Thus, sexual violence policies determine the problem that universities respond to and the way that they understand this problem is often left unquestioned. Resources are funneled into addressing the problem as the policy has defined it, which can limit the scope of responses to the issue, which in this case is sexual violence at universities in Ontario. This quotation demonstrates an imperative point regarding how universities respond to sexual violence on campus and how policies give them the power and control to dictate how an issue as complicated as sexual violence is understood in the public realm. Universities, within the guidelines set forward by the Province of Ontario in Bill 132, are able to dictate how they define sexual violence in their policies and thus determine what is recognized as sexual violence at universities, which has far-reaching influence beyond their campuses (Phipps, 2017). For fear of legal reprisal, universities are unwilling to create definitions that would push boundaries. Burns, Hyde, and Killett (2013) speak further to this as they suggest that institutional issues, particularly those characterized by institutional betrayal, require less prescriptive and standardized solutions, which are prevailing characteristics of policies, and, rather, more ongoing examinations, critiques, and re-adjustments.

The knowledge that is shaped by the definitions and discourses produced by universities is loaded with power in defining public understandings of sexual violence, resources for survivors, the scope and breadth of education on sexual violence, and preventative measures (Iverson, 2007; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). The language used by policy thereby shapes the

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experiences that people have in reality (Iverson, 2007). It impacts how survivors define their experiences, how perpetrators define their actions, how peers respond, and the responses of those with the power to provide resources (Iverson, 2007).

Sara Ahmed argues that diversity and equity policies frequently become constructed as sufficient responses to the issues they are established to address (2012). Policy documents responding to sexual violence, which is a complex issue deeply interwoven with issues of diversity and equity, are certainly necessary; however, I found that policy-based approaches can actually limit the work done against sexual violence by universities, as Ahmed cautions (Garcia, Lechner, Frerich, Lust, & Eisenberg, 2012; Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008; Napolitano, 2015; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011). Furthermore, these policies must be created, curated, revised, and administered in a meaningful way that actively seeks to engage university communities (Shariff, 2017; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010; Vladutiu, Martin, & Macy, 2011).

University policies that conceptualize sexual violence in non-inclusive ways isolate marginalized people from access and support (Bourassa et al., 2017; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Wooten, 2017). Through this, universities reproduce the normalization of violence against these communities (Ahmed, 2012; Bourassa et al., 2017; Wooten, 2017). Ahmed makes reference to how diversity is often defined as some people being "different" (2012, p. 33). This reinforces ideas of normalized identities and replicates institutions that are made to include some people, particularly those who are white, cisgender, and heterosexual, while ostracizing those who are not. The Canadian national identity values ideals of multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion - and university sexual violence policies reproduce these ideals on a superficial level because they are marketable (Breton, 2015; Phipps, 2017; Quinlan, 2017; Walcott, 2016).

Policies allow universities to take a formal stance against sexual violence (Ahmed, 2012). As neoliberal institutions that exist within the insincerely progressive zeitgeist of Canada, the creation of sexual violence policies at all institutions of higher education benefits the perception of the province of Ontario as well as the schools themselves (Phipps, 2017; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017; Walcott, 2016). The policies become a certain kind of advertisement with which universities declare themselves to be responsive to current social, cultural, and political realities while also being able to assert power over how sexual violence is officially defined on campus

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(Ahmed, 2012; Quinlan, 2017; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017). The function of policy as a formal document to which universities can refer and from which formal complaints can be made is complicated by the self-imposed limitations that policies are based upon (Todorova, 2017; Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005). Complaints that do, however, align with policy definitions can be resolved through referencing the document, which can then catalyst much-needed changes on campus. Zemsky and Sanlo (2005) refer to policies as "sticks," meaning motivators, and "carrots," meaning rewards, for universities to combat violence and discrimination (p. 11). When their scopes and definitions are set well and universities live up to their commitments, policies can be a tool to facilitate important systemic transformations.

Policies offer a document on the basis of which institutions can gesture when making decisions and they thereby offer security to those associated with universities (Ahmed, 2012). This security is essential for engaging with a broader foundation of support. For example, after the Stonewall rebellions in New York, students were responsible for much of the anti-homophobia and anti-transphobia work at universities in the United States (Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005). When universities finally began to create policies and formal responses against homophobic and transphobic violence 15 years after Stonewall, faculty and staff had institutional support and could speak out without risking such severe institutional penalties, demonstrating an important function of policy (Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005). As the work that students were doing required more access and resources than they had, the additional support of staff and faculty was important in combatting homophobia and transphobia, though this work is far from finished (Zemsky & Sanlo, 2005). Similarly, universities in Ontario being obligated to take a stance against sexual violence through the Bill 132 requirement to produce a stand-alone policy offers all community members at university campuses a formal document to support working against sexual violence. Though it seems absurd that a document would be needed to justify a public stance against sexual violence, recent cases of misogyny and rape culture on campuses and within court systems exemplify why some staff and untenured faculty in particular may feel unsafe working against sexual violence (Shariff, 2017).

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6.2 What is the Point of Student Consultations?

> In many cases, activist-survivors did exactly what every educator hopes for their students: They fell in love with their school, built relationships with faculty and staff in their various campus communities, and trusted that they would be cared for. Instead, they were silenced, pushed out, and turned away. (Linder & Myers, 2018, p. 12)

Bill 132 requires colleges and universities to "ensure that student input is *considered* [emphasis mine], in accordance with any regulations, in the development of its sexual violence policy and every time the policy is reviewed or amended" (*Sexual Violence and Harassment Action Plan Act*, 2016, Sched. 3.1). The bill does not, however, require that student input is included. The semantics of this phrase are complicated and point to an issue with the bill. While certainly not all student input can, or should, be included in a sexual violence policy as some may be contradictory and others may reinforce narratives of rape culture or even seek to discredit the existence of sexual violence, the terminology used does give those in charge of creating and revising the policy the power to decide what feedback to incorporate. Given that both universities and governments have similar agendas in curating the illusion that sexual violence is not an issue condoned by their institutions and that they are doing their due diligence to respond to it, this policy requirement, which demands no further action than listening to students, is mutually beneficial (Linder & Myers, 2018; Phipps, 2017). Shariff (2017) and Iverson (2007) contend that protests by students and activists demonstrate that students feel that they are not being heard by universities.

Consultations are a popular method of considering input from varying parties in medicine, counselling, and education, and consultations were used in all three universities that I analyzed for this project (Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). Consultations are understood as "an indirect, preventative, problem solving service delivery model that seeks to remediate problems identified in a system . . . or an individual" (Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018, p. 189). This description of consultations as systematic methods of "problem solving" for "problems identified in a system" highlights much of what I found in the literature that I reviewed. The notion that consultations on policies can solve sexual violence on campuses emphasizes the problem inherent in how sexual violence is "identified in a system," and how it is

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understood specifically in the system of universities. As Ahmed (2012) contends, policy and consultation documents do not solve the issues that they are set to address; they merely formalize institutional dialogues surrounding the issue at hand.

Defining consultations as "preventative", as done by Williams, Conyers, and Garcia (2018, p. 189), is illuminating, as the follow-up question is obviously "preventative of what?" In the context of neoliberal Canadian universities attempting to preserve their reputations as public scrutiny on sexual violence heightens, the issue that consultations are trying to prevent is that of university leadership being seen as not working to respond appropriately to sexual violence at their schools (Linder & Myers, 2018). Sexual violence policies and documentation of consultations thus become an exercise in bureaucracy (Ahmed, 2012). As an example, Brock University provided documentation that consultations on their sexual violence policy were offered. Media coverage of the university, however, cited community outrage regarding the professor who was found to have sexually harassed a student being allowed back into a teaching position (Clementson, 2019). This demonstrates a dissonance between what communities are calling for and what universities are claiming as a sufficient response. The university avoids moral liability by leaning on legal obstacles as reason for allowing the return of this professor. The issue accordingly becomes legal constraints for the university as an employer, rather than the issue being a professor sexually harassing a student. By reframing the problem as such, the university obscures how its own actions facilitate sexual violence on campus.

By considering consultations as a way of "solving" issues between parties, in this context between students and university policy makers, the constructed issue at hand is that students and universities do not agree about the content of sexual violence policies (Ahmed, 2012; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018, p. 189). Rather, the issue that should be under consideration is sexual violence itself. Sexual violence will not be solved if universities have the power to decide what is and is not legitimate enough to be covered by an official policy. The ways that sexual violence is constructed through these consultation processes do not deal with the actual issue of sexual violence. Listening to the needs of students is essential, but the hierarchical nature by which these policies are produced does not allow for this in a meaningful way, as policy makers can pick and choose the scope and feedback that they include (Ahmed, 2012).

If consultations are done well, they offer an opportunity to address the needs of a campus. Universities should, for example, be listening to the needs of trans students who face transphobic

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discrimination and violence on campus and have lived experience that is crucial for universities to make their campuses affirmative spaces for trans students (Goldberg, Beemyn, & Smith, 2019). Iverson and Issadore (2018) argue that consulting students, especially students whose social identities are marginalized and those who face disproportionate rates of sexual violence, is essential in addressing the specific needs of these students and the ways that certain populations have been ignored and put at risk by being neglected by institutional responses. By ensuring that students whose identities have been historically ignored by resources responding to sexual violence are present, Monahan-Kreishman and Ingarfield (2018) argue that universities can work to ensure that these students have equitable access to the supports and resources that they need.

Shariff (2017) argues that meaningful consultations with communities would allow universities to "reclaim their central role as research-intensive institutions, avoid developing arbitrary reactive policies, and build a sustainable foundation through evidence-based, student-informed policies and practices" (p. 56). Hence, these conversations are a path forward against sexual violence as well as a chance for universities to use their resources and the expertise of their staff, faculty, and students to make tangible and transformative changes to rape culture and sexual violence in Canada (Shariff, 2017). The dissonance between the written commitment that Brock University has made against sexual violence and the actions taken in allowing a professor found to have sexually harassed a student back into a position of power demonstrates the arbitrary nature of their policies and practices.

The need for meaningful policy consultations are not only based on social location and identity. Universities are comprised of many departments – from teaching to libraries to recreation to residences – and each of these have nuanced needs when it comes to preventing and responding to sexual violence (Lichty, Campbell & Schuiteman, 2008; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). No administrator or policy maker has the expertise that would be required to adequately understand all of the intricacies of a complete campus. Further, different schools and campuses at universities in Ontario have different needs: It would be naïve to assume that an urban university with a large graduate student population in Toronto would have the same needs as a primarily undergraduate university in Thunder Bay (Iverson & Issadore, 2018). Consultations, therefore, are essential in informing policy makers of the needs of a campus (Lichty, Campbell, & Schuiteman, 2008).

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Effective consultations require an understanding of cultural context, such as recognizing the impact of racism, colonization, homophobia, and transphobia on sexual violence (Behring & Ingraham, 1998; Bourassa et al., 2017; Girshick, 2002; Serano, 2016; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). This requires, for example, not only recognizing how intersections of this violence impacts Black, Indigenous, and students of colour but also how white students perpetrate these systems of violence on campus and how universities can respond appropriately (Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). Iverson (2007) argues that policies with requirements for consultations and dialogues may disingenuously present themselves as engaging with critical race theory's counter-storytelling wherein racially marginalized students have their experiences of racism heard by an institution. Rather, Iverson asserts that capitalism subverts and exploits these experiences to endorse the goals of the institution (2007). Should universities not respond appropriately to their cultural context, they may replicate systems that facilitate violence against marginalized groups. For example, when Penn State University published official statements on hate crimes occurring on campus, they presented their work as being done in consultation with members of the student Black Caucus, but failed to mention the demands the Black Caucus had made as well as the student protests and sit-ins on campus (Iverson, 2007). This sort of selective decision-making regarding what universities opt to include in their public statements is reflected in the schools that I investigated and demonstrates a pattern in universities hiding the discontent of students while presenting themselves as working for needs of their students.

Students are understood in the scholarly literature as having specialized knowledge of their own communities and of student culture on their campuses (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Streng & Kamimura, 2017). For this reason, it follows that universities should consult students regarding sexual violence policies. Wooten (2017), problematizes this assumption by highlighting the focus that has been given to the experiences of white students and how this has erased the experiences of Black students. Whiteness is made invisible, as it is assumed neutral and thus becomes the centralized experience in "colour-blind" policies (Wooten, 2017, p. 406). Furthermore, Bourassa et al. (2017) discuss how Canadian universities write the experiences of Indigenous students out of their responses to sexual violence. Those in charge of facilitating student involvement should accordingly be cognizant of which students are present and to which students policy makers are listening. This is particularly crucial since students can provide essential information on what

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supports the campus would benefit from and can speak to different values in the policies than those of administrators (Streng & Kamimura, 2017).

Wooten (2017) contends that national conversations in the United States position sexual violence and trauma as occurring to individuals without accounting for the ways that ongoing legacies of racism impact this violence. Rather, the survivor and perpetrator are both positioned as "ahistoric" and "acultural" and that

> rape in this sense is forced to be a neat and tidy experience, a series of acts that fit into a number of acceptable boxes, generally modelled off of what has been written into law through consensus regarding definitions of violent conduct. (Wooten, 2017, p. 406)

This quotation speaks to the ways that institutions would have trauma packaged to be consumed as statistics and marketing tools to show that universities, the province, and the nation care about survivors. Further, it illustrates the power that legal discourses have in shaping how North America understands sexual violence and how easily this erases the experience of survivors whose lives exist outside of these "neat and tidy experience[s]" (Wooten, 2017, p. 406). These dialogues also exist in Canada where racist and colonial foundations position Black, Indigenous, and racialized bodies as sexually available (Bourassa et al., 2017; Palmater, 2016). Though some schools, such as Carleton University and Lakehead University, make intentional efforts to engage Black, Indigenous, and racialized students in their consultations, sexual violence policies and consultations cannot undo the racism and colonialism that are built into campuses.

The documents published by Brock University and Carleton University that present the consultation process as isolated from instances of sexual violence by professors or that write out prior community protests demonstrate how easily universities can present only part of the story. Students who access the university-organized consultation meetings engage with policy makers on the terms of the university, which creates a power imbalance wherein students must present themselves in ways that appease the expectations of the universities (Higginbotham, 1993). Students who critique sexual violence policies outside of these approved channels are constructed by policy makers and university administration as the problem rather than the issue at hand being inadequate policies or sexual violence itself (Linder & Myers, 2018). Further, respectability politics result in personal presentation making a substantial difference in how an

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individual's feedback is taken and whether their perspective and experiences are considered legitimate (Ahmed, 2012; Danvers & Gagnon, 2014; Higginbotham, 1993; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). Respectability is framed by white, upper-middle class norms which favour white students and marginalize the voices of Black, Indigenous, and racialized students as well as those who are visibly queer (Ahmed, 2012; Higginbotham, 1993; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018). This demonstrates the power that university institutions have in curating the ways that narratives surrounding sexual violence and consultation processes are presented (Ahmed, 2012; Ferguson, 2017).

Though it is beyond the scope of this thesis, it would be useful to research the demographics of the students involved in these consultation processes. Media attention focuses on the work of white students, making the advocacy of white, straight, cisgender women in particular, visible in a way that is not afforded to students and activists of colour (Brubaker & Mancini, 2017; Wooten, 2017). University students at all levels are busy and often balance multiple responsibilities in school, at work, at home, and in their personal lives as friends, partners, and family members, limiting the extracurricular time and energy that they have for campus engagement (Sisneros & Rivera 2018).

Topics pertaining to sexual violence additionally require an enormous amount of emotional and psychological energy that people may not even realize they are expending (Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Smith & Freyd, 2013). Survivors of sexual violence in particular are often contending with the impacts of trauma and consequently risk retraumatization when engaging with these conversations (Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Sisneros & Rivera 2018). This is particularly true when survivors are conversing with university officials who are creating a document drenched in institutional power that both attempts to produce an image of a commitment to addressing sexual violence while also limiting the liability of the institution (Ahmed, 2012; Smith & Freyd, 2013). Literature on university responses to sexual violence clearly and repeatedly articulate the retraumatization that universities often induce on students when student survivors come forward with their experiences of sexual violence (Linder & Myers, 2018; Shariff, 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2013; Todorova, 2017). Engaging in these conversations is therefore a risk for students who have experienced trauma. Further, there is a reasonable degree of intimidation that students may

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experience in advocating for their needs to some of the most powerful individuals at the schools from which they are working to attain their degrees (Shariff, 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2013).

Both Lakehead University and Carleton University provided lists of the student groups that were invited to consultations in their documentation. Though opportunities for students to attend as individuals at town halls and through online tools existed, the documents that spoke to the use of these platforms noted that they tended to have low attendance (Lakehead University, 2016). The documents provided by the universities listed specific student groups that were invited by administration to attend task force meetings (Carleton University, "Considerations for Carleton University Sexual Violence Policy Review," 2018; Lakehead University, 2016). Though these task forces often invited student groups focused on socially-marginalized students, the scholarly literature available on student organizations notes the ways that even these advocacy groups are often permeated by social hierarchies (Westbrook, 2009; Wooten, 2017). Therefore, though these student groups may be tokenized as representing marginalized student voices, the groups themselves may reproduce oppressive power dynamics.

As Sara Ahmed (2012) articulates, community consultations can be problematic in their own ways. Marginalized communities may experience "a culture of consultation" or tokenization wherein they are over consulted, often as a part of institutions performing care without enacting the necessary changes or actions (Ahmed, 2012, p. 94). This pertains to a central argument of this thesis: Policy consultations must engage communities in a meaningful way rather than engaging in superficial consultations for the sake of generating document-products that lack substantial actionable items for transformative change. Engaging with communities extends beyond consultations, which Ahmed describes as "a very particular line of address: between those who consult and those who are consulted" (2012, p. 94). The power dynamics in this line of address reinscribe the validity of the institution and give it credit for a performed communication with communities (Ahmed, 2012). The experiences of those being consulted consequently only become legitimate should the institution see them as fit (Ahmed, 2012). That Brock University does not make mention of the community alarm that followed the reinstatement of the professor found to have sexually harassed a student in their documentation of the consultation process exemplifies the authority that universities have in deciding what legitimate consultation looks like. Though Carleton University does not address the protests of previous years, it does document verbatim a piece of student journalism regarding the

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consultations, demonstrating how universities can lend their power to other channels of communication (Carleton University, “Report on Sexual Violence Policy Review Feedback,” 2019).

Auditing processes are another space of institutional performance (Ahmed, 2012). Ahmed argues that policies can create auditing processes that institutions will succeed at, regardless of the actual effectiveness of the policy and any consequent actions (2012). Just as institutions can be very good at “doing” documents, they can also be very good at “doing” audits, all while completely failing to attend to the issues that they claim to be addressing through these systems (Ahmed, 2012). For this reason, university engagement with communities must involve accountability to these communities that exists beyond the parameters constructed by the universities (Shariff, 2017).

Rather than running consultations as the disingenuous exercise of which Ahmed cautions, universities should give students the time and freedom to participate critically (Shariff, 2017). In, for example, the documents available regarding the consultation process at Lakehead University, there were specific questions asked by the university, which clearly demonstrates which parts of the policy the university values. There were also open-ended questions, which leaves space for students to bring their own concerns; however, the tight timeline of the process impacts the research and criticism that students may be able to contribute. Iverson and Issadore (2018) contend that inviting students as experts on their experiences and communities disrupts the power dynamics that assume university administrators to be experts on policy making. Through Pillow’s (2003) argument for embodied policies which consider the reality of lived experiences, Iverson and Issadore (2018) further argue that student consultations bring forward knowledge that is vital for informed policies.

Students have been taking a leadership role in the work being done against campus sexual violence, and their knowledge of their communities is a valuable resource worthy of the respect of universities (Shariff, 2017; Eversole, 2011). Superficial consultations for the sake of institutional image-making or adhering to minimal legal requirements are inadequate whereas consultations that engage with students in a genuine manner may bring forth perspectives on issues that universities may not otherwise consider (2017). Scholarly literature suggests that meaningful dialogues are important for making structural changes and solid policies (Iverson, 2007). Through critical race theory, Iverson (2007) demonstrates that hierarchical consultation

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strategies where decision-making is centralized and positioned as expert, such as meetings with administrators and presidents as well as town hall meetings, are inherently elitist and construct participants as oppositional.

Landreman and Williamsen (2018) problematize the notion that consultations be limited to inviting feedback from students. Instead, they call for collaboration between students and student affairs professionals and role modelling by administration. What these discussions lack are concrete ways for administrators to do this work. Rather, the authors contend that student affairs officials have the professional capacity to do this work in a meaningful way, without specifying what that would actually look like. The design-thinking workshops administered by Carleton University that emphasize creative and collaborative work between facilitators and students seem to present a real effort at engaging with students in the ways that Landreman and Williamsen (2018) suggest. There, however, remains the power differential that is inescapable when universities dictate consultation spaces. Consequently, universities should pay legitimate attention to feedback brought forward through alternate means, such as student protests and open letters.

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VII

7. Conclusions

These three case studies clearly demonstrate three approaches that universities have in documenting the consultation processes for their sexual violence policies. Brock University provides a scarcity of information: Enough is provided to document an effort to gather student feedback, but any content that could be taken as biased for or against survivors was not documented. Lakehead University provides a mid-range amount of information on their process, uses emotive language to demonstrate gratitude to the students who participated, and makes statements acknowledging flaws in their consultations. Carleton University provides meticulous documentation of their process with the articulated goal of increasing transparency.

Quinlan (2017) remarks on the ways that the responses of universities to sexual violence have become a quantifiable and marketable measure of institutional success. Though there are certainly differences in how the universities have chosen to present themselves in these reports, this thesis is not seeking to determine which practices best serve university communities. Rather, I am interested in why the universities have presented their processes as they have and what meanings the universities are creating for themselves and the Province of Ontario by engaging students and running these consultations, how this interacts with Canadian national identity, and what this means for how sexual violence is understood in these contexts.

Wooten (2017) cites Giroux's (1983) three tenets of the relationship between schools and the societies in which they are situated. The definitions of these tenets as provided by Wooten are as follows:

> (1) Higher education policy cannot be understood as removed from the socio-political context in which it is situated; (2) Higher education policy functions as sites of the construction and promotion of discourse, meaning, and subjectivities; and, (3) the common-sense values and beliefs that guide and structure higher education policy are not a priori universals, but social constructions based on specific normative and political assumptions. (Wooten, 2017, p. 407)

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These definitions are crucial to understanding how these consultation documents speak to Canadian national identity as well as how understandings of sexual violence are contained and reproduced by these documents. By curating themselves to appear genuinely concerned with the needs of students, universities, Ontario, and thus Canada all position themselves ideally to enact institutional betrayal and exacerbate the trauma that survivors may already be undergoing (Linder & Myers, 2018; Quinlan, 2017; Smith & Freyd, 2013; Streng & Kamimura, 2017).

The sexual violence policies at all universities in Ontario fit within the requirements outlined in Bill 132. The very existence of these policies at some of these schools is because of the bill. This is a very literal example of how higher education policy is integrated into "the socio-political context in which it is situated" (Wooten, 2017, p. 407). The call for student engagement comes from activist and student advocacy as well as evidence-based literature calling for students to be involved in the process of developing responses to sexual violence on campuses, thus demonstrating another example of socio-political influence (Ferguson, 2017; Landreman & Williamsen, 2018; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Shariff, 2017; Streng & Kamimura, 2017). Furthermore, the notion that sexual violence at universities is best dealt with through policies and education is impacted heavily by discourses that position sexual violence within the legal realm and as an individual action rather than a deeply entrenched systemic issue that is supported by legal and educational systems (Bourassa et al., 2017; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Palmater, 2016; Phipps, 2017). Legal systems support sexual violence by officially delineating the scope of "sexual violence" as something that can and should be defined by the law (Iverson & Issadore, 2018; Shariff & Eltis, 2017). This leaves out the sexually violent experiences of entire groups and gaslights survivors from understandings of their own traumas by acting as an authority over how sexual violence is publically defined (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Ristock, 2002; Shariff, 2017; Shariff & Eltis, 2017; Tillman, Bryant-Davis, Smith, & Marks, 2010). Non-critical education programs reinforce sexual violence by proposing ineffective solutions targeted at survivors, bystanders, and those most vulnerable to violence, making them responsible for prevention and support rather than intervening at younger ages with appropriate programs to target violence before it is reproduced (Linder & Myers, 2018; Marine & Trebisacci, 2018; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018).

By offering education on consent and sexual violence, universities portray themselves as the "expert" on sexual violence, when it exists as a lived reality for many of the community

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members in the university context beyond how the university has defined it (Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Shariff & Eltis, 2017; Wooten, 2017). Sexual violence policy definitions of sexual violence mimic the ways that legal systems produce definitions through institutional authority. Their policies seek to solve what they have defined as the problem, which often does not encapsulate the complexities and nuances of sexual violence (Ahmed, 2012; Bourassa et al., 2017; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard, 2016; Hassouneh & Glass, 2008). Consequently, universities dictate the definitions and conversations related to sexual violence by positioning themselves as addressing the problem as they have themselves defined it (Wooten, 2017).

By understanding Canadian national identity and how these consultation documents position universities, we can begin to understand that "the common-sense values and beliefs that guide and structure higher education policy are not a priori universals, but social constructions based on specific normative and political assumptions" (Wooten, 2017, p. 407). By this, I mean that an understanding of Canadian national identity - and the politics and social climates that universities exist in - can help us understand that the documents produced by universities are not objective or complete. Though they are positioned as authorities, universities and provincial governments do not hold all of the answers for preventing and responding to sexual violence. Their definitions are situated as expert, but they nevertheless are reactions to the social and political worlds in which they exist. With the understanding that universities and provinces have chosen to respond to sexual violence in particular ways that can – and should – be questioned, we can begin to understand why universities have created sometimes enormous documents to report on the processes that curate these policies.

Universities, as institutions themselves and as signifiers of Canadian identity as discussed earlier, have a vested interest in distancing themselves from rape culture (Linder & Myers, 2018). Canada benefits substantially from a façade of gender equality, multiculturalism, and social justice (Walcott, 2016). Accordingly, it does not benefit the universities in Canada to admit to the ongoing racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia that they are built on as colonial institutions on stolen land (Bourassa et al., 2017). Rather, strategic responses wherein universities commit to formal messaging and programming, such as one-time workshops on consent, allow universities to advertise their commitment to responding to sexual violence while not requiring an admission of guilt for harbouring rape culture (Ahmed, 2012; Quinlan, 2017; Williams, Conyers, & Garcia, 2018; Wooten, 2017). Provincial actions, such as Bill 132, which

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require all universities to implement policies specifically pertaining to sexual violence allow universities to implement much-needed responses without necessarily accusing individual universities of having particularly poor responses to sexual violence.

As discussed throughout this thesis, Canada constructs itself as a progressive nation, particularly as it stands in the shadow of the political and economic power of the United States (Bourassa et al., 2017; Sheehey & Gilbert, 2017; Walcott, 2016). Built on a legacy of colonialism, which uses sexual violence as a weapon, Canada is deeply entrenched in violence (Palmater, 2016). Neoliberal ideologies construct this violence as an individual act, blame survivors for vulnerability, and punish survivors for any time taken away from producing labour to recover (Phipps, 2017; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018; Quinlan, 2017).

Medical understandings of sexual assault have allowed survivors access to support services and medical interventions but not without the cost of pathologizing their experiences (Freyd, 2013; Humphreys & Joseph, 2004). Feminist and power-based understandings of sexual violence would require demolishing the very systems upon which educational structures have been built and hence are not an appealing option for universities, nor for the provinces tasked with overseeing education. Legal frameworks are within the scope of university leadership, unlike medicine, and make the most sense for these institutions. Policy is, as discussed in Section 6.1 above, often constructed as a savior for institutional problems, as it is assumed to have the power to make changes at all levels of an institution and be binding within the contractual obligations that neoliberalism constructs between communities and their universities (Quinlan, 2017). Hence, it serves the Province of Ontario to produce legislation that makes official its stance against sexual violence at universities by taking the action-based step of passing Bill 132 (Ahmed, 2012).

In response, universities created their policies and facilitated student consultations, with varying degrees of rigour. For schools like Carleton University, hours of work were poured into creating the documents that report on the consultation processes. As Smidt and Freyd (2018) point to the importance of institutional transparency, it is encouraging to see this effort put forward. The policies and the consultations, however, seem to exist in an echo chamber wherein policies and education at universities are the only solutions that universities can offer for sexual violence prevention. Given that Bill 132 asserts the importance of these policies, it is easy to see the substantial degree to which this belief is established. The recommendations that schools are

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receiving are reflective of this same belief, with calls to action tending to be limited to more education and demanding more clarity in the semantics of the policies.

The consultation documents, no matter how transparent and reflective of student voice they are and no matter how inclusive the consultations are, are directed by the power that the universities are granted by the neoliberal context of Canada (Portelli & Konecny, 2013; Quinlan, 2017). Any issues brought forward in these conversations are within the purview of universities protecting themselves as institutions from legal reprisal (Ahmed, 2012). By making sexual violence out to be an issue that can be handled by policies, Ontario promotes an understanding of sexual violence as something that can be defined by the scope of a policy.

In truth, the bureaucracy of university systems as inscribed in sexual violence policies lacks the empathy to be responsible for sexual violence. Landreman and Williamsen (2018) "have observed that healing timelines might not match our formal processes or expectations" (p. 41). This quotation demonstrates the dissonance between neoliberal institutions that work to quantify experiences and produce healing as a product, and the lived experience of someone surviving sexual violence. Policies, though not without purpose, are not made for the nuances of survivors' experiences. Rather, sexual violence policies outline a formal script that is imposed by the power of the institution.

7.1 Recommendations

> If the student movements demanded that the university commit itself to the economically, politically, and institutionally impoverished communities that often existed literally outside its walls, then administrators, politicians, and businesspeople issued their own set of demands: that the university refortify its commitment to systems of power that would keep those communities out and keep students, faculty, and staff regulated from within. (Ferguson, 2017, p. 6)

To move forward and address sexual violence as it exists in the lived reality of so many people, the current paradigms through which it is understood must be analyzed and feminist understandings of institutional, political, and social power must be prioritized in practice. This does not mean, for example, destroying medical care for survivors but, rather, changing how diagnoses pathologize patients and working to centre survivors in their own care. Within higher education, this means responding to sexual violence at universities by interrogating the context

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of the university and understanding how violence beyond the university impacts the campus and how violence at the campus impacts the wider community. Rather than allocating resources as being for university students only, schools should reflect on their own institutional powers and consider how sharing their resources, knowledge, and skills with the wider community can reduce violence within their campuses.

Humphreys and Joseph (2004) argue individuals who have experienced trauma must connect with their communities and social movements in order to heal. As this thesis has demonstrated, sexual violence at universities in Ontario cannot be separated from ongoing legacies that include, but are not limited to, colonialism, racism, transphobia, and homophobia (Bourassa et al., 2017; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard). To respond to and prevent sexual violence in any substantial way, universities must work against sexual violence within the broader contexts in which they operate (Bourassa et al., 2017; Lalonde, 2017). Universities are not separate from the political and social contexts that surround them, and so they must do active work in engaging with the community organizations and social movements in which they are immersed (Lalonde, 2017).

Universities must ensure that they are putting genuine effort into these community-based approaches and extend them beyond committee meetings where the terms are always set by universities (Moylan, 2017). Further, universities should not rely on unpaid student labour that changes over at least once every four years as students graduate or assume infinite resources from community organizations (Lalonde, 2017). These community-based partnerships should also not export elitist academic models that falsely assume community workers to not have legitimate skills because they may or may not have academic credentials. Lalonde (2017) discusses the disrespect that some community workers feel from universities regarding matters of sexual violence, despite that fact that these community workers have been effectively working against sexual violence for decades while universities have been struggling for years. Rather, universities and community organizations should embrace collaborative work as opportunities for exchanging essential knowledge on a substantial and devastating social issue.

The neoliberal zeitgeist of consumption and ownership have no place in healing communities from sexual violence. Universities must consider themselves as a part of their wider communities rather than as isolated from them. Burns, Hyde, and Killett (2013) present institutional abuse as “a global issue” (p. 514) that is attributed to individual actors. Making

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experiences of institutional abuse out to be the work of individuals obscures the systemic nature of the issue and reproduces the membership characteristic of institutional betrayal, as blame is placed on the actions of an individual rather than on the entire structures set up to betray the trust and dependency of people in vulnerable circumstances (Burns, Hyde, & Killett, 2013; Smith & Freyd, 2014).

The ways that sexual violence is conceptualized through policy discourses is removed from the reality of sexual violence at universities in Ontario. These policies run a dangerous risk of being seen as the only concrete responsibility for campuses. Though a public statement condemning sexual violence is important, these policies offer a disturbing look at the way that sexual violence is framed in Canada. The policies delineate how universities respond to sexual violence on campuses, but they fail to encourage university communities to consider sexual violence at universities as also existing beyond universities. Though many make statements about disproportionate rates of violence targeting socially marginalized populations, the policies fail to respond to the ways that sexual violence that occurs beyond campuses impacts students (Bourassa et al., 2017; Potter, Howard, Murphy, & Moynihan, 2018). For example, Landreman and Williamsen (2018) emphasize that if sexual violence prevention is to be comprehensive, it needs to occur as young as kindergarten. This offers the opportunity to address systemic issues such as sexism, homophobia, racism, transphobia, the normalization of violence and rape culture before they are established as habitual (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). Holding universities responsible for the lack of education and resources provided to students before they enter the campus is unrealistic (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018). It also demonstrates a lack of sincere concern for addressing sexual violence on the part of the Provincial Government, which is the governing body in charge of secondary school curriculum. University sexual violence policies, therefore, virtue signal a commitment to addressing sexual violence while not doing the comprehensive work to actually combat the issue (Landreman & Williamsen, 2018).

Despite the research, experience, and resources located within universities, sexual violence persists as a horrifying reality on campuses, and there is little evidence to indicate that rates of violence are decreasing (Hong & Marine, 2018; Wies, 2015). As Edwards, Shea, and Barboza Barela (2018) argue, the goal of addressing sexual violence is not response or even prevention; rather, the goal is the complete elimination of sexual violence. This cannot happen on campuses when they are conceptualized as isolated from the communities that surround them

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instead of as a part of these communities. Shariff (2017) presents the argument that universities should extend their scope to account for online spaces, particularly as younger generations increase their time spent online. The article argues that public discussions of sexual violence policies are missing the need for universities to expand their scopes (Shariff, 2017). I concur and further contend that the scope of university responses to sexual violence needs to incorporate advocating for better sexual education in secondary schools.

Through my research, it became apparent that sexual violence on campus is understood as largely isolated to university contexts themselves. Responses are not addressing the life-long work that must go into education and prevention efforts as well as the work that must go into dismantling the white supremacist, colonial, racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, xenophobic, and ableist systems that are arranged to support rape culture (Bourassa et al., 2017; Calton, Cattaneo, & Gebhard; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018; Wooten, 2017). As Audre Lorde states, "The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (1984/2007, p. 112). If they are to do effective work against sexual violence, universities need to be reflexive on the ways that their structures reproduce neoliberal and capitalist systems by segmenting resources for students at universities rather than considering the larger social community as a whole. To do successful work, universities must shed the neoliberal ideology wherein they exist only to serve those who pay into them (Phipps, 2017; Quinlan, 2017). To combat sexual violence on campuses, universities should invest in challenging rape culture as a whole rather than prioritizing their resources for marketable products and campaigns. This would require, among other things, reaching out to anti-violence organizations that have been working in their communities for generations and advocating for better primary school curriculums on topics like consent (Lalonde, 2017; Schneider & Hirsch, 2018). Meaningful student engagement does not exist when universities only listen to what they want to hear from students and ignore how the lives of their communities are impacted by sexual violence in contexts beyond their roles on campus.

Given the expertise available within community resource centres and advocacy groups, Shariff (2017) recommends partnerships beyond the university itself. Working with organizations beyond the school also facilitates a sharing of resources from remarkably privileged academic institutions. Not everyone attends post-secondary school, and access to a college or university education is often determined by socioeconomic status (Schneider & Hirsch, 2018; Quinlan, 2017). People who do not attend post-secondary schools do not have

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access to the sexual violence resources that are available through colleges and universities, despite there being a need for these programs and supports beyond post-secondary institutions. Where university students may have their experiences of violence affirmed, or at least given a name, by the education and policies that universities provide, those who cannot or do not want to attend post-secondary school may go without these resources (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017). To truly act against sexual violence as it exists in reality, universities must work beyond their own campuses and communities rather than using policies and consultations as a way of limiting their responsibilities and sustaining their image. The purpose of sexual violence policies and consultation processes should not be to create a façade of care from institutions but, rather, to actually support survivors and to prevent sexual violence. Though this may be uncomfortable for universities and will require reaching beyond how they have chosen to define their scopes, responding to and preventing sexual violence requires long-term, systemic commitments to reflexive action that pushes institutions to use their power well.

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VIII

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