

**An intersectional analysis of sexual violence policies, responses, and prevention efforts at
Ontario universities**

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Abstract

In the context of public scrutiny, heightened media attention, and the introduction of provincial legislation on campus sexual violence, Canadian post-secondary institutions are facing unprecedented pressure to respond. This dissertation critically analyzes how sexual violence is being conceptualized in post-secondary institutions' policies, responses, and prevention efforts. Specifically, the dissertation engages with the qualitative findings emerging from discourse analysis of post-secondary institutions' sexual violence policies and interviews with 31 stakeholders, including students, faculty, and staff involved in efforts to prevent and address sexual violence at three Ontario universities and members of community anti-violence organizations. The project is grounded in an intersectional analysis of sexual violence, which de-centres the 'ideal' survivor and challenges the dominant depoliticized framing of sexual violence as an interpersonal issue by revealing its structural dimensions and its intersections with systems of oppression. While a number of Ontario universities reference intersectionality in their sexual violence policies, this project examines the extent to which this translates into practice in their responses and prevention efforts and the myriad ways that contemporary neoliberal institutional cultures and the broader political climate limit the possibility of implementing intersectional approaches to campus sexual violence. Drawing on Sara Ahmed's (2014) concept of non-performativity, the dissertation concludes that these sexual violence policies may serve to publicly signal institutions' commitment to addressing sexual violence and construct them as 'progressive' for simply referencing intersectionality without necessarily transforming the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded. Failing to ground efforts to prevent and address sexual violence at Canadian universities in an intersectional analysis that addresses its underlying social and structural dimensions may not only limit their effectiveness but also risks reproducing marginalization and systems of oppression by valorizing particular experiences of violence while obscuring others.

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Introduction

Campus sexual violence is hardly a new phenomenon; in fact, research suggests that the prevalence of sexual violence at post-secondary institutions has remained static over the past thirty years (Senn et al., 2014). There is also a long history of student activism and community organizing in response to campus sexual violence. However, in the past 5 to 10 years it has been framed by mainstream media (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014) and politicians (Biden, 2015) as an ‘epidemic’ in need of urgent attention. In this context, post-secondary institutions are facing unprecedented pressure to respond to sexual violence on their campuses.

While sexual violence is undoubtedly an issue on every campus, certain incidents have generated greater media attention and scrutiny than others. In the Canadian context, highly publicized examples include the rape chants at Saint Mary’s University (SMU) (Haiven, 2017), the sexual assault allegations against members of the University of Ottawa (U of O) men’s hockey team (CBC, 2016), the Faculty of Dentistry scandal at Dalhousie University (Dalhousie) (Halsall, 2015), Mandi Gray’s Ontario Human Rights complaint against York University (York), the University of British Columbia’s (UBC) dismissal of Steven Galloway (Lederman, 2016), and the student walk-out at Concordia University (Concordia) and McGill University (McGill) (CBC, 2018). In the United States, the issue of campus sexual violence has captured similar public attention with Emma Sulkowicz’s *Carry That Weight* project at Columbia University (Kaplan, 2014), the release of *The Hunting Ground* documentary (Ziering & Dick, 2015), and high-profile cases including that of Stanford University student Brock Turner (Baker, 2016).

This heightened attention comes at a time when institutional responses to sexual violence are under scrutiny more broadly. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)’s response to

the allegations against Jian Ghomeshi (Rubin & Nikfarjam, 2015), the sexual harassment class action lawsuit against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Canadian Press, 2017), the persistent issue of sexual violence within the Canadian military (Syed, 2017), and allegations of sexual harassment on Parliament Hill (Campbell & McIntyre, 2018) and in the entertainment industry (Roxborough, 2017) are just a few examples. Social media has played an important role in the public discussion of sexual violence, as evidenced by the impact of hashtags such as #MeToo, #BeenRapedNeverReported, #YesAllWomen, and #WhyIDidntReport. Despite this broader context, it is arguably the issue of campus sexual violence that has garnered the most significant attention from legislators.

Since 2016, the provincial governments in Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, Prince Edward Island, and Manitoba have passed legislation requiring post-secondary institutions to develop specific sexual violence policies. The governments in Nova Scotia and Alberta have issued statements encouraging their post-secondary institutions to do the same (Shen, 2017). Prior to this legislation, a Toronto Star investigation revealed that less than 10 per cent of English post-secondary institutions in Canada had specific sexual violence policies and that incidents of sexual violence were often addressed through other policies, such as student codes of conduct (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014). Further, only 22 per cent of all colleges and universities in Canada had a dedicated women's centre or sexual assault centre (Quinlan, Clarke & Miller, 2016). A CBC investigation found that there are also significant disparities in how Canadian post-secondary institutions collect and report data on the prevalence of sexual violence on their campuses (Sawa & Ward, 2015). The recent provincial legislation directs post-secondary institutions to respond to these gaps by creating specific sexual violence policies with

corresponding data reporting requirements and processes to address complaints of sexual violence.

Given the persistently high rates of sexual violence on post-secondary campuses, in many ways this legislation and the attendant policies could be understood as significant progress. However, this heightened attention also provides an important opportunity to ask a number of critical questions. What are the sources of this heightened attention and why now? Going beyond the development of the sexual violence policies as a sign of progress in and of itself, what is it that these policies actually accomplish [and do not accomplish]? How is sexual violence circulating as a concept in these policies and how does this translate in post-secondary institutions' responses and prevention efforts? What are the material impacts on the lives of students, faculty, and staff? What are the points of contestation and areas of resistance? These overarching questions served as the point of departure for my dissertation research.

Personal investments

Before I attempt to address these critical questions, it is important that I delineate my personal investments in this project. My first encounter with the inadequacy of the sexual violence supports available on campus occurred during my undergraduate degree at the U of O. I was aware that sexual violence was an issue on campus and that there were informal reports of a serial perpetrator who was drugging and assaulting students at off-campus house parties in the surrounding Sandy Hill neighbourhood. I remember being surprised that the university did not issue any safety warnings or publicly respond to the reports. After a friend disclosed to me, I made an appointment with the counselling services on campus to request resources on how to best support them and was again surprised to find that they had nothing to offer. The resources

available at the student-run women's centre on campus were understandably limited. Throughout my undergraduate studies, I was also employed on Parliament Hill, where I witnessed and experienced persistent sexism and sexual harassment.

Based on these experiences, I added a Minor in Women's Studies to my degree and began to focus my academic work on gendered violence. I had the opportunity to participate in a directed research course under the supervision of Dr. Holly Johnson and we co-authored a factsheet on violence against cisgender women for the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAOW). My first engagement with community anti-violence organizations occurred when I was placed at a women's shelter in South Africa during the international internship portion of my degree. This experience informed my Master's research, which focused on cisgender men's involvement in efforts to prevent gendered violence in South Africa. During this time, my understanding shifted from liberal human rights discourses on 'violence against women' toward more critical approaches.

My focus narrowed to the issue of sexual violence at Canadian universities during the Dalhousie Faculty of Dentistry scandal in 2014, when comments posted in a closed Facebook group of male dentistry students were exposed. The students' comments included a poll about which of their female classmates they would like to "hate fuck" and discussed using chloroform to subdue women and facilitate sexual assault. They also suggested that the "penis is defined as the tool used to wean and convert lesbians and virgins into useful, productive members of society" (Halsall, 2015; Bourassa et al., 2017). This incident led to revelations about the broader culture of misogyny, sexism, racism, and homophobia in the Faculty of Dentistry and the inadequacy of the university's mechanisms to respond to complaints of harassment and violence

(Halsall, 2015). At the time, I had just completed my Master's at Dalhousie and was working as a research assistant at the Gender and Health Promotion Studies Unit. I became actively involved in the protests on campus and began researching similar incidents at other institutions with the intention of focusing my doctoral research on campus anti-violence efforts.

Throughout my doctoral studies, I have been volunteering with Toronto Rape Crisis Centre (TRCC) in various capacities, including providing peer counselling on the 24-hour crisis line and facilitating public education workshops. My involvement with TRCC has challenged and expanded my understanding of sexual violence in important ways. TRCC continues to operate as a non-hierarchical collective and provides survivor-led, peer-based support in a time when the sector is increasingly professionalized and operating through a de-politicized medical model (Bumiller, 2008). TRCC is also committed to addressing sexual violence from an anti-oppression framework and centring the experiences of survivors who are typically marginalized in the sector, including Black, Indigenous, racialized, newcomer, disabled, and/or queer survivors. This commitment informs how the Centre approaches staffing and volunteer decisions, survivor supports, interactions with the criminal justice system, and alternative justice models. In this sense, my experience at TRCC provides a useful alternative to mainstream approaches to sexual violence and informs my critical analysis. It has provoked me to think differently about justice, healing, and community organizing while also exposing me to the challenges and potential limitations of translating these political commitments into practice.

These experiences shape and inform how I approach this research. Over time, my conceptualization of sexual violence has shifted from cisgender women to gender and from liberal rights frameworks to an intersectional analysis. These experiences have allowed me to

critically examine my privilege as someone who in many ways approximates the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence, defined as a white, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied, cisgender woman (Richie, 2000; Goel, Lave, MacDowell & Morrison, 2015), and what that means as a researcher and in community anti-violence organizing. It has also prompted me to think critically about academic institutions as sites of oppression, the ways that power circulates in institutional spaces, and the possibilities and potential limitations for academic feminist research to respond to the demands of social justice organizing.

The current project

This research seeks to understand not only the reasons for the unprecedented pressure on Canadian post-secondary institutions to respond to sexual violence but also what this pressure has produced. Specifically, this dissertation critically analyzes the way that sexual violence is conceptualized in the new policies at Canadian post-secondary institutions and how these conceptualizations translate into practice. To date, media coverage of campus sexual violence has focused primarily on how post-secondary institutions are responding to complaints of sexual violence through their formal reporting processes and supports for survivors (or lack thereof). However, there has been little attention on whether and how the current context and recent policies are impacting sexual violence prevention efforts on Canadian campuses and, as such, these efforts are a central focus of this project.

This research is framed through an intersectional analysis, which informs how I understand sexual violence and what is at stake in the questions that I am posing. An intersectional analysis challenges radical feminist conceptualizations of sexual violence that centre patriarchy by arguing that sexual violence cannot be understood in isolation from violent

systems of oppression such as racism and colonialism and, as such, it de-centres the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence (Richie, 2000; Goel et al., 2015). Further, an intersectional analysis problematizes the prevalent depoliticized framing of sexual violence as an interpersonal issue between decontextualized individuals and reveals its structural and systemic dimensions, including the ways in which anti-violence efforts may “themselves function as sites that produc[e] and legitimiz[e] marginalization” (Linder & Harris, 2017, p. 242). In other words, the way that sexual violence is conceptualized in the policies and prevention efforts on university campuses can determine whether and how the experiences of marginalized students, including trans, racialized, Indigenous, queer, poor, and/or disabled students, are addressed. Further, not engaging with an intersectional analysis of sexual violence may result in policies and prevention efforts that not only fail to address the root causes of sexual violence but that also risk obscuring particular forms and experiences of harm in ways that reproduce marginalization and violence.

Grounded in this intersectional analysis, my research sought to address the broader overarching research questions posed above by responding to several sub-questions. How is sexual violence conceptualized in the new policies at Canadian universities and what do these policies accomplish? How are these conceptualizations of sexual violence translating into practice in terms of supports for survivors, formal reporting processes, and prevention efforts? How are unstable concepts such as ‘sex,’ ‘violence,’ and ‘consent’ defined in these policies and prevention efforts? How is identity being understood in these policies and institutional responses? How are the categories of ‘survivor’ and ‘perpetrator’ being constructed? What are the power relations inherent in the policymaking processes and decisions regarding how institutions respond? Whose interests are being represented in these processes? Are the support

services and formal reporting processes responding to the needs of survivors? Do the prevention efforts being implemented address the structural and social dimensions of sexual violence? Are they effective?

As Chapter 2 elaborates, to address these questions I conducted discourse analysis of the sexual violence policies of all of the public universities in Ontario. I selected three public universities in Ontario as case studies and completed 31 semi-structured interviews with a wide range of stakeholders involved in efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence on campus, including students, faculty, and staff at the selected universities and members of community-based anti-violence organizations and student activist organizations. My research methodology was informed by intersectionality and I sought to recruit participants whose perspectives on campus sexual violence are marginalized in institutional decision-making processes and campus sexual violence research.

My dissertation findings suggest that while the policies typically employ similar definitions of sexual violence, they differ significantly in how they approach identity. Specifically, while some policies are completely identity-neutral (Harris & Linder, 2017), others reference the language of intersectionality. Some go as far as committing to intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention efforts and responses. While my primary focus was on prevention efforts, my findings reveal that universities' commitments to address to sexual violence are not necessarily translating into responses that meet the needs of survivors, particularly those who are already marginalized within the institution, in terms of the supports available on campus and the formal reporting processes.

My dissertation also found that universities vary in terms of how they approach sexual violence prevention. However, what is consistent across these institutions and the majority of their prevention efforts is that sexual violence tends to be constructed as a depoliticized, interpersonal issue and engagement with intersectional analyses of sexual violence tends to be limited to individual inclusion and representation, even among institutions that commit to intersectional approaches in their policies. As a result, I argue that the impact of these prevention efforts may be limited by the fact that they do not address the structural dimensions of sexual violence and its intersections with systems of oppression. These prevention efforts also fail to address the ways in which anti-violence efforts may themselves be sites of exclusion and harm.

I employ Sara Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of policy as non-performative to argue that by publicly signalling the universities' commitment to addressing sexual violence, the policies may stand in for the substantive action required to actually address sexual violence on campus. Further, I argue that in the context of the mainstreaming and institutional incorporation of intersectionality, referencing intersectionality in these policies marks institutions as particularly 'progressive' without necessarily translating into intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention and response. In this way, I conclude that these failures may not be failures at all, but rather "a very successful discursive act" (Dua & Bhanji, 2017, p. 238).

Notes on language and terminology

As the findings of this dissertation clearly illustrate, language is not neutral. For the purpose of clarity and consistency, this section will briefly discuss some of the terms and language that I have chosen to use. I am employing the term 'sexual violence' throughout this dissertation because it is more capacious than the criminal code definition of sexual assault or

than the term ‘rape’ and is generally understood to include sexual harassment. The Ontario government also uses this term in Bill 132, which addresses post-secondary institutions’ responses to sexual violence. The Bill defines sexual violence as

any sexual act or act targeting a person’s sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person’s consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation. (schedule 3, 17(1))

The term ‘sexual violence’ is also used in the majority of the policies developed by post-secondary institutions in Ontario. However, as I discuss in greater detail in subsequent chapters, there is significant debate about the value of employing such a broad definition of sexual violence. For example, Liz Kelly (1987) frames sexual violence as a continuum to demonstrate its pervasiveness and argues against categorizing particular forms of sexual violence as more or less serious than others. Others have warned against adopting overly broad definitions of sexual violence and, in particular, against centring legal definitions of consent (Matthews, 2018; Cossman, 2018; Gilbert, 2018).

I acknowledge that individuals who experience sexual violence identify with various terms, including, but not limited to, ‘victim’ and ‘survivor’. I also recognize that there is a rich history and significant debate on the use and implications of these terms (Kelly, Burton, & Regan, 1996). The term ‘victim,’ for example, has specific implications within the criminal justice system and is linked to access to services and redress mechanisms within this system, such as the Victim/Witness Assistance Program and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. However, the term ‘victim’ has also been critiqued for constructing those who experience sexual violence as helpless and disempowered and, in the context of persistent sexist constructions of

cisgender women as inherently passive and weak, for being a highly gendered term (Reich, 2002). Conversely, Emi Koyama (2011) argues in favour of de-stigmatizing the term ‘victim’ based on the potential for the term ‘survivor’ to align with neoliberal constructs of recovery: “society needs victims to quickly transition out of victimhood into survivorship so that we can return to our previous positions in the heteronormative and capitalist social and economic arrangements” (para. 5). While this critique is important, I am also mindful that the majority of my research participants used the term ‘survivor’ during our interviews, including in instances when they discussed their own experiences of sexual violence. As such, for the purpose of consistency and out of respect for my participants, I have chosen to use the term ‘survivor’ in this dissertation.

I also acknowledge the limitations of language to adequately address the nuances and complexities of identity and experience. I recognize the inherently political nature of the construction of identity categories and the ways in which the imposition of these categories may be experienced as a form of violence (Crenshaw, 1995; Simpson, 2015; Hunt, 2016). As such, I do not wish to imply that these categories are in any way stable or natural or to reproduce this harm. However, given that mainstream discourses on sexual violence continue to centre the experiences of ‘ideal’ survivors, generally understood to be white, heterosexual, middle-class, able-bodied, cisgender women (Richie, 2000; Goel et al., 2015), it is necessary to address the way that power circulates through categories of identity to shape vulnerability to sexual violence and access to support and redress. While I do not wish to reproduce binary logics, at certain points in this dissertation I differentiate between cisgender and transgender identity to specify, for example, the fact that cisgender men are responsible for perpetrating the majority of sexual

violence and to acknowledge the particular ways in which trans women have been excluded from support services. When I use the terms ‘men’ and ‘women’ without this distinction, I am referring to all who identify with these constructs of identity. Further, in discussing the way that sexual violence policies and prevention efforts impact specific racialized groups, I do not mean to suggest that these groups are in any way fixed or homogenous; rather, I am seeking to highlight the intersections of sexual violence and racism. Recognizing the complexities of identity and experience, I have also refrained from making assumptions about my participants and only reference aspects of their identities that they explicitly discussed during our interview.

Study significance

To date, the bulk of scholarship on sexual violence at post-secondary institutions has been written in the American context. However, as the following chapter will illustrate, there are significant differences between the Canadian and American contexts, particularly with respect to their legislative environments (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017). Differing institutional cultures, such as the greater emphasis on fraternities/sororities and varsity sports in the American context, may shape approaches to campus sexual violence prevention. The histories and contemporary realities of colonialism and racism in the Canadian and American contexts are also distinct and, as such, there is an urgent need for scholarship that addresses the intersections of these systems of oppression and sexual violence in the context of Canadian post-secondary institutions (Stermac, Horowitz & Bance, 2017). This research seeks to address significant gaps in the literature by attending to the development of sexual violence policies and prevention efforts at Canadian universities.

By comparing the sexual violence policies across Ontario universities, this dissertation reveals differences in how they conceptualize sexual violence, particularly with reference to identity. These differences become more apparent through my analysis of the policymaking processes and the ways in which these policies translate into practice at the three selected universities. While other Canadian scholars have analyzed aspects of the sexual violence policies, reporting processes, and prevention efforts, few have taken a wider lens to consider how these aspects are intertwined. This dissertation is also one of the first studies to engage with Canadian university students' perspectives on their institutions' policies, responses, and prevention efforts in the current context. Though students are often included in research on campus sexual violence as survivors or perpetrators, relatively few studies engage with student anti-violence activists (Krause, Miedema, Woofter, & Yount, 2017) and, as such, I have sought to amplify the voices of student anti-violence activists in this dissertation.

While the findings of this dissertation are drawn primarily from three Ontario universities, their relevance is arguably much broader given the ubiquity of neoliberal corporatization across universities. They highlight the importance of remaining critical of institutional claims of progress and commitment to addressing sexual violence and of examining whether and how these commitments translate into practice. As I will argue, the value of the sexual violence policies, particularly those that include a commitment to intersectionality, is that they can be used to demonstrate the ways in which institutions' responses and prevention efforts fall short of these commitments and to hold institutions accountable.

Outside of academia, given the heightened media and legislative attention on the issue of sexual violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions, this dissertation addresses a relevant and

timely policy concern. In particular, my findings have the potential to inform the National Framework to Address Gender-Based Violence in Post-Secondary Institutions, which the federal government is currently in the process of developing. Further, my findings highlight the importance of approaching sexual violence from an intersectional analysis and I hope that they can be used to inform efforts to prevent sexual violence at Canadian universities that respond to the needs of those whose voices and experiences of violence have historically been marginalized.

Chapter outline

This Introduction provides an overview of the dissertation, its findings, and their significance. Chapter 1 expands on the theoretical framework that underpins this research. Specifically, I argue that campus sexual violence must be understood through an intersectional analysis that addresses its inseparability from systems of oppression and its structural dimensions. Chapter 1 also addresses radical feminist theorizing as it continues to inform mainstream representations of sexual violence and some approaches to violence prevention and response. This chapter considers the central debates of the so-called feminist ‘sex-wars’ as certain elements continue to circulate in contemporary debates about how campus sexual violence is being framed and addressed. Recognizing that neoliberal institutional cultures may have a greater influence on campus sexual violence policies and prevention efforts than feminist theorizing of any kind, Chapter 1 also discusses neoliberal approaches to sexual violence. Finally, this chapter introduces Ahmed’s (2014) conceptualization of policies as non-performative, which has proven to be a useful tool to understand how institutional commitments to addressing sexual violence and to attending to intersectionality in the process [fail to] translate into practice.

Chapter 2 elaborates the intersectional methodology employed in this dissertation and my positionality as the researcher. This chapter also discusses broader ethical considerations, as well as the formal ethics approval process for this research and the various challenges that I encountered. Finally, this chapter addresses the specific research methods employed, including the process of selecting three institutions as case studies, participant recruitment, and approaches to interviewing and data analysis.

Chapter 3 expands on the broader context in which this research is situated and considers the question of what, if anything, is new about the recent surge in attention on campus sexual violence and the factors that have contributed to this surge. The chapter begins with an overview of prevalence data on campus sexual violence and discusses some of its challenges and limitations. I argue that the heightened attention to campus sexual violence in the Canadian context is related to developments in the United States and briefly outline the differences in the legislation and political climate. Chapter 3 summarizes the recent history of student anti-violence activism and the role that mainstream media and social media have played in shaping the current context. Given that my research findings demonstrate that institutional responses to campus sexual violence are influenced by the neoliberal corporatization of the university, this chapter also briefly considers how this trend is impacting institutions' structures and priorities and exacerbating inequalities. Finally, I argue that contemporary debates on campus sexual violence must be contextualized within the rise of backlash in the form of men's rights activism and the alt-right.

In Chapter 4, I analyze how sexual violence is conceptualized in the policies at public universities in Ontario. I also discuss differences in how the policies address identity by

comparing identity-neutral approaches to intersectional approaches. Drawing on the data from my interviews, I argue that the policymaking process reproduces existing power relations within the university and highlight some of the complexities of consultation within the context of neoliberal corporatization. I also consider the productive power of these policies and my participants' perspectives on their function and effectiveness. Drawing on Ahmed's (2014) concept of non-performativity, I conclude that the value of sexual violence policies must be assessed based on how they translate into practice rather than on their content alone.

Chapter 5 continues this analysis by exploring how institutions' public commitments to addressing sexual violence translate into practice in the context of the support services available on campus for survivors. I argue that while the creation or expansion of these services is an important outcome of the pressure that institutions are currently facing to respond to campus sexual violence, the ability of those working in these positions to meaningfully support survivors is often constrained by strict administrative oversight, unrealistic workloads, and lack of institutional support. Further, this chapter discusses the barriers that survivors may experience in accessing these services and evaluates the extent to which they are informed by an intersectional analysis of sexual violence. It also considers students' experiences navigating the formal institutional processes for reporting sexual violence. I highlight the potential pitfalls of basing these formal reporting processes on a quasi-judicial model and consider the potential benefits and limitations of institutionalizing alternative justice approaches.

In Chapter 6, I discuss some of the most prevalent approaches to prevention currently being implemented at Canadian universities, along with their potential effectiveness and limitations. I also consider the target audiences of these prevention efforts, whose experiences

they include and/or exclude, and the extent to which they are informed by intersectional analyses. I argue that prevention efforts tend to reproduce the notion that sexual violence is an individual, interpersonal issue and fail to address its structural dimensions and intersections with systems of oppression. I also suggest that institutional commitments to approaching sexual violence prevention through an intersectional analysis tend to be limited to neoliberal models of individual inclusion and representation.

In Chapter 7, I discuss some of the overarching challenges and considerations that shape institutional approaches to sexual violence prevention, ranging from the practical to the political. Based on the findings of my interviews, I highlight various strategies to address these challenges, and differences between institutional approaches. This chapter concludes with an analysis of why institutional commitments to intersectional approaches tend to be limited to inclusion and representation rather than the broader structural transformation required to effectively prevent and address sexual violence.

The Conclusion summarizes the key findings of this dissertation and discusses their significance. Specifically, this dissertation concludes that the sexual violence policies at Ontario universities can be read as non-performative (Ahmed, 2014) to the extent that they create the perception that the university is committed to responding to sexual violence without necessarily addressing the ways in which it is institutionally embedded. In particular, institutional commitments to intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention and response fail to translate into practice beyond the level of individual inclusion and representation. In so doing, these responses and prevention efforts continue to centre the ‘ideal’ survivor and risk reproducing marginalization and other forms of violence by failing to address the intersections of

sexual violence with systems of oppression. The Conclusion also discusses the limitations of this research and considers potential areas of future research.

Chapter 1: Theorizing sexual violence

The relationship between the conceptualization of sexual violence and the fields of gender and women's studies is complex and highly charged. Feminist theorizing and activism around sexual violence figured strongly in the formation of the discipline and the development of gender and women's studies departments in North America. Robyn Wiegman (2012) argues that the disciplinarity of gender and women's studies "proceeds precisely from its formalization of the political as the value that differentiates it from traditional fields of study" and that violence figures as a significant object of analysis within the field based on its potential to "liv[e] up to the political desire invested in the field as a project of social transformation" (p. 76). However, sexual violence has also been the site of intense debate and division among feminist scholars, as the so-called 'sex wars' demonstrate. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to account for all feminist theorizations of sexual violence, I hope to highlight some of the key tensions that continue to resonate in debates about campus sexual violence.

This chapter begins by discussing intersectionality, which informs how I conceptualize sexual violence and serves as the framework of analysis for this project. It will then turn to radical feminist theorizations of sexual violence given the way that they continue to inform mainstream anti-violence discourses and practices. The chapter will also consider various critiques of radical feminist theorizations of sexual violence and the central arguments of the sex wars, which are relevant to contemporary debates on campus sexual violence. In so doing, this discussion reveals the instability not only of sexual violence as a concept but also of 'sex,' 'gender,' 'consent,' and 'justice,' among others, as well as the complex relationships between them. Given that responses to sexual violence are grounded in the broader context of the

neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary institutions, this chapter briefly outlines neoliberal approaches to sexual violence. Finally, this chapter discusses Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of the non-performativity of policy and its utility as a tool to understand the role of sexual violence policies within neoliberal institutional cultures.

Intersectional analyses of sexual violence

The overarching framework of analysis for this dissertation is rooted in intersectionality. Broadly speaking, intersectionality conceptualizes categories of identity as inseparable and mutually constituted and highlights the ways in which power is unevenly distributed at the intersections of these categories (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). This uneven distribution of power produces material consequences and, as such, Patricia Hill Collins and Sirma Bilge (2016) conceptualize intersectionality as both a mode of critical inquiry and a mode of critical praxis concerned with social justice.

While Kimberlé Crenshaw is often credited with introducing intersectionality as a theoretical framework in the late 1980s, there is a much longer history of women of colour theorizing the inseparability of race and gender, such as Sojourner Truth's *Ain't I A Woman* speech, published in 1851, and Anna Julia Cooper's *A Voice from the South*, published in 1892 (Linder, 2017; Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Crenshaw (2015) recognizes this history and acknowledges that "intersectionality was a lived reality before it became a term" (para. 1). Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) cite the social justice movements in the second half of the twentieth century as a critical time for the development of intersectionality as a framework of analysis and highlight the importance of the Combahee River Collective's *A Black Feminist Statement* (1977). In this statement, the collective articulates their black feminist politics as being "actively

committed to struggling against racial, sexual, heterosexual, and class oppression, and see[ing] as our particular task the development of integrated analysis and practice based upon the fact that the major systems of oppression are interlocking” (para. 1). Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) caution that while Crenshaw’s contributions to the conceptualization of intersectionality are significant, positioning them as its origin effectively erases the social justice and activist roots of intersectionality and reframes it as an academic field rather than a form of critical praxis.

Applied to the issue of violence, intersectional analysis reveals the inseparability and co-constitution of systems of oppression such as racism, sexism, and colonialism. Crenshaw (1991) draws on intersectionality to explain how women of colour’s vulnerability and experiences of violence occur at the intersections of race and gender and are obscured within single-issue activism, namely anti-racism and white feminism. She argues that characterizing rape as a function of patriarchy ignores the ways in which it may act as a “weapon of racial terror” (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 158). As she explains, “when Black women were raped by white males, they were being raped not as women generally, but as Black women specifically: their femaleness made them sexually vulnerable to racist domination, while their Blackness effectively denied them any protection” (Crenshaw, 1989, p.158-9). Specifically, Crenshaw (1991) argues that racist stereotypes construct black women as inherently promiscuous and ‘unrapeable’, which function as rape myths that undermine their credibility when reporting experiences of sexual violence and accessing support. Similarly, Beth Richie (2012) argues that by emphasizing patriarchy and failing to acknowledge its intersections with other systems of oppression, mainstream feminist conceptualizations of gendered violence construct an ‘ideal’ survivor of violence who is a white, middle-class, heterosexual, cisgender woman. Because they

do not resemble this ‘ideal’ survivor, the violence experienced by black women, and by black trans women in particular (Matos, 2018), is often used against them in interactions with the criminal justice system and they are “blamed, stigmatized or, worse, criminalized because of their abuse” (Richie, 2012, p. 23-4). In this sense, intersectionality highlights the fact that vulnerability and experiences of violence differ based on social location as well as histories of structural violence, including, for example, colonization and slavery.

Analyzing sexual violence through an intersectional lens challenges the notion that it is an interpersonal issue and highlights its structural and systemic dimensions. As Crenshaw’s (1989) description of sexual violence as a “weapon of racial terror” (p. 158) illustrates, sexual violence is used to reproduce and enforce not only patriarchal gender relations and binary gender norms, but also other systems of oppression, including white supremacy and colonialism. Similarly, Angela Davis (1981) argues that mainstream anti-violence movements perpetuate racism and that “if black women have been conspicuously absent from the ranks of the contemporary anti-rape movement, it may be due, in part, to that movement’s indifferent posture toward the frame-up rape charges as an incitement to racist aggression” (p. 173). She challenges the myth of the black rapist by demonstrating that it is “distinctly a political invention” used to justify the lynching and incarceration of black men (p. 184). As such, intersectional feminists are critical of the close relationship between mainstream anti-violence organizations and the state and suggest that this relationship results in a reluctance to address broader institutional forms of violence (Incite!, 2006). They also argue that feminist support for carceral responses to sexual violence legitimize police and prisons, which are founded in racism and colonialism, and perpetuate the overrepresentation of racialized people in custody (Incite!, 2006, Richie, 2015).

Intersectional feminists suggest that collective identity is an important political site of knowledge production and resistance to oppression (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). This position is clearly articulated in the Combahee River Collective's (1977) statement: "we believe that the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression" (para. 10). While Crenshaw (1995) acknowledges that identity categories such as race and gender are socially constructed and that the processes of categorization are inherently violent, she argues that these categories continue to have material consequences based on the way that "power has clustered around certain categories and is exercised against others" (p. 1297). As such, she claims that "the most critical resistance strategy for disempowered groups is to occupy and defend a politics of social location rather than to vacate and destroy it" (p. 1297). The anti-racist feminist collective Incite! (2006) expands on this position by arguing that women of colour must be at the centre of analysis and responses to violence because by "shifting the center to communities that face intersecting forms of oppression, we gain a more comprehensive view of the strategies needed to end all forms of violence" (p. 4). As such, the concept of collective identity is central to intersectionality as a framework of analysis and as critical praxis.

While intersectionality is often associated with black feminisms, Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) argue that other women of colour, including Latinas, Indigenous women, and Asian-American women, employ similar frameworks of analysis and have made important contributions to the conceptualization of intersectionality. This is not meant to suggest, however, that these bodies of knowledge are somehow reducible to intersectionality. Indigenous feminists have highlighted how Indigenous women's vulnerability and experiences of violence are shaped

by the intersections of patriarchy, racism, and settler colonialism (Deer, 2015; Simpson, 2015). Kim Anderson (2000) argues that the colonial construction of Indigenous women as ‘uncivilized,’ hyper-sexualized ‘squaws’ shapes how violence against Indigenous women is understood and (not) addressed in the present settler colonial context. As these negative constructions of Indigenous womanhood demonstrate, gender and colonialism are interconnected (Anderson, 2000) to the extent that Indigenous feminist scholars have argued that the imposition of Western binary gender norms is a form of colonial violence that obscures the diversity of Indigenous gender roles and identities (Simpson, 2015; Hunt, 2016). Indigenous feminists are also critical of the ways in which mainstream feminist anti-violence activism can serve to legitimize the colonial state and the prison industrial complex (Simpson, 2015). Further, Leanne Simpson (2015) argues that that while Indigenous people have always resisted, gendered violence is used as a tool to perpetuate settler colonialism and capitalism by facilitating the theft of land and by preventing communities from mobilizing toward the decolonization. These insights are particularly relevant given that this dissertation is situated in the context of ongoing settler colonialism and racism in Canada.

Crenshaw (2015) has written in support of the broader application of intersectionality as a framework of analysis. She argues that while intersectionality was “originally articulated on behalf of black women, the term brought to light the invisibility of many constituents within groups that claim them as members, but often fail to represent them” (para. 6). Over time, intersectionality has been taken up in other areas of scholarship and activism. For example, Transgender Studies scholars have drawn on intersectionality to analyze trans people’s experiences of violence. Julia Serano (2013) uses the concept of trans-misogyny to articulate the

particular violence that trans women face both as women and as trans people. Lori Saffin (2015) argues that framing violence against trans people as being based solely in transphobia or policing gender norms (re)centres the experiences of white, middle-class trans people and obscures the specificities and experiences of trans people of colour and the intersections of violence against trans people and other systems of oppression, including racism and poverty. In this sense, some Transgender Studies scholars have challenged analyses of violence that focus on transphobic individuals while obscuring the structural and systemic nature of this violence (Bassichis, Lee & Spade, 2013). As Morgan Bassichis, Alexander Lee, and Dean Spade (2013) argue, “trans people face short life-spans because of the enormous systemic violence in welfare systems, shelters, prisons, jails, foster care, juvenile punishment systems, and immigration, and the inability to access basic survival resources” (p. 658), rather than simply because of the actions of individual perpetrators. Sarah Lamble (2013) also highlights how the focus on individual perpetrators reproduces the innocence of those who act as ‘witnesses’ to the violence rather than recognizing how they may be implicated in the structures and systems that shorten and jeopardize trans lives. C. Riley Snorton and Jin Haritaworn (2013) similarly apply an intersectional lens to reveal the ways in which marginalization and violence against trans women of colour allows for increased visibility and inclusion of trans people who experience greater privilege.

Based on these critiques, Transgender Studies scholars have highlighted the limitations of legal responses to violence against trans people, including anti-discrimination and hate crime legislation. Dean Spade (2015) argues that these responses are only accessible to trans people who approximate the ‘ideal’ survivor of violence and effectively reproduce the legitimacy of the state and criminal justice system. Spade (2015) also cites the limitations of anti-violence efforts

that operate under a depoliticized charity model and serve to maintain inherently violent systems and structures by mitigating some of their effects. Instead, Spade (2015) advocates for survivor-centric responses to violence against trans people grounded in grassroots community activism and intersectional politics without the involvement of the state or the police.

Beyond highlighting the limitations of mainstream carceral and state approaches to justice, intersectional analyses of violence have contributed to the development of alternative justice models. While alternative justice models take many forms and are often specific to the communities in which they are grounded, they tend to share an emphasis on community accountability (Chen, Dulani & Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2011). Community accountability can be defined as “any strategy to address violence, abuse or harm that creates safety, justice, reparations, and healing, without relying on police, prisons, childhood protective services, or any other state systems” (Chen et al., 2011, p. 26). These models may include restorative and/or transformative justice practices, among others. In the context of sexual violence, examples include the Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective, Philly Stands Up/Philly’s Pissed, and Incite!’s *Community Accountability Framework*. In the Canadian context, Montreal’s Third Eye Collective is dedicated to eradicating violence against black women by “working to transform the conditions around us, in the lives of those we support, that create violence,” which includes “building circles of care around Black women in our community to provide food needs, rent, birth and postpartum support, parenting support, and importantly, love and presence in the aftermath of violence” (Third Eye Collective, 2018, para. 4). The possibilities and limitations of using alternative justice approaches to address campus sexual violence will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

While intersectionality has enjoyed broader uptake and engagement, it has also engendered significant criticism. One of the key sources of criticism is intersectionality's relationship with identity politics, which, according to Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) "gets either associated with bad politics or dissociated with politics in ways that resemble the decoupling of intersectionality from social justice" (p. 131). For example, intersectionality has been accused of essentialism or ignoring intragroup differences (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). While it is important to recognize the instability of identity categories, it is equally important to address the material realities that are produced by the uneven way in which power circulates at the intersections of these categories, which is why Crenshaw (1991) proposes to "occupy and defend a politics of social location" (p. 1297) as a critical resistance strategy. A related critique of intersectionality's relationship to identity politics is that it can lead to separatism and fragmentation as groups are divided into smaller sub-groups, which can have negative implications for activism (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) respond to these critiques by citing the concept of strategic essentialism (Spivak, 1996), whereby subordinated groups use identity politics strategically to achieve political goals.

Intersectionality has also been critiqued based on the ways in which it has been institutionally incorporated and depoliticized.¹ Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) suggest that as

¹ For example, Jasbir Puar (2012) argues that as intersectionality has been standardized as a method within women's studies, it has come to reify rather than destabilize difference, particularly the "*specific difference*" of 'women of colour' as a category, which has been "simultaneously emptied of specific meaning [...] and yet overdetermined in its deployment" (p. 52, emphasis in original). In this sense, she argues that intersectionality produces 'women of colour' as an Other, "who must be invariably shown to be resistant, subversive, or articulating a grievance" (p. 52). In this deployment, intersectionality re-centres white women by positioning sex and gender difference as "the constant from which there are variants" (p. 52). Puar is also concerned with the ways in which intersectionality travels and argues that as intersectionality is mainstreamed and understood to be 'policy-friendly' within neoliberal human rights discourses, it reproduces epistemic violence by presuming stable categories of identity across different historical and geopolitical locations. Further, Puar (2012) claims that intersectionality functions as a "problematic reinvestment in the humanist subject" (p. 55). As such, Puar (2012) advances the concept of assemblage, which "de-

intersectionality was incorporated into academia during the 1990s, it became increasingly disciplined by normative academic practices and disconnected from its roots in activism and social justice. As they explain,

one would think that during the pivotal decades where neoliberalism gained legitimacy, an increasingly market-oriented university would not welcome women's studies, race/class/gender studies, black studies, ethnic studies, and similar projects that criticized the academy. Paradoxically, the opposite happened. Through incorporation, universities seemingly suppressed the transformative and potentially disruptive dimensions of these critical projects. (p. 84)

In this context, Umut Erel, Jin Haritaworn, Encarnación Gutiérrez Rodríguez, and Christian Klesse (2010) argue that intersectionality is depoliticized by an overemphasis on difference to the extent that differences simply add up arbitrarily and the power relations that structure how differences matter are obscured. In this sense, intersectionality is used to understand how subject positions are constituted by race, class, gender, and sexuality but does not account for the relations of domination and subordination between various subject positions (Erel et al., 2010). The depoliticization of intersectionality not only divorces it from its roots in anti-racist feminist activism, but also reframes exclusion as an issue of identification and representation rather than of inequitable power relations (Erel et al., 2010). When intersectionality is depoliticized to this extent, it can then be deployed against those who continue to insist on occupying a politics of social location (Erel et al., 2010). As such, Erel, Haritaworn, Rodríguez, and Klesse (2010) argue that intersectional analyses must always be embedded in an analysis of power relations and the social and material conditions that they produce. As the subsequent chapters will demonstrate, this critique is particularly relevant to campus sexual violence policies in that while a number of

privilege[s] the human body" (p. 57) to supplement and complicate intersectionality so that categories of identity are understood as "events, actions and encounters between bodies, rather than simply entities and attributes of subjects" (p. 58).

policy documents deploy the language of intersectionality, the extent to which this translates into in practice is often limited to identification and representation.

Although these critiques are important, intersectionality remains a useful framework of analysis for this study. Specifically, this framework allows for an analysis of how the various conceptualizations of sexual violence circulating at Canadian universities are produced through historic, economic, and socio-political structures and power inequities in ways that shape social and material realities. In other words, employing an intersectional analysis reveals how these structures shape the uneven distribution of the impacts of the new policies and prevention efforts whereby certain forms and experiences of violence are addressed while others are obscured in ways that risk reproducing marginalization and violence. In this sense, intersectionality highlights the importance of analyzing how the perspectives and experiences of black women, Indigenous women, women of colour, poor women, women with disabilities, immigrant women, and queer, trans, and non-binary people are taken up within conceptualizations of, and responses to, sexual violence at Canadian universities. Ultimately, employing an intersectional analysis is essential to examining not only the epistemological assumptions underpinning sexual violence policies and prevention efforts at Canadian universities, but also the stakes involved in these inherently political processes. To the extent that this study seeks to highlight the perspectives of those who are typically marginalized in mainstream research and responses to violence and to contribute to policies and prevention efforts that better reflect these voices and experiences, intersectionality as a form of critical praxis and its commitment to social justice are consistent with the political aims of this project.

Radical feminist perspectives on sexual violence

Despite the long history of black women's activism on the intersections of racism and sexual violence, the origin of sexual violence activism in North America is often attributed to radical feminist consciousness-raising groups, led predominantly by educated, white, cisgender women, in the 1960s and 1970s (Linder, 2017; Jessup-Anger, Lopez & Koss, 2018). These consciousness-raising groups created a space for cisgender women to share their experiences and develop an analysis of violence as political rather than private or personal. These consciousness-raising groups also gave rise to the development of rape crisis centres and domestic violence shelters whose work often included programs on post-secondary campuses (Abrams, 2018).

Radical feminism posits the constitution of the category of 'woman' as its central organizing premise and frames patriarchy as "the earliest and most fundamental form of oppression and provides the model for all later forms of oppression" (Mann, 2012, p. 88). While there are different conceptualizations of sexual violence within radical feminism, Susan Brownmiller's (1975) book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, is one of the most widely recognized radical feminist texts on the subject. Brownmiller (1975) theorizes sexual violence as "nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear" (p. 15). She discusses the ways in which rape has been used to reinforce masculinity, construct cisgender women as cisgender men's property, and maintain social control over cisgender women. Brownmiller (1975) locates cisgender men's capacity to rape and cisgender women's vulnerability to rape in their physiology and frequently refers to the penis as a weapon. In so doing, Brownmiller (1975) constructs all cisgender men as potential rapists and all cisgender women as potential victims.

By centring gender and patriarchy in her conceptualization of sexual violence, Brownmiller (1975) argues that “sexual intimidation knows no racial distinctions and that the social oppression of white women and black women is commonly shared” (p. 131). Many, including black feminists, have critiqued this universalizing approach to sexual violence and to gender. Richie (2000) suggests that the radical feminist notion that all cisgender women are vulnerable to sexual violence may be understood as a strategy to highlight its pervasiveness and frame it as a social and political issue rather than an individual issue or an issue affecting a particular racialized group or class. However, she argues that this framing ignores how racism and poverty shape vulnerability and experiences of sexual violence and constructs the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence (Richie, 2000). Similarly, black feminists have challenged the universalizing framing of all cisgender men as potential perpetrators of sexual violence (Combahee River Collective, 1977), particularly given that it ignores the pervasiveness of the myth of the black rapist (Davis, 1981), as discussed above.

Radical feminist perspectives on sexual violence have also been critiqued for framing all cisgender women as vulnerable and as potential victims because this framing risks reproducing the dominant patriarchal narrative that cisgender women are inherently weaker, more fragile, and less powerful than cisgender men (Reich, 2002). This critique may be complicated by the fact that radical feminists employed the shared experience of vulnerability as a foundation for collective action against sexual violence and patriarchal oppression, as evidenced by emergence of rape crisis centres and women’s shelters. Carine Mardorossian (2002) argues that because many forms of sexual violence were not considered crimes at the time, radical feminist identification with victimhood was a form of resistance. In this sense, she argues that being a

victim “meant being a determined and angry agent of change” rather than being powerless (Mardorossian, 2002, p. 767). However, the fact that contemporary discourses on campus sexual violence often position cisgender female students as being in need of protection reflects the extent to which this notion of vulnerability continues to have cultural currency.

It is important to acknowledge the history and ongoing reality of trans exclusion among some radical feminists (Stone, 1996; Hines, 2019).² Trans-exclusionary radical feminists, commonly referred to in contemporary debates as TERFs, generally subscribe to an essentialist, biology-based understanding of sex to assert that trans women are not ‘real’ women (Williams, 2014) while dismissing the identity claims of trans men and non-binary people (Awkward-Rich, 2017). TERF logic has, and continues to be, mobilized to exclude trans people from sites deemed to be feminist or ‘women’s spaces,’ including women’s studies (Noble, 2012), women’s bathrooms (Hines, 2019), and women’s shelters and rape crisis centres (Pyne, 2015). Sexual violence has figured prominently in TERF arguments; for example, Janice Raymond (1979) argues that “all transsexuals rape women’s bodies by reducing the female form to an artefact, appropriating this body for themselves” (p. 104). TERFs construct trans women as potential perpetrators of sexual violence based on the argument that they are not ‘real’ women (Pyne, 2015) and use this argument to justify their exclusion from women’s spaces. These arguments ignore the fact that trans people experience sexual violence at higher rates than cisgender women (Bergeron et al., 2016) and reproduce barriers that impact their ability to access support.

These dynamics are clearly illustrated by the debate surrounding the legal struggle between Kimberly Nixon and Canada’s oldest rape crisis centre, Vancouver Rape Relief and

² Cristan Williams (2016) argues that there are also examples inclusion and support for trans people among radical feminists, including members of the Olivia Records collective and those who defended Beth Elliott from TERFs during the West Coast Lesbian Conference.

Women's Shelter (VRRWS). In 1995, Nixon, who is a transsexual woman and a survivor of relationship violence, responded to VRRWS' call for volunteers to participate in training to become peer counsellors for victims of cisgender male violence (findlay, 2006). During the first training session, the facilitator asked Nixon to leave based on her trans identity. Nixon subsequently filed a human rights complaint alleging that VRRWS had discriminated against her on the basis of sex (findlay, 2006). VRRWS argued that Nixon did not meet their 'women-only' policy and that she did not share the life experience of women who are assigned female at birth and would thus be unable to support the women accessing their services (Denike, 2006). While the British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal ruled that Nixon had been discriminated against and awarded her \$7,500 in damages, the British Columbia Supreme Court overturned their decision and Nixon's subsequent appeals to the British Columbia Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court of Canada were unsuccessful (Denike, 2006). In March 2019, the city of Vancouver announced that they would stop funding VRRWS based on their exclusion of trans women (CBC, 2019).

In addition to the violence of trans exclusion, scholars have highlighted a number of critical concerns regarding the Nixon case. For example, Patricia Elliot (2004) asserts that given that trans women experience sexual violence at disproportionately high rates, they may in fact be better positioned to support survivors than cisgender women who are not survivors. Viviane Namaste (2011) argues that VRRWS' invocation of 'shared experience' is limited to trans identity, which ignores other differences among women, including racialization and class. She also challenges VRRWS' turn to the law, which, in her view, signals an uncritical view of the state (Namaste, 2011). Bobby Noble (2006) frames the Nixon case as part of a broader effort by

feminist organizations to define and stabilize the category of ‘woman’ and claims that VRRWS’ arguments render the experience of victimization foundational to this definition. As he explains, “such essentializing assertions, whether trans-phobic in intention or ‘only’ in consequence, attempt to fix not only the limits of gender but also the intelligibility of what counts as the experiences of the appropriately gendered body” (Noble, 2006, p. 7). Such assertions also construct an essentialist understanding of masculinity that ignores the specificities of trans experiences (Chambers, 2007; Prasad, 2005). Ummni Khan (2007) suggests that VRRWS’s arguments serve to exacerbate the public/private divide and its gendered impacts by distinguishing volunteer work from paid work; by framing VRRWS in familial terms, thus assigning it to the realm of the private; and by “rendering the public the final arbiter of Nixon’s femaleness,” regardless of her self-identification (p. 56). Given that many contemporary anti-violence organizations have roots in radical feminism, this case illustrates the importance of remaining vigilant to ensure that essentialist and universalizing understandings of women and of sexual violence that exclude trans women and elide differences among women are not reproduced. In other words, this case demonstrates the potential for anti-violence efforts and organizations to reproduce violence and marginalization and, in so doing, highlights what is at stake in this dissertation research.

Debates about radical feminist conceptualizations of sexual violence are also evident in contemporary discussions on the utility of the concept of rape culture. While Brownmiller (1975) is often credited with being the first to articulate the term (Rentschler, 2014), rape culture is generally defined as a

complex set of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. It is a society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent. In a

rape culture women perceive a continuum of threatened violence that ranges from sexual remarks to sexual touching to rape itself. A rape culture condones physical and emotional terrorism against women as the norm. (Buchwald, Fletcher & Roth, 1993, p. vii)

While the concept of rape culture is frequently deployed in contemporary feminist anti-violence activism (Rentschler, 2014), it has been particularly prevalent in discussions of campus sexual violence (Phillips, 2017).

The concept of rape culture has been critiqued on the basis that it universalizes experiences of sexual violence and (re)centres patriarchal oppression as the root cause, thereby obscuring how structural differences and social and political contexts shape experiences of sexual violence (Warren, 2016; Phipps, Ringrose, Renold, & Jackson, 2017). Further, some suggest that the totalizing way in which the concept of rape culture is often deployed risks contributing to moral panics and demonizing particular communities that are constructed to be more likely to perpetrate rape (Phipps et al., 2017). However, as Nickie Phillips (2017) points out, suggestions that rape culture constitutes a moral panic are often tinged with misogyny and used as a means of dismissing accusations of sexual violence rather than generating a productive debate on the legitimate concerns surrounding its usage. In 2014, the largest American anti-sexual violence organization, the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), submitted a letter to the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault asking them to reconsider their use of rape culture based on the argument that it overstates social and cultural factors and distracts from the individual responsibility of perpetrators (Phillips, 2017). Phillips (2017) illustrates this argument by pointing to the fact that rape culture was used as a defence in the case against two of the four former football players who were charged and ultimately convicted of raping an unconscious student at Vanderbilt University in 2013. As these examples

demonstrate, while the concept of rape culture is frequently deployed in contemporary discussions of campus sexual violence, there is little consensus on its utility.

In addition to the development of rape crisis centres and women's shelters, radical feminist anti-violence activism contributed to a number of changes in law and the criminal justice system. While some radical feminists in the late 1960s and early 1970s were adamantly opposed to seeking change from within the state and the law (Halley, 2018), Brownmiller (1975) argues in favour of expanding the legal definition of rape to include marital rape and highlights the need to address the prevalence of rape myths, such as citing cisgender women's sexual history as evidence of their (un)rapeability, within the criminal justice system. However, she does not account for the ways in which these rape myths are shaped by racism, colonialism, heteronormativity, cisnormativity, and ableism, for example, and how this impacts survivors' experiences reporting sexual violence and accessing support. Further, Elizabeth Bernstein (2012) suggests that "feminist campaigns against sexual violence have not only been coopted by, but in fact been integral ingredients to the evolution of criminal justice as an apparatus of control" (p. 235). As discussed above, responses to sexual violence that legitimize the criminal justice system, which Bernstein (2012) calls forms of carceral feminism, have been critiqued for failing to acknowledge the ways in which the system is founded in racism and colonialism, as evidenced by the overrepresentation of black and Indigenous people in prison (Incite!, 2006).

More broadly, this turn toward the state has been critiqued as a form of what Janet Halley (2018) calls governance feminism, defined as "every form in which feminists and feminist ideas exert a governing will within human affairs" (p. ix). Halley (2018) argues that while governance feminism has contributed to positive changes in cisgender women's lives, the impact of these

changes has been unevenly distributed and there have been a number of unintended outcomes. Halley (2016) is particularly concerned with calls for affirmative consent laws in the United States (which are already in place in Canada), and suggests that their implementation would lead to false reporting and the incarceration of innocent cisgender men, and the emergence of an “intensely repressive and sex-negative” moral order (p. 259). She also raises similar concerns regarding the expanded use of Title IX investigations to address campus sexual violence (Bazelon, 2015). While I agree with Halley’s (2018) demand for critical analysis of feminism’s incorporation within the state, she fails to account for the low levels of false reporting (Lonsway, Archambault & Lisak, 2009) and the persistence of rape myths within the criminal justice system that contribute to low conviction rates for sexual violence (Rotenberg, 2017).

By linking sexuality and danger, radical feminist theorizing on sexual violence contributed to the emergence of the so-called feminist ‘sex wars’ in the late 1970s and 1980s. This argument was advanced by Andrea Dworkin (2007), who theorizes heterosexual intercourse as an act of possession and argues that “getting fucked and being owned are inseparably the same; together, [...] they are sex for women under male dominance as a social system” (p. 83). She claims that intercourse is constitutive not only of cisgender women’s subjectivities, to the extent that their “human potentiality [is] affirmed by it” (p. 154), but also of society and the distribution of power within it (p. 186-7). She argues that cisgender women become complicit with cisgender male dominance by policing and degrading themselves to conform to the norms associated with sexual attractiveness, thereby “becoming an object so that he can objectify her so that he can fuck her” (p. 178). She also suggests that intercourse is an expression of cisgender men’s hatred of cisgender women.

While Dworkin's (2007) arguments are often characterized as 'sex-negative,' she rejects this characterization and suggests that this is simply a strategy to dismiss her arguments and maintain a system of cisgender male dominance. However, she does not discuss the possibility of sex outside of this framework, and, as such, her argument has been read as totalizing. Though Dworkin (2007) challenges this interpretation of her argument in the introduction to the 20th anniversary edition of *Intercourse*, she concedes that

if one has eroticized a differential in power that allows for force as a natural and inevitable part of intercourse, how could one understand that this book does not say that all men are rapists or that all intercourse is rape? Equality in the realm of sex is an anti-sexual idea if sex requires dominance in order to register as sensation. (p. xxxiii)

Thus for Dworkin (2007), imagining the possibility of a heterosexual experience of sex outside of this framing appears to be predicated on dismantling cisgender male dominance.

Dworkin (1987) extended her theory of intercourse as an expression of cisgender male dominance and contempt for cisgender women to analyze pornography. She positions pornography as part of a continuum of violence used to reproduce cisgender male power and argues that "the fact that pornography is widely believed to be 'depictions of the erotic' means only that the debasing of women is held to be the real pleasure of sex" (p. 201). Dworkin (1987) also reiterates the impossibility of cisgender female sexual agency in the context of a society where "force is intrinsic to male sexuality" (p. 198). She claims that "no authentic idea of bodily integrity is ever hers to claim or to have [...] and force used against her does not victimize her; it actualizes her" (Dworkin 1987, p. 198). Based on the arguments of Dworkin, Brownmiller, and other so-called sex-negative radical feminists, anti-pornography activist groups were formed, including Women Against Pornography (WAP) in New York and Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media (WAVPM) in San Francisco.

The tensions between the so-called sex-negative radical feminists and the feminist sex radicals are illustrated by the controversy that emerged around the 1982 Barnard Conference on Sexuality, which focused on questioning the reduction of cisgender female sexual experience to victimization and the notion that pornography inherently oppresses cisgender women (Echols, 2016). Activists from WAP contacted Barnard officials to complain that the conference was “pro-pervert and anti-feminist” and protested outside (Khan, 2014). Their complaints focused particularly on sadomasochism (S/M), butch-femme relationships, and pornography as forms of “anti-feminist” sexuality promoted by the conference (Khan, 2014). They argued that the conference was organized to “supplant an authentically radical feminism with an anything-goes libertarian version of feminism” (Echols, 2016, p. 12). According to Alice Echols (2016), who presented at the Barnard Conference, the surrounding controversy exacerbated existing tensions between feminists and propelled local debates about pornography to the national level.

Carol Vance was one of the organizers of the Barnard Conference and the arguments that she presented serve as a useful illustration of the feminist sex radicals position. Vance (1984) claims that cisgender women’s sexuality is best understood as

simultaneously a domain of restriction, repression, and danger as well as a domain of exploration, pleasure, and agency. To focus only on pleasure and gratification ignores the patriarchal structure in which women act, yet to speak only of sexual violence and oppression ignores women’s experiences with sexual agency and choice and unwittingly increases the sexual terror and despair in which women live. (p. 1)

Vance (1984) argues that sex-negative feminists ignore cisgender women’s agency and the possibility of taking up mainstream symbols in playful, humorous, or subversive ways, such as in butch/femme relationships. She concludes that “feminism must speak to sexuality as a site of oppression, not only the oppression of male violence, brutality, and coercion which it has already

spoken about eloquently and effectively, but also the repression of female desire that comes from ignorance, invisibility, and fear” (p. 23). In so doing, she articulates a different feminist approach to sexuality that not only addresses sexual violence but also promotes pleasure and agency.

Gayle Rubin, who also presented at the Barnard Conference, is one of the most well-recognized proponents of the feminist sex radical position. At the conference, Rubin (2011) warned that the sex-negative feminist agenda relies on a sexual morality that aligns with right-wing political interests. She suggests that rather than frame certain sexual acts as moral and others as deviant, sexual acts should be judged “by the way partners treat one another, the level of mutual consideration, the presence or absence of coercion, and the quantity and quality of the pleasures they provide” (2011, p. 154). She characterizes sex-negative activism as a moral panic and demonstrates the ways in which previous moral panics have disproportionately affected sexual minorities with serious material consequences, including discrimination and criminalization. She also argues that while feminism tends to frame sexuality as deriving from gender, it is necessary to analyze sexuality separately. This argument is often cited as one of earliest articulations of sexuality studies and queer theory.

With respect to pornography specifically, Rubin (2011) challenges the notions that it is inherently violent and that it is more violent and sexist than other forms of media. She is particularly concerned with anti-pornography feminists’ calls for state censorship and how that may affect those whose sexuality is deemed ‘deviant’, including those who practice S/M. She suggests that the misrepresentation of S/M as abuse seems to derive from the fact that “both Dworkin and [Catherine] MacKinnon appear to think that certain sexual activities are so inherently distasteful that no one would do them willingly, and therefore the models are ‘victims’

who must have been forced to participate against their wills” (Rubin, 2011, p. 267). While she recognizes that “most pornography *is* sexist” (p. 272, emphasis in original), she suggests that the reason is because it is produced primarily by cisgender men for other cisgender men. Rather than eliminating pornography altogether, Rubin (2011) argues that feminists should encourage more cisgender women to enter the field as producers and directors and that the industry will shift as cisgender women are recognized as potential consumers. She concludes that by conflating sexual activity that they find distasteful or upsetting with violence, anti-pornography feminists actually trivialize violence and distract from more important feminist issues.

While the anti-pornography position continues to be presented in mainstream discourses “as ‘the’ feminist perspective on pornography” (Cossman & Bell, 1997, p. 7) and has had a significant influence on contemporary international anti-trafficking and ‘violence against women’ discourses (Echols, 2016; Jaleel, 2012), the sex radical position has increasingly gained traction among feminists, as evidenced by the rise of queer theory and sexuality studies (Khan, 2014). However, it is important to acknowledge that these debates about sexuality are not merely theoretical and have had important material consequences. For example, MacKinnon and Dworkin were involved in lobbying efforts to pass anti-pornography ordinances in the United States. In 1992, Canadian anti-pornography feminists and the Women’s Legal Education and Action Fund supported the Supreme Court’s decision to uphold the obscenity provisions in the criminal code. This decision effectively extends the state’s power of censorship and criminalizes depictions of sexual activity considered to be ‘degrading,’ ‘violent,’ and ‘dehumanizing,’ which echoes the language used by anti-pornography feminists (Rubin, 2011; Khan, 2014). As Rubin (2011) predicted, these obscenity provisions have been disproportionately applied against

representations of queer sexuality and S/M (Khan, 2014). For example, six weeks after the Supreme Court decision, Toronto's Glad Day Bookshop was criminally charged and later convicted for selling *Bad Attitude*, an American lesbian magazine deemed obscene for featuring S/M content (Cossman & Bell, 1997). The decision also affected public support and funding for art and events featuring queer content, including the Inside Out film festival (Cossman & Bell, 1997).

The central arguments of the so-called feminist sex wars continue to play out in contemporary debates about campus sexual violence and some have gone as far as to characterize these debates as part of the 'Sex Wars 2.0' (Cossman, 2018) or the 'return of the sex wars' (Bazelon, 2015). For example, Laura Kipnis (2017) reads the heightened attention to campus sexual violence as a moral panic that risks reproducing patriarchal constructions of femininity and cisgender female sexuality. However, as mentioned above, the notion that campus sexual violence constitutes a moral panic has also been used to dismiss allegations and is often tinged with misogyny (Phillips, 2017). As Phillips (2017) points out, this moral panic discourse problematically assumes that there is a consensus on the nature and scope of sexual violence, that claims of violence are exaggerated, and that current remedies are not only adequate but excessive. Sara Ahmed (2015a) also cautions against this moral panic framing, particularly with reference to student allegations of sexual violence against staff and faculty, as it "allow[s] a critique of power to be reframed (and dismissed) as an imposition of moral norms" (Ahmed, 2015a, para. 49) and therefore risks reproducing dominant structures of power and the normalization of sexual harassment within academia.

Jacob Gersen and Jeannie Suk (2016) take issue with expanded scope of Title IX (discussed in Chapter 3) and suggest that sex itself is increasingly subject to bureaucratic regulation. By contrast, others argue that post-secondary institutions already have extensive policies and procedures that regulate students and that the state has always been implicated in producing and regulating sexual norms through, for example, sexual education curriculums (Goldberg, 2016; Appleton & Stiritz, 2016). Kipnis (2017) argues that contemporary campus anti-violence activism risks extending the bureaucratic power of academic institutions and infringing on academic freedom based on her experience as the subject of two Title IX investigations for retaliation and violating confidentiality (Gersen, 2017) after she published an article and a book questioning the validity of students' Title IX complaints against a professor at her institution. The lack of transparency in these institutional investigations has also been cited as a concern (Gersen & Suk, 2016) and Lisa Duggan (2017) suggests that Title IX investigations risk disproportionately affecting queer studies scholars. As these examples demonstrate, some of the central tensions of the sex wars continue to reverberate in the context of contemporary debates on campus sexual violence.

Neoliberalism and sexual violence

Institutional responses to campus sexual violence are emerging within the context of the increasing neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary education and of anti-violence efforts more broadly. Kristin Bumiller (2008) argues that the need for stable funding sources has motivated anti-violence organizations to develop closer relationships with the state, often at the expense of their critical analyses of sexual violence. In this way, anti-violence organizing has become increasingly incorporated into the state's social service and criminal justice

bureaucracies, which has “far-reaching effects for the exercise of symbolic, coercive, and administrative power over both men as perpetrators and women as victims” as the feminist politics of anti-violence organizing are “deferred to the more pressing prerogatives of security, public health, preservation of the family, and other demands to maintain order” (Bumiller, 2008, p. 7). In this framework, sexual violence is constructed as an individual problem to be managed through the criminal justice system and the surveillance and management of survivors rather than a political problem of structural and systemic oppression (Bumiller, 2008). Perpetrators of sexual violence are criminalized and pathologized as violent ‘others’ and this framing not only obscures the root causes of sexual violence but also intersects with racist and colonial tropes, as discussed above (Bumiller, 2008). Given that neoliberalism has eroded social services and the welfare state, survivors’ ability to access increasingly scarce resources and supports relies on their ability to render their experiences of violence intelligible within the medical and psychological language used by the state (Bumiller, 2008). This model leaves little room to consider the ways in which sexual violence intersects with systems of oppression and how these intersections shape whose experiences of violence are rendered (un)intelligible. This model has also translated into the professionalization of sexual violence organizations and an emphasis on hiring staff with psychology or social work credentials, which distances these organizations from earlier grassroots peer support models (Linder, 2018). Chris Linder (2018) notes that in the American context, this professionalization has disproportionately impacted women of colour anti-violence organizers and has resulted in an overrepresentation of white, cisgender women working in the anti-violence sector.

These broader neoliberal approaches have translated into institutional responses to campus sexual violence. Linder (2018) explains that while campus sexual violence services were often initially provided by women's centres and other identity-based centres on campus, as a result of neoliberal professionalization, these services have shifted to campus health and counselling offices, which have radically different mandates. In the current context, sexual violence is often framed in ahistoric and identity-neutral ways (Harris & Linder, 2017). On the surface, this identity-neutral framing seems progressive in that it has the potential to expand the definition of sexual violence to include violence against cisgender men and queer, trans, and non-binary people, rather than focusing exclusively on cisgender men's perpetration against cisgender women. However, this identity-neutral approach must be read as an example of neoliberal inclusion that reproduces the dominant framing of sexual violence as a depoliticized interpersonal issue and fails to account for the complex power relations inherent in sexual violence (Harris & Linder, 2017). While it is important to challenge the construction of the 'ideal' survivor of sexual violence, intersectional approaches that centre the experiences of those most marginalized and vulnerable are more suited to this task (Incite!, 2006).

Neoliberal approaches to preventing and responding to sexual violence on campus emphasize individual freedom, autonomy, choice, and empowerment (Francis & Giesbrecht, 2016; Trusolino, 2017). As discussed in Chapter 6, consent campaigns, which are especially popular at Canadian universities, operate from the assumption that individuals have the freedom and autonomy to 'just say no' (or yes) and ignore the ways in which power relations inform consent (Francis & Giesbrecht, 2016). These campaigns typically do not account for the racist and colonial ideologies that construct black and Indigenous women as always already consenting

and sexually available (Crenshaw, 1991; Anderson, 2000) or for the sense of entitlement to sex embedded in normative white masculinities (Kimmel, 2013). Prevention efforts that promote ‘self-securitization,’ such as campaigns warning students about alcohol consumption and vulnerability to sexual violence, and responses focused on risk management and strengthening security forces on campus also correspond to this neoliberal framework (Trusolino, 2017; Gray & Pin, 2017).

In the context of the increasing neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary education, which is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3, institutional responses to sexual violence may be primarily motivated as a means of managing reputational risk and maintaining a positive public image (Gray & Pin, 2017). In this sense, “university branding becomes entangled with sexual assault prevention [...] to further the public reputation of the university as proactive in enhancing student safety [...] as a component of institutional efforts to attract prospective students” (Gray & Pin, 2017, p. 93-4). From this perspective, allegations of sexual violence are constructed as threats to the institution’s reputation that must be silenced, managed, or disavowed (Ahmed, 2015b). As such, institutions may seek to discourage complainants from coming forward or making formal complaints and often shroud complaint processes in silence (Phipps, 2018) through measures including non-disclosure agreements, for example. The following chapters will expand on the ways in which neoliberal ideology informs institutional responses and prevention efforts.

Conceptualizing policy as non-performative

In addition to understanding how neoliberalism shapes institutional approaches to sexual violence, developing a framework for this research also necessitates theorizing the function of

policy within neoliberal institutional cultures. In this respect, I have found Ahmed's (2014) concept of non-performativity,³ which she introduces to analyze the institutional incorporation of diversity politics, to be particularly useful. As she explains,

in the world of the non-performative, to name is not to bring into effect [...] In my model of the non-performative, the failure of the speech act to do what it says is not a failure of intent or even circumstance, *but is actually what the speech act is doing*. Such speech acts are taken up *as if* they are performatives (as if they have brought about the effects they name), such that the names come to stand in for the effects. As a result, naming can be a way of not bringing something into effect. (p. 117, emphasis in original)

Ahmed clarifies that to read policies as non-performative does not mean that they do not have productive power but rather that what they actually produce is not what they claim to be producing. In this sense, adopting a diversity policy is about "*changing perceptions of whiteness rather than changing the whiteness of organizations*" (p. 34, emphasis original). Drawing on Ahmed (2014), Enakshi Dua and Nael Bhanji (2017) reach similar conclusions with respect to equity policies at Canadian post-secondary institutions. They argue that

³ Despite the fact that in the context of gender studies, the concept of performativity is generally associated with Judith Butler's theorization of the performativity of gender, Ahmed (2014) does not substantively engage with Butler in her use of performativity. Ahmed's conceptualization of performativity seems to engage more directly with J. L. Austin's (1955) theorization of performative speech acts, which Butler (1993) also takes up in her work. Perplexingly, Ahmed (2014) cites a single line from Butler's (1993) *Bodies That Matter* in her conceptualization of performativity: "performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate 'act,' but, rather as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse *produces the effect that it names*" (p. 2, emphasis added, as quoted on p. 116). She cites this line to argue that diversity policies are non-performative to the extent that they *do not* produce the effect that they name. This limited reading fails to account for Butler's argument that performativity never fully succeeds in producing the coherent gendered subject that it names. From Butler's (1990, 1993) perspective, the performativity of gender is not limited to the singular pronouncement of 'it's a girl/boy' at birth but rather the compulsory process of repeated citation that it initiates to produce the gendered subject. While this repetition is necessary to produce the gendered subject, it also threatens the coherence and stability of the identity that it produces: "every repetition requires an interval between the acts, as it were, in which risk and excess threaten to disrupt the identity being constituted" (Butler, 1991, p. 28). Further, Butler (1990) acknowledges the possibility of subversion by displacing gender norms through citational practice. Ahmed's (2014) reading of Butler does not account for the possibility of subversion or for the ways in which the process of repetition threatens the stability of the effect that performative discourse is said to produce and, as such, her addition of 'non' may not be necessary. However, in Ahmed's conceptualization of non-performativity, it is not necessarily context (Austin, 1955), nor subversion or excess (Butler, 1990) that generate the failure of the declaration of diversity to produce that which it names; rather, Ahmed argues that this is not a failure at all but rather the work that the declaration is doing. In this sense, Ahmed's argument is that declarations of diversity work by *appearing* to be performative but that they are actually *not performative*, at least to the extent that the effect that they produce is not the effect that they name.

under neoliberalism, the most important measure of the effectiveness of equity policies is not their ability to address racism and other forms of inequities but rather the extent to which the presence of these mechanisms leads to the perception that universities are efficient, competitive, and leaders [...] Thus, *the ineffectiveness of equity policies is not a failure at all, but actually a very successful discursive act.* (p. 238, emphasis added)

As such, the non-performativity of policy is intimately connected to the preservation of institutional reputation and public image.

In more recent work, Ahmed (2015b) extends her concept of non-performativity to the issue of campus sexual harassment. She argues that public commitments to address sexual harassment and related institutional policy changes stand in for substantive efforts to address the ways in which sexual harassment is institutionally enabled and embedded. As she explains, institutions

articulate the following statement as if it was performative: ‘we do not tolerate sexual harassment.’ Organisations are only called upon to make such statements because they have tolerated sexual harassment: when their tolerance threatens to come out, it has to be denied. (Ahmed 2017, para. 2)

She claims that non-performativity relies on locating systemic issues of racism and sexual harassment in the bodies of individual harassers and that by sanctioning or removing the offending individual, the institution gestures towards removing the problem without actually addressing its systemic nature. This dynamic is clearly visible in the emphasis on the creation of formal processes to respond to allegations of sexual violence at Canadian universities in the new sexual violence policies. Because speaking of sexual harassment is framed as an injury to the reputation of the institution, those who file complaints are often framed as the problem and subjected to further harassment (Ahmed, 2015b). To what extent might this framing be useful in understanding the way that Canadian universities have responded to students who bring awareness to the issue of campus sexual violence?

As the following chapters discuss, the findings of my dissertation research suggest that Ahmed's (2014) concept of non-performativity is a useful tool to understand why institutional commitments to addressing campus sexual violence, and to intersectionality in particular, do not translate into meaningful and necessary institutional transformation. Rather than read this as a failure, the concept of non-performativity highlights how this is in fact "a very successful discursive act" (Dua & Bhanji, 2017, p. 238). Though on the surface the term 'non-performativity' seems to imply something far more benign, I will argue that the non-performativity of sexual violence policies produces serious material consequences, which are unevenly distributed. Specifically, the sexual violence policies succeed in constructing a public image of the institution as responsive to sexual violence and those that reference intersectionality distinguish their institutions as especially 'progressive.' In practice, however, these commitments remain shallow and efforts to make violence prevention and support intersectional are generally limited to neoliberal models of individual inclusion and representation rather than structural transformation. As a result, these efforts risk causing harm by reproducing the notion of the 'ideal' survivor and the barriers that marginalized students face in accessing support, and by lending legitimacy to prevention efforts that do not account for differential risk of further violence and/or criminalization.

Conclusion

This chapter began with a discussion of intersectionality, which informs how I conceptualize sexual violence and serves as the framework of analysis for this project. Intersectional analyses of sexual violence not only reveal its structural dimensions, but also the ways in which it is inseparable from systems of oppression. This framework is therefore useful in

understanding how certain experiences of violence are recognized and addressed through campus sexual violence responses while others are obscured in ways that risk reproducing marginalization and oppression. This chapter also considered radical feminist theorizing on sexual violence and the debates that emerged during the so-called sex wars. While I fundamentally disagree with radical feminist analyses of sexual violence in many ways, I recognize that they have informed mainstream anti-violence efforts and continue to be relevant in contemporary discourses about campus sexual violence. Similarly, this chapter briefly discussed neoliberal approaches based on the fact that they have a significant influence on how post-secondary institutions respond to sexual violence. Finally, this chapter addressed Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of the non-performativity of policy as a useful tool for understanding the work done by the new sexual violence policies at Canadian post-secondary institutions. Building on this theoretical framework, the following chapter discusses my research methodology, the ethical considerations of this project, and the specific research methods that I employed.

Chapter 2: Towards an intersectional methodology

Based on the theoretical framework established in the previous chapter, this chapter details the process of designing and conducting this dissertation research. I begin by situating this research within my methodological approach, which is informed by intersectionality, as well as Ahmed's (2014) work on conceptualizing institutional policy as non-performative. Building on this methodology, I discuss the ethical considerations for this dissertation and the formal ethics process. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the specific research methods used for this dissertation. Throughout the chapter, I also discuss the challenges that emerged while I was conducting this research, along the lessons that I learned from these challenges and how it might impact future research in this area.

Research methodology

As Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) explain, intersectionality is both a mode of critical inquiry and a mode of critical praxis. As a feminist scholar, I am familiar with applying intersectionality as a mode of critical inquiry. Through my involvement in anti-violence organizing, I have also developed a better understanding of possibilities for intersectionality-as-praxis. One of my primary objectives in developing and conducting this dissertation research has been to think through what it might mean to approach research on the topic of campus sexual violence as a mode of intersectional praxis.

Epistemologically, intersectional methodology seeks to produce knowledge that centres the voices of those who are typically marginalized in mainstream processes of knowledge production (Thornton Dill & Kohlman, 2012). Intersectional methodology understands knowledge as subjective rather than objective and as being situated within one's social location

(Moosa-Mitha, 2005). From this perspective, the researcher is positioned as a ‘learner’ rather than a ‘knower’ who seeks to learn from the knowledge of others while also recognizing that “not everything is knowable” and that “subaltern knowledge is owned by and belongs to particular marginalized communities” (Moosa-Mitha, 2005, p. 66-67). Further, intersectional research can be understood as a process of co-constructing knowledge that “can be acted on, by, and in the interests of the marginalized” (Potts & Brown, 2005, p. 261-262). This epistemological orientation has informed how I determined the participation criteria for this project, the specific research methods that I employed, and how I approached data analysis.

Researcher reflexivity is a central feature of intersectional methodology and is a means through which the researcher can examine how they are implicated in the dominant practices and assumptions of knowledge production (Moosa-Mitha, 2005) and how their social location informs their research practice (Hesse-Biber, 2012). Importantly, Kathy Davis (2014) challenges the confessional form that reflexivity often takes in feminist research:

while few feminist scholars today would take issue with situating one’s self as an epistemological stance, in practice, it is sometimes implemented by providing a list of the researcher’s identities [...] However, aside from highlighting the *fact* of multiple identities, such a list does not do much work and may, ironically, even end up becoming an excuse for *not* doing the necessary analysis of situating one’s self. A more intersectional strategy would not entail a list of identity categories, but rather involve developing a narrative about how your specific location shapes or influences you in specific ways—ways which will be relevant with respect to the research you are doing. (p. 22, emphasis in original)

In the Introduction, I began to gesture toward this reflexivity by discussing how I came to this dissertation research and the various investments that I have in this work.

Throughout this project, I have also been challenged to think critically about my investments in academia as an institution founded in privilege and exclusion and about how my

ability to conduct this research is shaped by my privilege as a white, middle-class, cisgender woman. My goal with this project is to use my privilege to challenge the structures and systems within academic institutions that continue to advantage those in similar social locations and exclude others. Ahmed (2015b) conceptualizes sexual harassment as an issue of institutional access “through which the academy itself becomes available only to some” (para. 26), not only through a lack of support for those experiencing harassment but also by making the costs of fighting harassment so great that they are silenced or forced to leave the institution. In this sense, Ahmed (2015b) suggests that “sexual harassment as a system cannot be separated from the ongoing problem of how a privileged few reproduce a world around their bodies” (para. 25). By seeking to expose the ways in which responses and prevention efforts at Canadian universities continue to render invisible the intersections of sexual violence with systems of oppression, I hope that this project will challenge how these responses fail to address the way that sexual violence functions to make academic institutions inaccessible, particularly to multiply marginalized students.

Reflexivity has also shaped the ways that I have sought to position myself in relation to my research participants. I recognize the power that I hold as the researcher while also acknowledging the agency of my research participants (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). In conducting and analyzing the interviews for this project, I have tried to attend to the ways in which my positionality shapes whether and how potential participants may [not] engage with me and what they may choose [not] to share with me. I structured the interviews in an open, conversational way and framed the process as a co-creation of knowledge and the participants as experts from whom I hoped to learn. I also provided research participants with the opportunity to revise their

interview transcripts and to withdraw information with the goal of facilitating a more collaborative process.

Practicing reflexivity has required me to think about the (im)possibility of representing the experiences of others and the implications for this dissertation. However, I am also aware that to speak only of my own experiences of violence would effectively reproduce the dominant narrative given the ways in which my social location approximates the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence (Richie, 2000; Goel et al., 2015). As the Incite! collective (2006) explains, by shifting the centre of analysis “to communities that face intersecting forms of oppression, we gain a more comprehensive view of the strategies needed to end all forms of violence” (p. 4). In her work on representations of violence against Indigenous women, as a white settler scholar, Amber Dean (2015) navigates the complexities of difference and distance through the concept of implicatedness. Dean (2015) challenges the impulse to overcome the distance between settlers and the violence inflicted on Indigenous women through empathy and identification in a way that imagines that the violence that they experience “could just as easily have happened to *any* woman” (p. xxvii, emphasis in original). She argues that

disregarding these differences by imagining their stories could just as easily be *my* story is another method for avoiding grappling with how I am implicated in the unjust social conditions and arrangements of ongoing settler colonialism, conditions and arrangements that leave some people more vulnerable to violence and disappearance than others. (p. xxvii, emphasis in original)

In this sense, this dissertation has necessitated thinking about the ways in which I am implicated in the structures and systems that render certain forms and experiences of violence visible while rendering others invisible.

Intersectional methodologies also have important implications in terms of the research outcomes. Intersectional research is invested in promoting social justice through the production of knowledge that seeks to address the material conditions of marginalization and oppression and the structures and systems that shape them (Thornton Dill & Kohlman, 2012). Throughout this research, I have been challenged to think about the limitations of academic research as a way of responding to the demands of social justice. Yet in the narrow scope of this dissertation, academic research may be particularly appropriate to address the shortcomings of prevention efforts and responses to campus sexual violence given the ways in which academic knowledge is privileged within academia. I also plan to make this research more accessible to student activists and community organizations who engage with academic institutions by producing a summary report. In this respect, I am invested in the possibility of transgressive research that “empowers resistance” by making “a contribution to individually and collectively changing the conditions of our lives and the lives of those on the margins” (Brown & Strega, 2005, p. 10). I remain open to creative possibilities of translating this research in ways that are most meaningful for the communities that it aims to serve, namely the students whose experiences of sexual violence are currently rendered invisible in existing policies and prevention efforts.

Ethics: Considerations and challenges

Before discussing the formal process of obtaining ethics clearance, I would like to briefly address some of the ethical considerations involved in this project. One of the most important considerations was the preservation of participant confidentiality, particularly given the sensitive nature of the research topic. Initially, I had planned to identify the institutions that I selected as case studies while keeping the identities of the individual participants confidential. However,

early on in the research process it became clear that identifying the institutions would risk making the participants identifiable given the relatively small number of people working to address campus sexual violence. This research was designed to reflect primarily on the broader trends and themes that emerged across the selected institutions, rather than as a direct comparison between them. As such, while I will discuss the sexual violence policies and prevention efforts at specific institutions as examples, I will not identify the specific institutions that I selected for this project.

Another overarching ethical concern for this project pertains to the difficult and sensitive nature of the topic. My goal in this dissertation was to speak to a broad range of stakeholders and was not specifically designed to engage with survivors of sexual violence. I also intentionally avoided questions that would elicit information about participants' experiences of violence in developing my interview guide. However, based on my experience in community anti-violence organizing, I recognize that those who are involved in efforts to address sexual violence are often survivors. Knowing this, and recognizing the agency of participants to determine what to share and what to withhold or withdraw, I anticipated that experiences of violence might be discussed. As such, I tried to be very clear about the dissertation in my recruitment materials and was open to sharing the interview questions with potential participants. I provided participants with a list of supports and resources available in their communities in case they wanted to debrief with someone after the interview. I also made it clear that participants did not have to answer any questions that made them uncomfortable and were welcome to stop the interview at any time.

In the majority of the interviews, participants did not discuss their experiences of violence in detail beyond some identifying themselves as survivors and explaining how that

shaped their involvement in efforts to address campus sexual violence. However, in one interview, the participant wanted to share their relatively recent experience of sexual violence and of navigating the formal reporting process at their university. Given that I volunteer as a peer counsellor on a sexual assault crisis line, I felt conflicted about my role as a researcher and what was appropriate in terms of offering support. In that moment, I listened openly and validated the participant's experiences. I clarified that the research questions were not meant to probe for personal details and reiterated that they did not have to share anything that made them uncomfortable and that they had the option to end the interview. The participant wanted to continue the interview and we eventually moved on to talk about their involvement in prevention efforts on campus. However, at the end of the interview when I asked if there was anything else that they wanted to share, the participant returned to discuss their experiences. They concluded by saying "I don't know if many people talked [to you] about what actually happens on campus when you report sexual assault. So that's why I was super excited and I was like 'I need to be part of this, I need to tell people' because not many people go through it." I read this as a powerful example of participant agency and of survivor agency. I had been so concerned that I had triggered the participant with my questions that I had not considered the possibility that they were participating in this project as a means of sharing their story. In the interest of using this academic research to co-create knowledge that will serve survivors, this experience has taught me the importance of being open to this possibility.

In terms of the formal ethics process, despite the fact that all of the institutions included in this research are governed under the Tri-Council Policy Statement, I had to obtain ethics approval from each institution in addition to my own. To make matters more complicated, each

institution included in this research has a different process for granting ethics approval to external researchers. At one institution, the ethics board did not review my application and I was instead required to submit separate applications to the relevant Offices of the Vice Provosts to gain research access to students, faculty, and staff. While I received permission to invite students and staff to participate in my project, after three months and several follow-up emails, the relevant Office of the Vice Provost denied me access to faculty on the grounds of ‘survey fatigue.’ At another institution, the research ethics board required that I obtain a letter of support for my research from the sexual violence office on campus before they would grant me access. I communicated with the staff at the sexual violence office over email and telephone and also met with them in person. The staff raised questions regarding my positionality in relation to this research and although I answered them openly, they did not provide the required letter of support. Given the sensitive and political nature of my research, I recognize the importance of establishing trust and accountability and in this particular instance the limited timeframe for my fieldwork did not allow me to do so. This experience thus serves as an example of the ways in which my social location has influenced this research (Davis, 2014). As a result, I was ultimately forced to choose a different institution. Fortunately, the faculty and staff members involved in sexual violence response and prevention efforts at the other institution were very open and supportive of my research. They issued a letter of support to accompany my application to their ethics board and access to their institution was quickly granted. However, the ethics board required that I make a few amendments to my recruitment materials to tailor them to their institution, which meant that I needed to file an amendment with my own institution to receive permission to use two different sets of recruitment materials and consent scripts.

Overall, the process of obtaining ethics approvals for all of the included institutions took several months and caused a significant delay in my research. Given that the final ethics approvals were granted in April 2018 and that my research includes faculty, staff, and students, many of whom are away from campus during the summer, I had to wait until the fall to conduct the majority of my interviews, which was 10 months after I submitted my initial ethics application. I am troubled not only by the length of time that this process took, but also by the political implications of requiring researchers to gain ethics approvals from institutions that they are seeking to critique, particularly when this approvals process involves individuals other than members of the institutions' ethics boards, which was the case at two of the four institutions that I sought to access. In the case of my research, it could be argued that the ethics process was subverted in favour of the preservation of institutional reputation.

All participants were provided with a consent form that explained the purpose of the study, what they would be asked to do, the potential risks and benefits, confidentiality, and who they should contact if they had concerns about the study. The signature page included lines pertaining to permission to audio-record the conversation, and to use direct quotes from the interview, along with the option to include an email or mailing address if they wanted to receive a copy of their transcript. Based on previous research experience where a number of participants wanted to be identified, I also included this as an option on the signature page. However, early on in the process I realized that if some participants were named and others were not, it might make it easier to identify the unnamed participants based on the institutional affiliations of the named participants. As such, I informed research participants that I planned to keep all participants' identities confidential unless they felt strongly otherwise. None of the participants

objected to having their identities kept confidential. All participants agreed to be audio-recorded and to the use of direct quotes, although a few participants indicated particular passages in their transcripts that they did not want to have quoted.

The selected institutions

For this dissertation, I examined the sexual violence policies at all of the public universities in Ontario and conducted interviews with stakeholders across three selected universities. While I had initially hoped to include institutions across Canada, given the differences in provincial legislation (or lack thereof), focusing on institutions in Ontario afforded greater consistency and feasibility. The institutions that I had initially selected as case studies shared some similarities that would have perhaps enabled me to conduct a closer comparison. However, because I was unable to include one of the institutions that I had originally identified, there are differences between the selected institutions that make such a comparison more challenging. For example, the histories and cultures of the institutions that I selected vary widely. Two of the selected institutions are large and the other is medium-sized. The institutions are located in different geographic regions of Ontario and all are located in urban areas. It is difficult to compare the institutions based student demographics given that Canadian universities often do not collect data on their students' identities beyond age and gender (James, Robson & Gallagher-MacKay, 2017; McDonald & Ward, 2017). While all three of the selected institutions participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in 2017, only one of the selected institutions publicly released the findings pertaining to their student demographics, including ethno-cultural identity, sexual orientation, parental education levels, citizenship status, and place of residence. Thus while these institutions make claims of diversity, in the absence of

publicly available data, it is difficult to assess whether these claims actually translate into reality and to hold universities accountable (James et al., 2017).

The selected institutions also vary in their approaches to sexual violence prevention. While one institution has invested in substantial prevention efforts that reach a significant percentage of the university's student population, the other selected institutions rely primarily on one-off workshops, online modules, and orientation events. The types of prevention being implemented are also different, with two institutions offering some form of bystander intervention training, two offering consent campaigns, one offering a women's resistance initiative, and another offering a masculinities workshop series. All three of the selected institutions also offer workshops and events for survivors, including, for example, arts-based programming and yoga. There may be a number of factors that contribute to these differences, including the size of the institution and the resources allocated by the administration for prevention efforts. The selected institutions also vary in terms of the levels of student anti-violence activism on their campuses. While there is significant and very visible student activism at two of the selected institutions, my participants reported that there is far less student anti-violence activism at the third institution, which may be explained, at least in part, by the fact that it is the institution with more substantial prevention efforts. In other words, students at the third institution may perceive their administration to be more invested in anti-violence efforts than students at the other institutions and may thus perceive activism to be less necessary.

While it is important to acknowledge these differences, this dissertation is not meant to be a direct and detailed comparison between these institutions but rather an analysis of the broader themes and trends that emerged across the selected institutions. Given the vastly

different levels of access that I was given at each institution, conducting a more detailed comparison would have proven difficult. Further, in the interest of maintaining the confidentiality of my research participants, I am mindful that providing a more detailed comparison may make it easy to identify the selected institutions and my participants by association.

Research methods

This study employed a couple of different qualitative research methods. First, I conducted discourse analysis of the sexual violence policies at all of the public universities in Ontario (see Appendix B). My approach to discourse analysis is informed by poststructural conceptualizations of discourse, which are heavily indebted to the work of Michel Foucault, whereby discourse is not viewed as a tool for describing what is ‘real’ but rather as a site of power where what is seen to be ‘real’ or ‘true’ is produced (Gannon & Davies, 2012). Importantly, from this perspective, the subject is constituted through discourse (Gannon & Davies, 2012; see also Butler, 1990, 1991, 1993). Drawing on the work of Foucault, Susan Strega (2005) argues that poststructural discourse analysis reveals that “hegemonic or dominant discourses and subjugated or illegitimate discourses are produced by processes such as the sanctioning, including, excluding, valuing, and devaluing certain concepts, ideas, language and words” (p. 219). As such, for the purposes of this dissertation, I have approached the sexual violence policies at post-secondary institutions as sites where ‘truths’ about sexual violence—how it is defined, whose experiences ‘count,’ and in what ways—are (re)produced. In practical terms, I conducted this discourse analysis by attending to not only what the policies ‘say’ about sexual violence but also to their silences, which are evident, for example, in policies that are completely identity-neutral.

Specifically, my policy analysis focused on how institutions define sexual violence, whether they reference the language of intersectionality and/or acknowledge the intersections of sexual violence with systems of oppression, and whether and how they address identity. I also looked for references to the concept of rape culture as a potential indication of how institutions understand sexual violence. A significant portion of these sexual violence policies is dedicated to outlining institutions' formal reporting processes and there are substantial differences between them. However, for reasons of feasibility and based on the amount of analysis that has already been done on these reporting processes, I chose to focus on prevention efforts. As such, I generally did not analyze the differences in these reporting processes except when policies referred to alternative justice approaches or included clauses regarding 'vexatious' or 'bad faith' complaints, given that these inclusions might also signify how institutions understand sexual violence. I analyzed whether and how institutions discuss prevention in their policies and conducted a search of their websites for additional information on the specific prevention efforts that they have implemented. The findings of this analysis are discussed in Chapter 4.

I also conducted discourse analysis of documents pertaining to the policies and prevention efforts at the selected universities. The volume of material for each selected institution varied depending on the level of cooperation and support that I received from faculty and staff. At one institution, the faculty members involved in implementing the institutions' prevention efforts sent me documents detailing the history and content of the prevention efforts, facilitation guides, and relevant research articles. While I requested similar materials from the sexual violence offices at the other selected institutions, both were unsupportive and did not provide any documents. I was, however, able to analyze documents made publicly available on

the universities' websites and, in one instance, obtained a copy of the content for a particular prevention effort directly from its creator.

Finally, I analyzed relevant Canadian media coverage to better understand the broader context in which these debates are situated, as discussed in the following chapter. To ensure that I was able to consistently monitor media coverage, I created Google alerts for the topics 'rape culture,' 'campus sexual violence,' and 'sexual violence Canadian campuses.' Predictably, the alert for 'rape culture' yielded the most results but they were the least relevant. During the months of September 2017 to April 2018, the alert for 'sexual violence Canadian campuses' yielded new results on nearly a daily basis with fewer articles published on the subject during the summer months.

Employing discourse analysis allows for the exploration of not only what is included in the content of these documents but also what is excluded and the power relations that shape these inclusions and exclusions (Strega, 2005; Gannon & Davies, 2012). In her analysis of diversity policies as non-performative, Ahmed (2014) argues that analyzing institutions requires "a 'thick' form of description, [...] a way of describing not simply the activities that take place within institutions [...] but how those activities shape the sense of an institution" (p. 21). In seeking to uncover how sexual violence policies are produced and the power relations embedded within them, discourse analysis is better suited to this form of 'thick' description than simple content analysis. However, Ahmed (2014) also argues that analyzing documents alone is insufficient to the task of "follow[ing] diversity around" (p. 12). Instead, she claims that it also necessitates "*following the actors who use the forms*. The question of what diversity does is also, then, a question of where diversity goes (and where it does not), as well as in whom and in what

diversity is deposited (as well as in whom and in what it is not)” (p.12, emphasis in original). To better understand whether and how conceptualizations of sexual violence travel in the ways that Ahmed (2014) describes, I turned to other qualitative methods.

I had hoped to observe prevention efforts at the selected institutions to gain a better understanding of how conceptualizations of sexual violence are being translated into practice and how the participating students, faculty, and staff respond to these efforts. However, I was not able to gain the institutional access required to conduct these observations. In the case of two of the selected institutions, as I mentioned above, the sexual violence offices who coordinate the prevention efforts were unsupportive and did not respond to my requests to observe prevention efforts. In the case of the third institution, the faculty and staff involved in the prevention efforts expressed concern that my presence as a researcher could negatively impact the facilitation of the prevention workshops and ultimately decided not to allow me to observe.

Though I was unable observe prevention efforts, I conducted 31 interviews with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss how sexual violence is conceptualized on campus, how this conceptualization translates into responses and prevention efforts, and whether and to what extent the experiences of marginalized students are reflected in these efforts. I identified potential research participants using both purposive and snowball sampling techniques. I kept the participation criteria quite broad to allow me to interview a range of stakeholders with the goal of developing a fuller and more nuanced understanding. These stakeholders included students at the selected universities who are involved facilitating prevention efforts or providing peer support services or who are members of student organizations whose work relates to sexual violence and/or represents the interests of marginalized students. I also interviewed members of broader

student activist organizations whose work impacts the selected institutions. I interviewed staff members at the selected universities whose work relates to institutional efforts to prevent and respond to sexual violence, along with faculty members involved in these efforts or whose research and teaching pertains to campus sexual violence. Finally, I included members of community anti-violence organizations who have relationships with the selected institutions.

To recruit participants, I sent invitation emails to relevant faculty, staff, and student activist and community organizations. The process of recruiting student participants was slightly more complex. In an effort to centre the voices of students whose perspectives and experiences are typically underrepresented in research on campus sexual violence, I emailed recruitment information to a wide range of student organizations, including organizations for black, Indigenous, and other racialized students, organizations for students with disabilities, organizations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBTQ) students, and organizations for Muslim students, among others. To recruit students involved in facilitating prevention efforts, I requested that the offices that coordinate these efforts circulate the recruitment email on my behalf. The institution that was supportive of my research circulated the email on my behalf and I received a high volume of responses from interested students. The other institutions did not provide this support and, as such, I relied primarily on snowball sampling to identify student participants on these campuses.

The majority of my research participants were current students or recent graduates from the selected institutions. In total, I interviewed 13 undergraduate students and nine graduate students. While I did not receive permission to recruit faculty members at one of the selected institutions, I interviewed a total of five faculty members from the two other selected institutions.

Though I met with the sexual violence staff at all three institutions and actively sought to recruit university staff members from other relevant offices, only one staff member agreed to participate. This gap may be explained, at least in part, by the relative precarity of staff within academic institutions and the unreasonable workload that they are often given, as discussed in Chapter 5. Similarly, though I sent recruitment emails to a number of relevant community organizations, I only interviewed one member from these organizations. Finally, I interviewed two participants from broader student organizations whose work impacts the selected institutions. It is important to note that these categories are not necessarily discreet and may overlap; for example, some of the students that I interviewed are also involved with community organizations and drew on the breadth of their experience during the interview. Further, one of the faculty members that I interviewed had previously worked in a sexual violence staff role.

I did not collect demographic data on my participants; however, many of them discussed aspects of their identities during our interviews. Of the 31 participants, seven identified as male, at least three identified as Indigenous or Métis, at least six identified as black, at least 10 identified as survivors of sexual violence, and at least eight identified as lesbian, gay, or queer. To my knowledge, none of the participants identified as trans, although one participant discussed experiencing violence based on their non-normative gender presentation. I did not receive any response to my efforts to recruit participants from organizations for students with disabilities and none of my research participants explicitly identified themselves as having a disability during the interviews. These gaps in my research sample may be related, at least in part, to broader structural barriers that impact marginalized students' access to academic institutions and ability to volunteer their time to participate in research. Given the ways in which academic research has

historically been, and continues to be, a site of harm (Tuck, 2009), potential research participants from marginalized communities may have decided not to participate in this research based on my positionality as a researcher and/or distrust of academic research in general.

Before conducting each interview, participants were given a printed copy of the consent form and of the list of resources and supports available in their community. In an effort to approach the interviews as a collaborative process, I developed the interview guide (see Appendix C) to facilitate a semi-structured conversation with open-ended questions to allow participants to contribute ideas and information that I may not have anticipated. I generally opened the interviews by inviting participants to tell me about themselves and how they came to be working on the issue of sexual violence. The interview guide includes questions pertaining to the effectiveness of the sexual violence policies and how sexual violence is conceptualized within them. The interview guide also includes questions about the various prevention and education efforts on campus and their strengths and limitations. I concluded each interview by asking participants whether there was anything else that they would like to share with me.

The majority of the interviews were conducted in person at locations and times chosen in consultation with the participants. The interviews were conducted primarily at locations on the selected campuses with a few exceptions, including, for example, the participants from community and student organizations who preferred to meet in their own offices. Three participants were unavailable to meet in person due to distance and scheduling conflicts and, as such, their interviews were conducted via Skype. Prior to the Skype interviews, I emailed the participants a copy of the consent form and resource guide and invited them to email me with

any questions or concerns. Participants then signed the consent forms and emailed them back to me. On average, the interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

The findings of this research were analyzed using an inductive qualitative method that approaches data analysis as an ongoing process of reflection (Creswell, 2008). In this sense, the findings of my discourse analysis informed the development of the interview guide and the conversations that I had during early interviews informed how I approached subsequent interviews. Once participants had the opportunity to revise their transcripts, I continued the analysis process by coding the transcripts for themes. This inductive method of data analysis is well-suited to the aims of this project and intersectional methodologies in that the analysis emerges from the research findings rather than in response to a pre-determined hypothesis.

Research challenges

The most significant challenge in conducting this research was gaining institutional access. As discussed above, I was unable to include one of the institutions that I had initially identified to as a potential case study due, at least in part, to complex issues related to my positionality as the researcher. Institutions also have an interest in preserving their public reputations and may view critical research as a potential threat. In the context of this dissertation, the requirement to obtain ethics approval from each institution allowed some to effectively prevent me from accessing their campus or certain stakeholders. Further, as I have discussed, at two of the three selected institutions, the sexual violence offices were unsupportive. I initially contacted the sexual violence offices in March 2018 to request a meeting to discuss my dissertation. After many follow-up emails, I succeeded in meeting with staff members at both offices in June and July 2018. During these meetings, which I did not have permission to record

as formal interviews, I told the staff about the project and requested their support in facilitating observations, sharing documents pertaining to their prevention efforts, and circulating recruitment emails to student facilitators on my behalf. I continued to follow up on these requests for several months with no response. In total, I exchanged over 50 emails with these offices. By contrast, the faculty and staff involved in prevention efforts at the third university were extremely supportive in terms of providing documents, circulating recruitment materials, and taking time to participate in formal interviews. The institutional support had a significant impact on my ability to recruit student participants and, as such, there is an over-representation of students from the third institution in comparison with the institutions where the sexual violence offices were less supportive.

There were also challenges related to conducting research with students. Given that the majority of undergraduate students are not on campus over the summer months, the time frame for conducting this research was limited. I also tried to schedule participant recruitment to avoid the times when undergraduate students are most likely to be busy, such as during the mid-term exam period. I recognize that students have many competing demands on their time and that some simply did not have the capacity to participate in my research even though they had expressed interest. Further, I did not provide research participants with an honorarium and this seemed to be a deterrent for a few students who had initially expressed interest in participating. It is not uncommon for students to receive a small honorarium for filling out brief institutional surveys, which may have contributed to this expectation. In future research with students and community activists, I will strongly consider providing an honorarium.

Conclusion

While it was certainly challenging, I learned a great deal throughout the process of obtaining ethics approval and conducting the fieldwork for this project. Specifically, this dissertation has highlighted the possibilities and limitations of conducting critical research on academic institutions in ways that have been revealing about institutional investments. This process has also challenged me to think about how this research addresses the demands of intersectional research praxis and to envision how I might approach research differently in the future to expand its collaborative nature and ensure that the research outputs respond to the needs of the research participants in a meaningful way. The following chapter discusses the broader context in which the findings of this dissertation are situated and outlines the factors that have contributed to the unprecedented pressure that post-secondary institutions are currently facing to respond to sexual violence.

Chapter 3: Contextualizing contemporary responses to sexual violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions

Researching and writing about the context in which sexual violence policies, responses, and prevention efforts at Canadian universities are taking shape has proven challenging for several reasons. First, there is the question of history. Anti-violence activism on Canadian campuses is hardly new and its legacies live on in the women's centres and sexual violence centres on many campuses. In fact, Chris Linder and Jessica Harris (2017) warn that framing campus sexual violence as a new phenomenon perpetuates an ahistoric approach that “not only covers up the historical influences on identity-specific experiences but also glosses over the root causes of sexual violence” (p. 244). While contemporary descriptions of campus sexual violence as an ‘epidemic’ may serve the strategic purpose of mobilizing responses, they have a similar ahistoric effect and distract from the ways in which sexual violence is embedded in the cultures and histories of post-secondary institutions. However, in the current context, heightened public and political attention to the issue of campus sexual violence has forced university administrators to respond in unprecedented ways (Linder et al., 2016). Given this longer history, where does one situate the beginning of the present moment? What are the events and factors that have shaped this increase in attention? Second, there is the question of scale. Campus sexual violence policies and prevention efforts are influenced by factors as broad as government legislation and #MeToo, but also by local factors within individual institutions. Which factors have been most influential in the recent developments? Third, this is a complex topic that is constantly evolving, particularly in provinces where legislation mandating the development of sexual violence policies has only recently been passed. As such, it is beyond the scope of this project to fully

account for the myriad events and factors that have shaped these policies and prevention efforts. Instead, this chapter aims to map out some of the key factors that have catalyzed recent media and government attention and prompted Canadian universities to respond to sexual violence.

While there are significant differences between the Canadian and American contexts, as the following sections will demonstrate, the histories of campus sexual violence research, policymaking, and prevention are inextricably linked. In the current context, the heightened attention from Canadian media and legislators may be understood, at least in part, as a response to changes in American policy and subsequent media coverage. As such, this chapter will discuss the American context to the extent that it is useful in understanding how the current Canadian context has developed.

I begin this chapter with an overview of the prevalence research and discuss some of the challenges inherent in collecting data on campus sexual violence. I provide a brief overview of contemporary student anti-violence activism, which I argue has played a critical role in raising public awareness and pressuring institutions to respond. This chapter also discusses the role that social media and mainstream media have played and the legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence in both the Canadian and American contexts. I highlight the ways in which increasing neoliberal corporatization has impacted the management structures, priorities, and labour relations at post-secondary institutions in Canada. Finally, I conclude this chapter by contextualizing the present momentum toward addressing campus sexual violence in relation to backlash in the forms of men's rights activism and the rise of the alt-right.

Prevalence research

It is difficult to accurately estimate the prevalence of sexual violence at post-secondary institutions given that sexual violence is generally underreported and that studies have relied on different measures, definitions, methods, and study populations, which makes them challenging to compare. Studies also differ in the language that they use to describe sexual violence and particular constructs of identity. As such, I have generally referenced the specific language used in the various studies when discussing their results in this section.

There are a number of limitations in existing sexual violence research. For example, many studies presuppose cisgender male perpetration and cisgender female victimization, which reflects radical feminist analyses of sexual violence. This presupposition reproduces an essentialist understanding of gender that obscures other experiences of sexual violence, including violence against trans people. Further, it constructs an oversimplified victim/perpetrator binary, which fails to account for the fact that those who perpetrate violence are often also survivors (White & Hall Smith, 2004; Senn, Desmarais, Verberg, & Wood, 2000; Casey et al., 2017).

Research on campus sexual violence tends to include an overrepresentation of white cisgender women and often fails to account for how differences among women impact vulnerability to sexual violence and access to support (Linder, Williams, Lacy, Parker & Grimes, 2017). An analysis of studies on campus sexual violence in the American context found that over the last 10 years, only 20 per cent of research included data on sexual orientation, 0.9 per cent on ability status, and 1.4 per cent on non-normative gender identity (Linder et al., 2017). Further, the analysis revealed that although 72 per cent of the studies included data on the ethnicity of the research participants, less than 22 per cent addressed ethnicity or racism in the analysis of their study findings (Linder et al., 2017). As a result, identity is often only referenced in the context of

heightened vulnerability, which, in the absence of an intersectional analysis, serves to reproduce harmful pathologizing narratives (Hunt, 2016). These limitations illustrate the urgent need for prevalence research that is grounded in an intersectional analysis of sexual violence.

The first large-scale study of campus sexual violence was the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES), a national study of over 6,000 students at 32 American post-secondary institutions conducted by Mary P. Koss in collaboration with *Ms.* magazine. According to the study findings, which were published in 1987, 27 per cent of cisgender female students had experiences that met the legal definition of rape or attempted rape and 7.7 per cent of cisgender male students reported perpetrating an act of rape or attempted rape (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). These findings served as the basis of Robin Warshaw's (1988) influential book *I Never Called it Rape*, which drew its name from the fact that the majority of students whose experiences met the legal definition of rape did not define their experiences as such (Jessup-Anger, Lopez & Koss, 2018).

Perhaps the most commonly cited statistic pertaining to campus sexual violence is that 1 in 5 women on college campuses in the United States have been sexually assaulted (Krebs & Lindquist, 2014). This statistic has been publicly cited numerous times by members of the Obama administration and appears as the opening line in *Not Alone: The First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault* (2014). The 1 in 5 statistic is derived from the 2007 Campus Sexual Assault Study, which was funded by the Justice Department's National Institute of Justice and surveyed undergraduate students at two large public American universities. Of the 5,446 cisgender female students who participated in the web-based survey, 19 per cent reported experiencing attempted or completed sexual assault since they began college (Krebs et al., 2007). The same survey found that of the 1,375 cisgender male

students who participated, 6.1 per cent reported experiencing attempted or completed sexual assault since they began college (Krebs et al., 2007).

Two of the researchers who conducted the Campus Sexual Assault Study published an article in *Time* magazine in 2014 to “set the record straight” on the oft-quoted 1 in 5 statistic (Krebs & Lindquist, 2014, para. 2). They caution that the statistic is not nationally representative given that the survey included only two institutions. They also explain that while the statistic is often reduced to experiences of rape, it includes other forms of sexual assault, such as unwanted kissing and groping, and that the prevalence of rape among cisgender female students, defined as unwanted sexual penetration, was actually 14.3 per cent. Further, they caution that the response rate was relatively low (42%) and that there is no way of knowing whether students who had experienced sexual violence were more or less likely to respond to the survey than those who had not (Krebs & Lindquist, 2014). These arguments usefully illustrate some of the common challenges associated with the (mis)interpretation of prevalence data on campus sexual violence.

In the Canadian context, one of the earliest representative national studies on campus sexual violence was conducted in 1992 when 3,142 students were surveyed across 44 post-secondary institutions (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993). Using Koss’ SES measures, the survey found that 27.8 per cent of cisgender female respondents had experienced some form of sexual abuse, including unwanted sexual contact, coercion, and rape in the previous twelve months (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993). Using a revised version of the SES measures, a 2013 survey of 899 cisgender female first-year students at three Canadian universities found that 58.7 per cent of participants had experienced at least one form of sexual victimization since the age of 14 (Senn et al., 2014). Of these participants, 23.5 per cent reported having been raped during the same

time period (Senn et al., 2014). However, given that the survey covers experiences of sexual violence since the age of 14 and was conducted with first-year students, it is unclear what percentage of those incidents occurred during university. Both of these studies focused exclusively on cisgender male perpetration against cisgender female victims.

Macleans magazine recently surveyed 23,000 undergraduate students from 81 Canadian post-secondary institutions. While the full results of the survey have not been made available, the published data suggests that more than 20 per cent of cisgender female students, 46.7 per cent of LGBTQ+ students, and 6.9 per cent of cisgender male students surveyed had experienced sexual violence in their lifetime and that half of these assaults occurred during university (Schwartz, 2018). The survey also collected data on students' knowledge about institutional responses and found that 31 per cent of students said that they were given no information on how to report sexual violence and 25 per cent said that they were given no information on support services available for students (Schwartz, 2018).

Statistics Canada does not collect data on campus sexual violence specifically. However, the most recent General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS),⁴ which collects data on self-

⁴ The General Social Survey on Victimization is conducted by Statistics Canada every five years and interviews Canadians aged 15 and older on a range of experiences of victimization, including sexual assault. One of the strengths of the survey is that it includes both experiences of violence that are reported to police and those that are unreported, along with questions regarding the factors that influence whether or not participants chose to report. The most recent survey cycle was conducted in 2014 and included 33,127 respondents from the provinces and 2,040 respondents from the territories (Statistics Canada, 2016). The survey is typically conducted via telephone; in 2014, Statistics Canada piloted an online version of the survey, which participants were directed to after being contacted by telephone (Statistics Canada, 2016). As such, anyone without access to a telephone is currently excluded from the survey and those who are living in violent households may be unable to safely disclose their experiences of violence over the telephone (Johnson & Colpitts, 2013). Sexual violence occurring in the context of what the GSS calls 'spousal violence' is measured differently and is not included in the data on sexual violence (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). The survey is conducted exclusively in French and English, which prevents those who are not fluent in either language from participating (Johnson & Colpitts, 2013). It also excludes those who are currently institutionalized (Statistics Canada, 2016). Due to the small sample size, the survey does not disaggregate data based on racial identity and instead employs the category of 'visible minority,' which makes it difficult to assess the ways in which anti-black racism, for example, impacts the prevalence of sexual assault. Further, the survey does not measure

reported incidents of sexual assault that occurred during the previous 12 months, found that nearly half of the reported incidents of sexual assault were committed against cisgender women between the ages of 15 and 24 (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). The GSS also found that only 1 in 20 sexual assaults are reported to police (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). Overall, the GSS found that the rate of sexual violence among Aboriginal people is approximately three times higher than among non-Aboriginal people and that Canadians who identify as homosexual or bisexual were six times more likely to report sexual assault than those who identify as heterosexual⁵ (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). Reports of sexual assault among people living with mental or physical disabilities were twice as high as those without disabilities and three times as high among people who had experienced homelessness compared with those who had not (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). Experiences of childhood sexual abuse were also a strong predictor of experiencing sexual assault as an adult (Conroy & Cotter, 2017). While the GSS statistics may serve as a useful starting point, these categories are discussed as though they are discrete with little consideration of their intersections. For example, studies have shown that Indigenous and LGBTQ youth experience relatively high rates of homelessness in Canada (Gaetz et al., 2016). It is also important to recognize that these heightened levels of vulnerability are the product of social and systemic inequities and to resist discourses of individual pathology (Hunt, 2016).

In light of the recent increase in public attention to the issue of campus sexual violence, a number of campus climate surveys have been conducted. For example, in the fall of 2015, the University of New Brunswick (UNB) conducted a campus climate survey of 1,220 students and

gender identity beyond cisgender men and women and therefore does not include an analysis of trans people's experiences of sexual assault (Johnson & Colpitts, 2013).

⁵ Perplexingly, participants aged 15 to 17 were not given the option to identify their sexual orientation and therefore the data on the prevalence of sexual violence among homosexual and bisexual Canadians excludes those younger than 18 (Conroy & Cotter, 2017).

found that 21 per cent of respondents reported experiencing sexual assault, broadly defined as non-consensual sexual contact, and 22 per cent reported experiencing sexual coercion during their post-secondary studies (Fuller, O’Sullivan & Belu, 2018). The majority (63 per cent) of perpetrators were other students and there were few reports of sexual violence perpetrated by professors (1.1%) or university staff (0.8%) (Fuller et al., 2018). Students also responded to a number of statements regarding their knowledge of university-based supports and reporting processes. The majority of respondents reported that they would not know how to get help (53%) or file a report (61%) following an assault (Fuller et al., 2018). Further, the survey asked students to indicate their level of agreement with various rape myth statements, which the report defines as “beliefs that reinforce negative responses toward those who experience sexual assault” (Fuller et al., 2018, p. 3), and found that the majority of student responses were ambiguous. For example, 50.7 per cent of surveyed students did not select ‘disagree strongly’ for the statement that “men don’t usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away” (Fuller et al., 2018, p. 12). Similarly, 47.3 per cent of students did not disagree strongly with the statement that “rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men” (Fuller et al., 2018, p. 12). While these findings do not necessarily indicate support for sexual violence, they highlight the importance of addressing rape myths in prevention efforts.

In 2016, a team of researchers surveyed 9,284 respondents, including students, faculty, and staff, at six French universities in Quebec as part of the *Enquête Sexualité, Sécurité et Interactions en Milieu Universitaire (ESSIMU)*. The survey addressed sexual harassment, unwanted sexual behaviour, and sexual coercion (Bergeron et al., 2016). Overall, 36.9 per cent of respondents reported experiencing at least one form of sexual violence committed by another

person affiliated with the university (Bergeron et al., 2016). Sexual harassment was the most commonly reported form of violence experienced (33.5%), followed by unwanted sexual behaviour (18.3%) and coercion (3.1%) (Bergeron et al., 2016). Trans, non-binary, and other gender minority respondents reported the highest rates of sexual violence (55.7%), followed by cisgender female respondents (40.6%), and cisgender male respondents (26.4%) (Bergeron et al., 2016). Sexual minority respondents also reported higher rates of sexual violence (49.2%) in comparison with heterosexual respondents (35.1%) (Bergeron et al., 2016). International students, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students reported slightly higher rates of sexual violence (Bergeron et al., 2016). This data clearly demonstrates the disproportionate levels of violence against sexual and gender minorities, as well as the significant violence experienced by cisgender men, which challenges radical feminist conceptualizations of sexual violence and highlights the urgency of de-centring the ‘ideal’ survivor in prevention efforts and responses. Given that the majority of research on campus sexual violence tends to focus on students, the inclusion of faculty and staff and attention to the specific conditions of graduate students in the ESSIMU study are particularly interesting. Further, by including sexual harassment, the survey provides a fuller picture of the campus climates.

In February and March 2018, 160,000 students at post-secondary institutions across Ontario participated in the Student Voices on Sexual Violence campus climate survey mandated by the previous provincial government. The survey asked students about experiences of sexual violence, satisfaction with institutional responses, perceptions of consent, bystander behaviour, and knowledge of campus supports and reporting processes (CCI Research, 2019). While the previous Wynne government had committed to releasing the survey findings in Fall 2018

(Student Voices on Sexual Violence, n.d.), the Ford government delayed their release.⁶ In February 2019, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities cited privacy concerns as a justification for the delay; however, student activists pointed out that the data should be relatively easy to anonymize given that it was a multiple choice survey (Press Progress, 2019). After significant criticism from student activists and opposition Members of Provincial Parliament, who suggested that the delay was politically motivated (Bai, 2019; Huizinga, 2019), the Ford government released some of the aggregate survey data in March 2019. They also announced \$3 million in additional funding for the Women’s Campus Safety Grant fund, which can be spent on campus safety audits, installing safety equipment, and holding workshops (Rushowy, 2019a).

The survey found that of the 117,148 university students who responded, 63.2 per cent reported experiencing sexual harassment, 23.7 per cent reported experiencing stalking, and 23 per cent reported experiencing a non-consensual sexual experience since the beginning of the 2017/2018 academic year (CCI Research, 2019). While the report does not indicate the overall percentage of respondents who reported disclosing their experience of sexual violence to a member of staff, faculty, administration, or service office at their university,⁷ it claims that of those who disclosed, 59.7 per cent were satisfied with the institutional response while 22.5 per cent were dissatisfied (CCI Research, 2019). The survey found that the university students who

⁶After repeated attempts to speak to staff from the Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities regarding the survey, I filed a Freedom of Information request in February 2019 to obtain the aggregate survey data for the selected institutions and all government communications regarding the delayed release of the findings. In May 2019, I received a quote for \$1,500 to release the information that I requested and was informed that the information may or may not be released based on ongoing privacy concerns. I subsequently modified my request to include only the communications. In June 2019, I received a letter informing me that “after a thorough search, the Ministry has determined that no records exist,” which seems extremely unlikely.

⁷ By not including this data, the report suggests that the majority of students are satisfied with the response that they received but does not take into account the students who may have opted not to report because of structural barriers and/or the expectation that they would not be believed or receive trauma-informed support.

responded generally understood consent; approximately 90 per cent disagreed with false or potentially harmful statements about consent (CCI Research, 2019). Importantly, the survey found that only 22.4 per cent of university students who responded indicated that they knew how to access institutional supports and information about reporting sexual violence (CCI Research, 2019). While 75.1 per cent of the university students who completed the survey reported witnessing an incident where there is at least the potential for sexual violence to occur since the beginning of the academic year, 30.4 per cent claimed that they did not intervene in these situations (CCI Research, 2019). Interestingly, there was no significant difference in the data on bystander behaviour between institutions that have substantial bystander intervention efforts and those that do not.

Given the variation in the methods, measurements, and study populations in the research cited above, combined with the political challenges inherent in researching sexual violence, it is difficult to ascertain the prevalence of sexual violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions. Prevalence research rarely captures the ways in which vulnerability to violence is shaped by intersecting systems of oppression and is often based on assumptions, such as the cisgender woman-as-victim and cisgender man-as-perpetrator binary, that risk obscuring other experiences of violence. Despite these limitations, the studies cited above clearly demonstrate that campus sexual violence is a significant problem. Given that recent provincial legislation mandates post-secondary institutions to collect and report data on sexual violence on their campuses, the prevalence and dimensions of this issue may become clearer in the coming years. However, it is worth noting that only two of the three selected institutions for this dissertation have made this data publicly available. Feminist scholars and student activists should advocate for the collection

of disaggregated data that allows for analysis of the uneven impact of sexual violence based on its intersections with systems of oppression and for this data to be made publicly available so that institutions might be held accountable.

Student anti-violence activism: A brief overview

As Chapter 1 mentions, despite the long history of black women's organizing to address the intersections of racism and sexual violence, mainstream narratives often locate the origins of contemporary anti-violence activism, including activism on university campuses, in the 1960s radical feminist consciousness-raising groups led predominantly by white, cisgender women (Linder, 2017). This consciousness-raising led to the creation of domestic violence shelters and rape crisis centres. In the Canadian context, VRRSW and TRCC, founded in 1972 and 1974 respectively, are among the earliest feminist organizations dedicated to sexual violence (Rise Up!, n.d.). Support services for survivors of sexual violence began to emerge on North American campuses by the end of the 1970s (Jessup-Anger et al., 2018).

The Canadian Federation of Students (CFS) has urged post-secondary institutions to develop clear policies and processes to address sexual harassment on campus since at least 1982 (CFS-Ontario, 1982) and they introduced the *No Means No* consent campaign during the 1990s. Over time, the campaign slogan changed to *Consent is Sexy* and, most recently, to *Consent is Mandatory*. In 2017, the CFS-Ontario released their *Campus Toolkit for Creating Consent Culture*, which includes a template for campus sexual assault policies, a campus safety checklist, strategies for promoting consent culture, and suggestions on how to respond to resistance from university administrators. As part of their lobbying work, the CFS-Ontario was also involved in

developing the provincial legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence, which is discussed in greater detail below.

There are a number of recent examples of survivor-led anti-violence activism on campus. Perhaps the most widely recognized symbol of this activism is the image of Emma Sulkowicz carrying their dorm mattress around Columbia University. Sulkowicz carried their mattress from fall 2014 until their graduation in May 2015 in a performance art piece titled *Carry That Weight*, which was framed as a response to the university's alleged mishandling of Sulkowicz's sexual assault complaint (Kaplan, 2014). Sulkowicz is also one of 28 students who filed a Title IX complaint against Columbia (Nathanson, 2014). A video of Sulkowicz's performance on the website of the student-run Columbia Daily Spectator newspaper currently has over 2 million views. On 29 October 2014, student activists at over 130 post-secondary institutions in five countries participated in a National Day of Action in solidarity (Mitra, 2015).

In the Canadian context, Silence is Violence has been one of the most visible student activist groups protesting campus sexual violence. Silence is Violence is a survivor-led organization that originated at York in March 2015 and has had chapters at UBC, McGill, and the University of Toronto (U of T). The organization emerged in response to "the institutional and systemic failures in adequately implementing policy and procedure for redressing cases of sexual violence" that Mandi Gray, a doctoral student at York, experienced when she tried to report that she had been sexually assaulted by a fellow graduate student (Silence is Violence, n.d.). Gray's assailant was convicted of sexual assault in 2016 but the conviction was later overturned on appeal (Katawazi, 2017). Gray chose to waive the publication ban on her name

and her experiences with York and with the criminal justice system have garnered significant media attention.

The chapters of Silence is Violence have organized a number of events and actions to draw attention to institutional failures to address sexual violence and support survivors. For example, in response to a for-profit conference on campus sexual violence organized by the Ryley Conferences Group, where individual admission cost over \$920 (Ryley Conferences, 2015), Silence is Violence held a counter-conference that centred the voices of survivors and sought to address sexual violence from an intersectional lens (Moore, 2015). The U of T chapter has protested the university's long-standing relationship with Peter Munk, the founder of the Barrick Gold mining company, which has been accused of human rights violations including sexual violence (McSheffrey, 2017). They also created the *Survivors Speak Back* campaign and put up posters featuring statements about survivors' experiences reporting sexual violence to administrators at U of T, which were promptly removed (Denton, 2017). The chapters at York and U of T have conducted research to better understand students' experiences of reporting sexual violence and accessing institutional supports (Gray & Pin, 2017; Wright et al., 2019).

Another student organization, Our Turn, emerged at Carleton University (Carleton) in March 2017 after the administration failed to address students' concerns in their sexual violence policy (Our Turn, 2017). In partnership with 20 student unions across Canada, the group released the Our Turn *National Action Plan*, which provides guidelines to support student unions in preventing sexual violence on campus, supporting survivors, and advocating for policy reform (Our Turn, 2017). As part of the *Action Plan*, they developed a scorecard to evaluate post-secondary institutions' sexual violence policies and used it to rank the policies at 14 universities.

The evaluation criteria included the formal and informal complaint processes, the scope of the policy, the composition of the policymaking committee, and items related to education and support (Our Turn, 2017). Of the 14 policies evaluated, Our Turn found that only one institution has an immunity clause for drug and alcohol use. They also found that two institutions place a one-year time limit on the ability to file a formal complaint and that eight do not have explicit protections from face-to-face meetings between the complainant and the respondent during the complaint process (Our Turn, 2017). Interestingly, eight of the evaluated institutions recognize intersectionality in their policies (Our Turn, 2017). Our Turn has also lobbied federal and provincial governments to amend legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence policies to create an oversight mechanism and minimum standards for campus supports (Chiose, 2018a; Goffin, 2018). In December 2018, it was reported that several members of Our Turn had formed a new organization called Students for Consent Culture (SFCC) after a leadership disagreement (Genest, 2018). Thus far, SFCC appears to be continuing the work of Our Turn and are actively involved in lobbying efforts at the federal and provincial levels. They are also currently working on a follow-up report to the *Action Plan* and are conducting research on predatory professors (sfcccanada.org).

While this is by no means an exhaustive account of student anti-violence activism, it serves to illustrate the history and diversity of these efforts. As these examples demonstrate, student activists use a range of techniques to draw attention to the issue of campus sexual violence, including performance art, lobbying politicians, and poster campaigns. These examples also highlight differences in theoretical approaches among student activists. While the U of T chapter of Silence is Violence has adopted an explicitly intersectional approach, I recently

encountered a group of students at York who were collecting signatures to petition the university administration to increase the presence of security officers on campus. Further, as Chapter 6 will explain, the evolution of the CFS' consent campaign slogan over time is not merely superficial but rather represents changing political investments.

Social and mainstream media

The rise of social media has undoubtedly contributed to the pressure faced by post-secondary institutions to respond to sexual violence (Linder et al., 2016). While the *Me Too* movement was initially started by Tarana Burke in 2006, it went viral as a hashtag on October 15, 2017 when actor Alyssa Milano encouraged Twitter users to post about their experiences of sexual harassment and assault using #MeToo in hopes that “we might give people a sense of the magnitude of the problem” (as quoted in Bogen, Bleiweiss, Leach & Orchowski, 2019, p. 5). #MeToo was included in over 12 million social media posts within the first 24 hours and in over 85 million posts by users in 85 different countries within the first 45 days (Sayej, 2017). An analysis of tweets posted using #MeToo during the first week revealed that 54 per cent of posts included a disclosure of sexual violence and that the majority of other tweets using the hashtag were supportive, although negative reactions and trolling behaviour were also identified (Bogen et al., 2019). As such, the researchers concluded that #MeToo has functioned as an important site of community formation (Bogen et al., 2019). The circulation of #MeToo had a significant impact on the rates of sexual assault reporting to police in Canada. Statistics Canada data shows that the number of founded⁸ reports made to police was higher in October and November 2017

⁸ The term ‘founded’ refers to sexual assaults reported to police that are not cleared as ‘unfounded’. For a sexual assault to be considered unfounded, it must be “determined through police investigation that the offence reported did not occur, nor was it attempted” (Statistics Canada, 2018). Sexual assaults are deemed ‘unfounded’ at significantly

than in any other month since 2009 and that there was a 25 per cent increase in founded reports in comparison with the quarter prior to #MeToo (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018).⁹ There has also been a surge in demand for sexual assault support services across Canada as a result of #MeToo (Paling, 2018).

#MeToo has not been without controversy or critique; namely, women of colour quickly pointed out that the phrase was originally coined by Burke, a black anti-violence activist, and challenged the credit that Milano, a white actor, has received (Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). They also contrasted the overwhelming response to Milano's tweet with the lack of support for Burke's movement 10 years earlier, and for black women who had recently been targeted on Twitter, including actor Leslie Jones and sports journalist Jemele Hill (Onwuachi-Willig, 2018). Further, Burke has been critical of the way that #MeToo has been taken up. While she initially started the movement to raise awareness and demand support for young black survivors, she argues that the voices of women of colour, trans women, queer people, and Indigenous women continue to be marginalized in coverage of #MeToo (Chan, 2019). Burke has challenged the way that media coverage of #MeToo has focused on the high-profile cisgender men who have been accused and whether or not they are guilty, rather than on the voices and needs of survivors (Rowley, 2018). Thus while the circulation of #MeToo has undoubtedly had a significant impact and contributed to pressure on post-secondary institutions to respond to sexual violence, it is also

higher rates than other violent crimes in Canada, which demonstrates the prevalence of rape myths within policing (see Doolittle, 2017).

⁹ In Quebec, founded sexual assaults reported to police increased by 61 per cent following the circulation of #MeToo (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018). While the overwhelming majority of founded sexual assault cases are reported within the first 24 hours, there were significant increases in rates of reporting across all timelines, including sexual assaults that occurred over 10 years ago (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018). Further, the largest increase in reporting was among victims aged 12 to 17, which corresponded with a significant increase in the number of 12 to 17-year-olds who were accused (Rotenberg & Cotter, 2018).

an important illustration of the ways in which anti-violence efforts can be sites of harm and marginalization.

Although the relationship between social media and activism is often dismissed as ‘slacktivism,’ Carrie Rentschler (2018) re-conceptualizes social media as an important site where student activists ‘do feminism.’ As evidenced by the popularity of #MeToo, social media represents a new platform for survivors of sexual violence to share their stories and connect with one another. Social media also allows student anti-violence activists to raise awareness, disseminate calls to action, and connect with other activists to share strategies (Linder et al., 2016). For example, in the American context, student activists used a closed Facebook group to share information on filing Title IX claims against their institutions (Linder et al., 2016). Rentschler (2018) also points to the use of Google Docs to create collective documents for public circulation, as evidenced by the open letter created by the Student Society of McGill University (SSMU) in April 2018. The open letter, which claimed that the Dean of the Faculty of Arts had mismanaged students’ sexual assault allegations against a number of professors in the Faculty and called for an external investigation, rapidly gathered signatures from 102 student organizations and 2,407 individuals (Rentschler, 2018). As this example illustrates, social media can also be a useful tool for holding institutions accountable by publicly exposing their failure to adequately address sexual violence on campus (Linder et al., 2016).

Anastasia Powell (2015) argues that social media has the potential to mediate informal justice practices that respond to the needs of survivors and challenge conventional approaches to justice by revealing their inadequacies. For example, Rentschler (2018) highlights informal reporting models, such as the ‘Overheard at McGill’ Facebook page and the Community

Disclosure Network (CDN), which was formed in response to allegations of sexual violence perpetrated by an elected member of the SSMU. The CDN developed an anonymous online reporting form and provided resources for student survivors (Rentschler, 2018). While informal reporting networks are hardly new, Rentschler (2018) argues that the CDN also articulates a critical community accountability approach to addressing sexual violence within the SSMU and on the McGill campus.

Powell (2015) points to Jada, a survivor whose assault was photographed and circulated online as a meme with the hashtag #JadaPose, as an example of survivors who use social media to fight back. Jada responded to the meme of her assault by posting a photo of herself with her fist raised in defiance and the hashtag #IamJada and thousands of supporters posted #StandWithJada in solidarity (Powell, 2015).¹⁰ Powell (2015) argues that this response allowed Jada to reclaim her identity and draw support online. Chris Linder, Jess Myers, Colleen Riggle, and Marvette Lacy (2016) also highlight the #StandWithJada example as an illustration of the potential for social media to function as a space for black women to create activist networks. They assert that social media is less hierarchical and contributes “to a shift in power dynamics present in other activist spaces” and therefore “provides a counterspace for people choosing to engage in forms of activism not recognized in other spaces or for people whose voices are ignored or silenced in mainstream media” (p. 240). However, Jada’s experience also reveals the ways in which social media may itself be a site of sexual violence.

¹⁰ Interestingly, Powell (2015) reads Jada’s pose in the photo as having “her arm curled like Rosie the Riveter” (p. 572) when in reality her closed fist is raised in the gesture commonly recognized as the black power salute. While the closed fist has also been used as a feminist symbol when coupled with the symbol for woman, reading Jada’s pose through the (white) feminist symbol of Rosie the Riveter rather than the black power salute underscores the need to approach this topic from an intersectional perspective and raises questions about how social media posts circulate and are (mis)interpreted by different audiences to serve different purposes.

As these examples demonstrate, the emergence of social media has had a significant impact on public awareness of campus sexual violence. It has facilitated the creation of student activist networks and resource sharing. Social media may also provide a platform for survivors to tell their own stories and for those whose voices are marginalized in mainstream media and traditional activist spaces. Further, the public visibility of social media and its ability to disseminate information rapidly expands discussions about campus sexual violence beyond activist networks and survivors to the general public and contributes to the pressure to respond by increasing the reputational risk to post-secondary institutions.

In addition to social media, traditional media sources have contributed significantly to the current pressure faced by university administrations. As indicated in the Introduction, there has been extensive media coverage of a number of high profile incidents at universities across Canada. Investigative journalism has also played an important role in drawing attention to this issue. In November 2014, the *Toronto Star* published an investigation into the sexual assault policies at Canadian post-secondary institutions. The investigation found that only nine of the 78 Canadian universities and none of the 24 Ontario colleges surveyed had specific sexual violence policies (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014). The article also highlights institutions' failure to adequately address sexual violence on campus and pointed to the absence of formal reporting mechanisms. Further, they claimed that while the provincial government has spent approximately \$33 million in women's safety grants at Ontario colleges and universities since 1991, the majority has been spent on campus security upgrades such as emergency phones and cameras rather than on substantive prevention efforts (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014). While the government of Ontario had already begun discussing the importance of sexual violence policies and reporting processes, as

evidenced by their 2013 guide, *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence*, the *Star* report undoubtedly contributed to the pressure to develop legislation.

In 2015, *CBC News* conducted an investigation on the reporting rates of sexual violence at Canadian post-secondary institutions. They found that the methods of data collection and reporting varied widely between institutions, which impacted the overall number of incidents reported (Sawa & Ward, 2015). Interestingly, six institutions refused to provide data, which reflects the vested interest that universities have in silencing reports of campus sexual violence and protecting their reputations (Sawa & Ward, 2015). The investigation concluded that the number of reported assaults was well below the estimated rates of sexual violence among post-secondary students (Sawa & Ward, 2015) and a follow-up investigation found that 16 post-secondary institutions claimed that they had received no reports of sexual assault between 2009 and 2014 (Ward, 2015). Rather than interpreting these findings as an indication that the overall rate of sexual violence on campuses is low, the investigators argued that institutions were not encouraging students to come forward (Sawa & Ward, 2015). The *CBC* investigations sparked calls to standardize how post-secondary institutions record instances of sexual assault, which is reflected in the provincial legislation that emerged.

While mainstream media and investigative reporting have contributed to heightened public awareness of campus sexual violence and pressure on post-secondary institutions to respond, as the example of #MeToo illustrates, mainstream media can also reproduce problematic representations of sexual violence. In particular, sexual violence against those who approximate the ‘ideal’ survivor tends to be deemed more ‘newsworthy’ and receive greater attention (O’Hara, 2012; Hayes & Luther, 2018). Mainstream media also often depicts

perpetrators as deviant individuals; as Shannon O’Hara (2012) argues, “if the perpetrator is a devious monster, rape becomes a random act of violence rather than a societal problem” (p. 256). There are also examples of mainstream media openly sympathizing with convicted assailants; for example, Brock Turner (Baker, 2016) was repeatedly referred to as ‘the Stanford swimmer,’ which emphasizes the impact of his conviction on his future and laments what could have been rather than how the assault has impacted his victim (Hayes & Luther, 2018). This particular case also illustrates the potential for social media to function as a platform to challenge mainstream media representations as the victim’s powerful impact statement went viral online after she released it to *Buzzfeed News* (Baker, 2016). Similarly, the Femifesto (n. d.) collective uses social media to repost ‘corrected’ versions of mainstream media headlines that reproduce rape myths.

Legislation and government initiatives

Perhaps the most important factor contributing to the development of sexual violence policies and formal reporting processes at Canadian post-secondary institutions has been the implementation of legislation that makes these measures mandatory. There are substantial differences in legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence in the Canadian and American contexts. However, given the timelines, I would argue that the heightened media and legislative attention to campus sexual violence in Canada emerged in relation to heightened attention in the American context, particularly with respect to the Obama government’s actions on this issue. As such, it is useful to have a basic understanding of the legal frameworks pertaining to campus sexual violence in the United States.

In the American context, while the legal definition of sexual assault varies from state to state, there is federal legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence. Title IX of the 1972

federal Educational Amendments, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education institutions that receive federal funding, has proven to be significant in this debate. Title IX investigations focus on how institutions handle allegations of misconduct rather than on the alleged incidents themselves and violations can result in the loss of federal funding (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017). Until recently, Title IX was interpreted to apply primarily to allegations of sexual harassment (Jessup-Anger et al., 2018) and was used infrequently; between 1998 and 2008, there were only 24 Title IX complaints, which ultimately resulted in five universities being found in violation. These universities were provided with guidance on improving their procedures but were not subject to any sanctions (Shapiro, 2010).

One of the most significant developments in the changing application of Title IX was the *Dear Colleague Letter* issued by Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) under the Obama administration in 2011. The *Dear Colleague Letter* explicitly states that Title IX requirements apply to sexual violence and directs post-secondary institutions to employ a 'preponderance of the evidence' standard in campus sexual violence investigations, which is lower than the 'clear and convincing' standard used by some institutions (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017). Further, the guidance outlines measures to allow complainants to continue their education without facing discrimination, including no-contact orders and accommodations pertaining to housing, course schedules, and extra-curricular activities (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017). In May 2016, the Department of Education and the Department of Justice issued a joint *Dear Colleague* letter to clarify that Title IX protections apply to discrimination based on gender-identity, including transgender identity. As of January 2017, there were 304 federal investigations into Title IX violations at 223 American colleges and universities (Anderson, 2017).

Under the Trump administration, the OCR issued a new letter in February 2017 that withdrew the 2016 guidance that extended Title IX protections to gender identity. In September 2017, they withdrew the 2011 guidance citing problems with fairness and due process. In November 2018, the Trump administration released new regulations on how institutions must respond to complaints of sexual assault and harassment to comply with their Title IX obligations. Critics warn that the new regulations establish a narrower definition of sexual harassment that requires one to wait until the harassment is “so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it denies a person access to the recipient’s program or educational activity” before filing a complaint (NWSA, 2018). Under the new regulations, institutions are only required to investigate complaints of sexual harassment or assault that occur during the institution’s own program or activity and in cases where they have “actual knowledge” of an offence and a formal complaint has been made (Green, 2018). Further, the new regulations extend the quasi-legal framework of adjudicating sexual assault complaints by requiring institutions to hold live hearings during which the accused and the complainant can cross-examine one another through an adviser or lawyer. The regulations also encourage institutions to apply the higher standard of ‘clear and convincing’ evidence rather than the ‘preponderance of evidence’ standard recommended by the Obama administration (Green, 2018). In essence, the new regulations increase the rights of accused students and narrow the scope of institutions’ responsibilities, which will likely result in fewer Title IX complaints (Green, 2018; NWSA, 2018).

In addition to Title IX, American post-secondary institutions are subject to the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act), which was passed in 1990. The Act requires post-secondary institutions that participate in federal

financial aid programs to report annual crime statistics, including statistics on sexual violence, and to develop prevention policies. The Clery Act is enforced through site visits by the Department of Education's Federal Student Aid office and violations can result in the imposition of fines (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017). To date, the largest fine for Clery Act violations was issued in 2016 against Pennsylvania State University for \$2.4 million for covering up sexual violence related to the football program, including the Jerry Sandusky scandal (New, 2016). Critics argue that the reporting process for crime statistics in the Clery Act lacks guidance and oversight and that institutions have a vested interest in preserving their public image, which results in underreporting (Jessup-Anger et al., 2018; Grigoriadis, 2017).

The Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE Act), which came into effect in March 2014, expanded the reporting requirements of the Clery Act (Jessup-Anger et al., 2018). The Campus SaVE Act features guidance on campus sexual assault prevention and education initiatives, including consent education and bystander intervention training. It also requires post-secondary institutions to develop adjudicative processes to address sexual violence complaints (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017) and outlines the rights of complainants in these processes. In 2014, the Obama administration created the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. The Task Force subsequently released a report titled *Not Alone*, which outlines recommendations for preventing and addressing campus sexual violence (Jessup-Anger et al., 2018). President Obama and Vice President Biden also launched the *It's On Us* campaign, which uses public service announcements featuring celebrities to encourage the public to take an active role in preventing campus sexual violence (Sheehy & Gilbert, 2017).

In Canada, legislation pertaining to campus sexual violence is provincial rather than federal as education is primarily a provincial responsibility. Thus far, the provincial governments of Ontario, British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island have passed legislation requiring post-secondary institutions to develop specific sexual violence policies. The governments of Nova Scotia and Alberta have issued statements encouraging their post-secondary institutions to develop policies and reporting processes (Shen, 2017).

The Ontario Women's Directorate released *Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario's Colleges and Universities* in January 2013. The *Guide* takes an explicitly intersectional approach and suggests that campus policies must account for the fact that "individuals experience sexual violence differently, including the risks they face and their access to services" (section 1, para. 2). The *Guide* discusses the importance of adopting a broad definition of sexual violence that includes harassment, stalking, and cyber harassment and dispels a number of prevalent rape myths. It also provides a template for developing sexual violence policies and response protocols, along with sample statements on survivors' rights and the roles and responsibilities of campus groups.

In March 2015, the Ontario government released *It's Never Ok: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment*. The *Action Plan* provides definitions of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and rape culture, along with statistics on prevalence and rates of police reporting. It also makes a number of important commitments, including updating curriculum content on consent and sexual health in public schools, introducing a pilot program to provide survivors of sexual violence with access to free legal aid, and implementing legislation on campus sexual violence.

In March 2016, the Ontario government passed Bill 132, which defines sexual violence

as:

any sexual act or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person's consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation. (schedule 3, 17(1))

The Bill requires Ontario colleges (including private career colleges) and universities to develop sexual violence policies and specific processes to respond to complaints of sexual violence, to consult students in the development and revision of sexual violence policies, to review their sexual violence policies at least once every three years, and to collect and report data on the number of complaints and requests for support or accommodations that are received. Post-secondary institutions in Ontario were required to comply with Bill 132 by January 2017.

British Columbia became the second province to pass legislation on campus sexual violence with Bill 23 in May 2016. Bill 23 refers to sexual misconduct, which is defined as:

(a) sexual assault; (b) sexual exploitation; (c) sexual harassment; (d) stalking; (e) indecent exposure; (f) voyeurism; (g) the distribution of a sexually explicit photograph or video of a person to one or more persons other than the person in the photograph or video without the consent of the person in the photograph or video and with the intent to distress the person in the photograph or video; (h) the attempt to commit an act of sexual misconduct; (i) the threat to commit an act of sexual misconduct. (section 1)

The Bill requires post-secondary institutions to create sexual misconduct policies and procedures for responding to complaints and reports of sexual misconduct involving students. Like Ontario's Bill 132, Bill 23 requires student consultation and policy reviews every three years. Post-secondary institutions in British Columbia were required to comply by May 2017.

Manitoba's Bill 15, which passed in April 2017, employs the same definition of sexual violence as Ontario's Bill 132. Bill 15 specifies that post-secondary institutions must adopt

sexual violence policies that include awareness raising campaigns, consent education, and training, in addition to a complaint procedure and response protocol. The Bill also stipulates that these policies must be developed in consultation with students, reviewed every four years, and, notably, “culturally sensitive and reflect the perspectives of those most vulnerable to sexual violence” (section 2.2(4ii)). The Manitoba government also released an accompanying policy guide with information on best practices and compliance with the legislation.

Quebec passed Bill 151 in December 2017. The Bill defines sexual violence as “any form of violence committed through sexual practices or by targeting sexuality, including sexual assault” and “any other misconduct, including that relating to sexual and gender diversity, in such forms as unwanted direct or indirect gestures, comments, behaviours or attitudes with sexual connotations, including by a technological means” (chapter 1, section 1). Similar to Manitoba’s legislation, Bill 151 states that educational institutions must create sexual violence policies that account for “persons at greater risk of experiencing sexual violence, such as persons from sexual or gender minorities, cultural communities or Native communities, foreign students and persons with disabilities” (chapter 2, section 3). The Bill also outlines policy requirements regarding prevention and awareness-raising activities for students, training for staff, and a code of conduct for relationships between students and professors. Institutions are required to implement their policies by September 2019 and to review them at least once every five years. Student activists from Our Turn expressed concern that the Quebec government has not included students in the advisory committee tasked with developing guidelines for the post-secondary institutions to follow (Hendry, 2018). The majority of the committee members are government staff and post-secondary institution administrators and the Quebec Coalition of Rape Crisis

Centres (RQCALACS) has claimed that they are the only committee members who represent the concerns of sexual assault survivors (Hendry, 2018).

Most recently, Prince Edward Island passed Bill 41 in December 2018, which largely mirrors the language in Ontario's Bill 132. The Bill combines the definition of sexual violence included in Ontario's Bill 132 with the language pertaining to sexually explicit photographs and videos from British Columbia's Bill 23. It requires post-secondary institutions to develop sexual violence policies by December 2019 that establish complaint procedures, include provisions on prevention and reporting, and address issues related to consent. It also requires institutions to conduct student consultations and, drawing on the language of Manitoba's Bill 15, ensure that the resultant policies are "culturally sensitive and reflect the perspectives of those most vulnerable to sexual violence" (Section 3(3)). Institutions must review their policies every three years.

Tensions between student groups and the government have emerged in Nova Scotia in response to the government's refusal to pass legislation requiring post-secondary institutions to develop sexual violence policies and response mechanisms, despite the fact that both opposition parties have introduced bills on the subject (Rutgers, 2017; McNally, 2018). The government maintains that their 2015-2019 memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Nova Scotia universities, which requires that universities adopt sexual violence policies, is sufficient. However, CFS-Nova Scotia (CFS-NS) argues that the MOU is non-binding and lacks a mechanism to enforce compliance. In August 2017, they suggested that five of the 10 post-secondary institutions in Nova Scotia were not complying with the standards established by the MOU (Rutgers, 2017).

In December 2017, the Nova Scotia government released a report titled *Changing the Culture of Acceptance*, which outlines 10 recommendations on how universities should address sexual violence on campus. Notably, the report claims to be based on feminist, black feminist, and anti-oppressive frameworks and advises universities to apply these frameworks in the development of their prevention efforts. The report discusses various forms of privilege and oppression, along with their relationship to sexual violence. Their recommendations centre social change and the report also touches on healthy masculinities education and trauma-informed approaches. The report recommends that anti-oppression training should be provided to student leaders, as well as faculty and staff. It also discusses a federally-funded project to develop a Nova Scotia-specific bystander education program.

While the content of the report seems promising, in March 2018 the CFS-NS chairperson, Aidan McNally, published an op-ed in which she argued that the government was taking credit without properly acknowledging the contributions of students and community organizations. She claimed that the government had omitted the most important recommendations regarding firm timelines and mechanisms to hold institutions accountable to develop sexual violence policies (McNally, 2018). She concluded the op-ed by stating “while you might now be using the right words, your inaction speaks volumes. Do not hide behind the language of a report that was written by the students and community groups you refuse to support” (McNally, 2018, para. 9). After the op-ed was published, CFS-NS released a statement claiming that they had been shut out of the province’s Sexual Violence Prevention Committee meetings, which the government denied (Quon, 2018).

Although government approaches and legislation across these provinces share certain elements (e.g. the need for specific policies and a cyclical review process), they differ in important ways. The legislation in Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba, and Prince Edward Island employ broader definitions of sexual violence that include violence based on sexuality and gender identity while British Columbia's definition of sexual misconduct is narrower in scope. The Quebec legislation is unique in requiring institutions to address relationships between students and professors. Provinces also differ in the funding allocated to addressing campus sexual violence. Along with the introduction of Bill 151, the Quebec government committed \$23 million to combat campus sexual violence (Kane, 2018). Under the leadership of Kathleen Wynne, the previous Ontario government dedicated \$41 million to address violence and harassment as part of their *Action Plan*, although it is unclear what percentage of that funding was spent on campus sexual violence specifically (Kane, 2018) and how the 2018 election of Doug Ford will affect this spending. Meanwhile, the government of British Columbia did not commit additional funds to address campus sexual violence (Kane, 2018). The *Changing the Culture of Acceptance* report references the creation of a Nova Scotia government initiative titled the Prevention Innovation Fund, which is meant to fund research on and evaluation of sexual violence prevention efforts by groups who are not part of sexual violence organizations, such as student unions. To date, \$1.4 million has been allocated through the Fund, of which \$86,500 was spent on campus sexual violence projects between 2015-2017 (Nova Scotia, n.d.).

In addition to these provincial government efforts, the federal government included campus sexual violence in the 2018 federal budget. Specifically, the federal government committed \$5.5 million over five years to create a harmonized national framework to address

sexual violence at post-secondary institutions (Smith, 2018). Perhaps inspired by the American Title IX legislation, the federal budget also stated that beginning in 2019, the government could withdraw funding from post-secondary institutions that do not implement “best practices addressing sexual assaults on campus” (Smith, 2018). While some have supported this announcement and argued that it will result in greater consistency in definitions, policy content, support for survivors, and reporting processes (Lum, 2018), others have expressed concern that withdrawing funding could negatively affect student-led initiatives to address sexual violence on campus (Smith, 2018).

In the absence of Canadian equivalents of Title IX and the Clery Act, students have relied on alternative legal measures to hold their post-secondary institutions accountable. In June 2015, Mandi Gray filed a complaint against York with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario (HRTO), which alleged that the university’s treatment of sexual assault survivors constituted systemic gender discrimination on the basis that the majority of survivors are cisgender women (Hoffman, 2015). Gray cited the ability of the HRTO to enforce changes to the university’s sexual violence policy as the reason why she filed a human rights complaint rather than civil litigation (Hoffman, 2015). While the complaint was settled in mediation in November 2016, Gray filed a breach of settlement against the university in August 2018. According to Gray, one of the conditions of the settlement was that York would partner with a local community organization to provide counselling on campus for survivors for four years. Gray argues that while the university issued a press release announcing the partnership as though it was a benevolent and voluntary gesture, they quietly cancelled it after less than a year (Silence is Violence, n.d.). Students at U of T, the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT), Concordia, and UBC have filed similar

human rights complaints against their institutions (Kane, 2017; Xing, 2017; McKenna, 2018). Canadian students have also used civil litigation in an effort to hold their post-secondary institutions accountable. For example, in April 2017 a student at Queen's University (Queen's) filed a lawsuit seeking \$950,000 in damages from the university based on the way that they responded to her allegations of sexual and physical assault perpetrated by university employees (Lorinc, 2018).

The neoliberal corporatization of Canadian universities

Debates about campus sexual violence are unfolding within the broader context of the increasing neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary institutions. Elizabeth Quinlan (2017) argues that the relationship between post-secondary institutions and the corporate world has been intensifying since the 1970s. This trend corresponds to institutions' increasing reliance on private sources of funding as government funding for post-secondary education has decreased (E. Quinlan, 2017; Gray & Pin, 2017). Tuition fees represent one of the most significant revenue sources for post-secondary institutions. In Ontario, tuition fees went from accounting for 20 per cent of university revenue in 1991 to 50 per cent in 2010 (Pin, Martin & Andrey, 2011). In this context, students become consumers who 'purchase' their education and there is intense competition to attract tuition dollars (E. Quinlan, 2017). Research agendas are increasingly market-driven as the significance of private sector research funding grows (E. Quinlan, 2017).

The neoliberal corporatization of institutions has also shaped the management structures and practices of post-secondary institutions, which are often at odds with longstanding governance structures and foster tensions between faculty members and administrations (E. Quinlan, 2017). A recent study of the governance structures at 31 Canadian universities

concluded that “a corporate-style approach to governance brings with it the business world’s faulty assumption that academic staff do not share the same interests as the university” and that “due to current trends of board membership, those in power are increasingly from environments that have nothing to do with research or education” (Canadian Association of University Teachers [CAUT], 2018a, p. 3). For example, the York Board of Governors features members from the mining, energy, and financial industries. Of the 25 members, two are faculty, two are staff, and two are student representatives. In this context, collective bargaining has become more complex and strikes are increasingly common (E. Quinlan, 2017), as evidenced by the 2018 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 3903 strike at York, which was the longest strike in the post-secondary education sector in Canadian history and ended with back-to-work legislation (Dionne, 2018). Quinlan (2017) argues that the corporatization of post-secondary education has also transformed knowledge from a public good to a private good and, as such, the emphasis is placed on the economic value of knowledge rather than on social and political engagement. She notes that while some institutions continue to claim that they have strong civic mandates, these claims are directly contradicted by the governance structures and the prioritization of profit (E. Quinlan, 2017).

The neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary education has also had a significant impact on teaching labour. As tenure-track positions become increasingly scarce, the percentage of teaching done by contract faculty members has increased. A recent study by the CAUT found that the percentage of post-secondary instructors with full-time, full-year teaching employment decreased by 10 per cent between 2005 and 2015 (Foster & Birdsell Bauer, 2018). During the same time period, the percentage of university professors working part-time for part of the year

increased by 79 per cent (Foster & Birdsell Bauer, 2018). Contract faculty currently perform 39 per cent of the teaching labour at York, for example, and that percentage increases to 60 per cent when teaching assistants are included (Chiose, 2018b). Contract teaching is precarious labour with little job security or income stability (Foster & Birdsell Bauer, 2018) and contract faculty are often paid a third of the amount that tenured faculty are paid per course (Hauen, 2018). A recent Canadian survey of 2,606 contract faculty members found that 48 per cent have jobs outside of academia and that 16 per cent work at multiple institutions (Foster & Birdsell Bauer, 2018). These trends have significant implications for employment and wage equity as racialized, Indigenous, and women post-secondary teachers are less likely to have full-time, full-year employment (CAUT, 2018b). A 2016 study found that only 2 per cent of university faculty are black and only 1.4 per cent are Indigenous (CAUT, 2018b). Racialized women professors are the most under-represented in full-time, full-year teaching positions and earn only 68 cents on the dollar compared to white male professors at Canadian universities (CAUT, 2018b).

As the subsequent chapters will demonstrate, the neoliberal corporatization of Canadian post-secondary institutions shapes responses to campus sexual violence in important ways. On one hand, post-secondary institutions must maintain their reputation and public image to attract students and private research funding, which may serve as motivation to respond to campus sexual violence (E. Quinlan, 2017). However, neoliberalism also informs the types of responses that institutions implement and who holds the power to make these decisions. Ultimately, this dissertation will illustrate the ways in which neoliberal corporatization generates responses and prevention efforts that not only fail to address the underlying causes of sexual violence but that also risk reproducing violence and marginalization.

Backlash: The rise of the alt-right and men’s rights activism on campus

Current debates on sexual violence cannot be understood outside of the rise of white nationalism, the alt-right, and men’s rights activism on Canadian campuses. While these groups are certainly not new, recent events have made their presence on Canadian campuses particularly visible. Men’s rights activism, which grew out of the men’s liberation movement in the 1970s (Messner, Greenberg, & Peretz, 2015), is perhaps most clearly linked to the issue of campus sexual violence. Men’s rights activism can be characterized as a form of backlash to the extent that it is often framed as a response to a supposed crisis of normative constructions of white masculinity generated by feminist gains. Men’s rights activists (MRAs) tend to promote the suppression of feminism and the revalorization of normative constructions of masculinity¹¹ as the solution to this supposed crisis (Blais & Dupuis-Déri, 2012). MRAs also chastise men who espouse feminist politics or are involved in anti-violence efforts by labeling them as “traitors to their sex, self-haters, haters of their maleness, in sum, not ‘real’ but ‘castrated’ men, and probably gay” (Blais & Dupuis-Déri, 2012, p. 27).

While men’s rights groups are vocal on a range of issues, including domestic violence and child custody, their activism around sexual violence has been particularly visible. Lise Gotell and Emily Dutton (2016) argue that this emphasis on sexual violence is a strategy to mobilize

¹¹ Raewyn Connell (1995) refers to normative constructions of masculinity as hegemonic masculinity, which she defines as the “configuration of gender practice” that defines and regulates what it means to be a ‘real’ man in a given society and “guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of [cisgender] men” (p. 77) over women and those with subordinated masculinities. This conceptualization thus approaches masculinity as socially constructed rather than innate or natural and highlights the social processes through which this configuration of masculinity is reproduced as normative (Jewkes et al., 2015). Connell (1995) notes that while the majority of cisgender men’s lived and embodied experiences of masculinity fall short of hegemonic masculine norms, they may remain complicit with these norms based on the power conferred by patriarchy and the consequences that they may face for defying them. However, it is also important to recognize that this power is unevenly distributed based on the intersections of masculinity with other categories of identity, which privileges certain constructions of masculinity and subordinates others (Morrell, 2001; Crenshaw, 1991). Other scholars suggest that there may be multiple culturally-specific constructions of hegemonic masculinity that co-exist in a particular context (Morrell, Jewkes & Lindegger, 2012).

younger cisgender men. For example, the Canadian Association for Equality (CAFE), a prominent men's rights group, has hosted a number of talks on university campuses and encouraged students to form affiliated groups (Gotell & Dutton, 2016). Gotell and Dutton (2016) summarize MRAs' perspectives on sexual violence: "that sexual violence is gender-neutral; that feminists are responsible for a cover-up of men's experiences of victimization; that feminists have created a climate where false allegations are rampant; and that rape culture is nothing more than a moral panic" (p. 72). They argue that these discourses have gained traction because they resonate with neoliberal discourses on sexual violence that emphasize individual responsibility and obscure structural analyses (Gotell & Dutton, 2016).

In practice, MRAs have filed injunctions against anti-rape campaigns on the basis that they allegedly promote a negative image of cisgender men (Blais & Dupuis-Déri, 2012) and have also created their own counter-campaigns. For example, in 2013, Men's Rights Edmonton launched the *Don't Be That Girl* campaign in response to the *Don't Be That Guy* anti-rape campaign, which was particularly popular on Canadian campuses. Their counter-campaign featured posters with statements such as "just because you regret a one night stand, doesn't mean it wasn't consensual" (Gotell & Dutton, 2016). The notion that feminist anti-rape activism promotes false reporting also featured prominently in the threats made against feminists at U of T in September 2015 (Hopper, 2015). The threats, which were posted online, included: "next week when a feminist at the University of Toronto tries to ruin your life with false sex rape allegations, rent a gun from a gang and start firing bullets into these feminists at your nearest Women's Studies classroom" (Hopper, 2015). As this example demonstrates, MRAs also use the threat of violence, including sexual violence, to try to silence feminists. At U of O, a student

journalist faced threats of violence for exposing the Science Students Association's pub crawl, which awarded participants points for performing oral sex and eating doughnuts off of a judge's penis (Schnurr, 2016). In response, racist, sexist, and Islamophobic threats were posted to her social media accounts, including: "I will be laughing when your father murders you in an honor killing. You terrorist breeder" and "don't spoil it for everyone else, you filthy f***ing sand*****. I hope your imam rapes you" (Schnurr, 2016). In 2014, a Queen's student who was involved in opposing an event held by the Men's Issues Awareness Society on campus was violently attacked outside her home after receiving threats (Canadian Press, 2014).

Involuntary celibates, commonly known as incels, express similar entitlement to sex and argue that feminist gains have come at the expense of cisgender men and contributed to their celibacy (Fifth Estate, 2019). Unlike MRAs, the focus of incel communities is on perpetrating misogynistic violence rather than on restoring normative masculinity, as evidenced by the fact that Marc Lepine, who murdered 14 cisgender women at École Polytechnique in Montreal in 1989, is celebrated as the first incel killer (Fifth Estate, 2019). The term 'incel' gained mainstream recognition in 2014 when Elliot Rodger, who killed six people and injured 14 others in Isla Vista, California, cited incel ideology in his 137-page manifesto and in a number of YouTube videos (Fifth Estate, 2019). Alek Minassian, who killed 10 people and injured 17 others in the van attack in Toronto in 2017, praised Rodger in a Facebook post immediately before the attack, as did the Parkland, Florida school shooter, Nikolas Cruz (Fifth Estate, 2019). Researchers have warned that while these acts of violence are often characterized as 'lone wolf' attacks, there have been over 120 instances of alt-right violence, including incel violence, in

Canada over the last 30 years (Fifth Estate, 2019). In 2017, the incel thread on Reddit had over 40,000 active members before it was taken down (Fifth Estate, 2019).

Men's rights activism and incel culture often overlap with the politics of white supremacy and the alt-right¹² movement (Griffin, 2018). The majority of MRAs and incels are generally understood to be white, heterosexual, cisgender men and their sense of entitlement to power and sex is typically framed as emerging from normative constructions of white masculinity (Marwick & Caplan, 2018; Dignam & Rohlinger, 2019).¹³ There are notable exceptions including Rodger and RooshV, the infamous so-called 'pick-up artist' who has argued in favour of legalizing rape and tweeted that Minassian's attack could have been prevented had he been able to have sex with "only two or three Toronto Tinder sluts" (as quoted in Anti-Defamation League, 2018). There are also racialized members of online incel communities who refer to themselves as 'ethnicels' and, in the case of South Asian and East Asian members, as 'currycels' and 'ricecels' (Paradkar, 2018). Racism is rampant within these communities; for example, in his manifesto, Rodger complains about black, Mexican, and Asian men who date white women and argues that he "deserves it more" as someone who is "half white" and "descended from British aristocracy" (as quoted in Paradkar, 2018, para. 10). Given that aggrieved white masculinity is foundational to men's rights activism and incel communities, David Futrelle (2017) characterizes these groups as a "gateway drug to the alt-right" (para. 7).

¹² The term alt-right was popularized as a description of a faction of conservative Trump supporters who wanted to distinguish themselves from both long-standing white supremacist groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, and mainstream republicans (Perry, Mirrlees & Scrivens, 2018).

¹³ Given that the majority of MRA and incel activity occurs on online forums where participants may be anonymous, it is difficult to ascertain their identities. However, the results from a self-survey of members of the Men's Rights subreddit suggested that 98 per cent of subreddit members identified as white and that 87 per cent were between the ages of 17 and 20 (Constant, 2014). The extent to which these demographic trends also apply to incel communities is unclear.

The 2016 election of Donald Trump symbolizes the power of the discourse of white masculinity in crisis and Trump's promise to "make America great again" is inherently a promise to "make [cisgender] men 'great again' too" in that "to white, native born, heterosexual [cisgender] men, he offered a solution to the dilemma they had long faced as the 'left-behinds' of the 1960s and 1970s celebration of other identities" (Hochschild, 2016, p. 229). In many ways, Trump reproduces the construction of white masculinity as dominance over women and over those with subordinated masculinities (Pascoe, 2017; Smirnova, 2018). Sexual entitlement is a central feature of this construction, as evidenced by the fact that Trump was elected despite the release of a videotaped conversation with Billy Bush in 2005 in which he described grabbing cisgender women "by the pussy" (as quoted in Pascoe, 2017, p. 121) and the numerous sexual assault allegations made against him (Baker & Vigdor, 2019). The Trump administration has consistently undermined the credibility of sexual assault survivors, as demonstrated by the changes to Title IX and by the repeated invocation of 'due process' in reference to campus sexual violence and to Dr. Christine Blasey Ford's testimony against Brett Kavanaugh.

While there is a long history of white supremacy in the United States and in Canada, Trump's election served to embolden racists and white nationalists (Perry et al., 2018). The Southern Poverty Law Centre documented more than 800 reports of hate crimes in the weeks immediately following the election and similar incidents occurred in cities across Canada (Perry et al., 2018). In January 2017, Alexandre Bissonnette killed six people and injured 19 others at a mosque in Quebec City shortly after evening prayers. According to evidence introduced in court, in the days leading up to the shooting Bissonnette visited the Twitter accounts of several prominent white supremacists and people associated with the alt-right (Gracie, 2018). Sexual

violence has also featured prominently in Trump's white nationalist, anti-immigration discourse, as evidenced by his construction of Mexican cisgender men as rapists and "bad hombres" (as quoted in Pascoe, 2017, p. 131), which perpetuates the long history of constructing perpetrators of sexual violence as racialized others (see Davis, 1981). The 'bad hombres' discourse serves to not only distance Trump and other white cisgender men from the perpetration of sexual violence (Pascoe, 2017), but also to construct racialized immigrants as 'threatening' others from whom the state must be protected (Perry et al., 2018). In this sense, Trump's promise to 'make America great again' is also a promise to restore America as a white nationalist state (Perry et al., 2018).

In recent years, white supremacists and the alt-right have mobilized on Canadian post-secondary campuses. For example, flyers were circulated on university campuses in Ontario and Quebec bearing statements such as "it's only racist when white people do it" and "tired of anti-white propaganda? It's time to MAKE CANADA GREAT AGAIN!" (as quoted in Perry et al., 2018, p. 59). At the University of Alberta, a poster featuring an image of a Sikh man was captioned "fu*k your turban [...] go the fu*k back to where you came from" (Zhou, 2017). Canadian campuses have also hosted speakers associated with the alt-right, including Ben Shapiro, Ezra Levant, and Laura Southern (Pang, 2017). In November 2018, Steve Bannon was invited to participate in the Munk Debate on the rise of populism. Given that Bannon was the former executive chairman of the far-right *Breitbart News* and a chief strategist in Trump administration who played a central role in the executive order banning immigrants from Muslim-majority countries, his appearance drew significant protest (Wells, 2018).

The concept of free speech is central to the proliferation of the alt-right on campus based on the premise that in the era of 'political correctness,' controversial perspectives, particularly

far-right perspectives, are being censored (Pang, 2017). In the Canadian context, one of the most prominent proponents of this view is Jordan Peterson. Peterson, a psychology professor at U of T, became (in)famous for arguing that being asked to use gender neutral pronouns and protections against discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression constitute threats to free speech (Pang, 2017). His arguments gained greater visibility after Lindsay Shepherd, a teaching assistant at Wilfred Laurier University (WLU), was sanctioned for showing a video of Peterson's comments on gender identity during her tutorial. She later leaked the audio of a disciplinary meeting with faculty members, who she claimed were infringing on her right to free speech, which ultimately resulted in an apology letter from the university's president (Hutchins, 2017).

These events provided Peterson with a significant following and public platform to disseminate his views, which often align with the alt-right and with incel culture. Peterson has questioned the existence of patriarchy and white privilege and suggests that existing hierarchies are the natural result of differing levels of competence (Bowles, 2018). He argues that the Toronto van attack could have been avoided if Minassian had been sexually successful and posits "enforced monogamy" as a potential solution to incel violence (as quoted in Bowles, 2018). He also proposed to start a website to reduce enrolment in university classes that he calls 'indoctrination cults,' including women's studies, ethnic studies, sociology, anthropology, English literature, and education (CBC Radio, 2017). After protesting during Peterson's speech at a rally hosted by the U of T chapter of Students in Support of Free Speech, trans students had their personal information published online and were subjected to harassment (Pang, 2017).

Free speech on post-secondary campuses was one of the first issues that Ontario Premier Doug Ford, widely considered to be a right-wing populist, addressed when he took office. In August 2018, the government passed legislation requiring all post-secondary institutions in Ontario to implement free speech policies and threatened to cut funding to institutions that do not comply (Jeffords, 2018). While the discourse around the free speech legislation is supposedly neutral, it responds to demands from Ford's alt-right supporters and raises concerns that the line between free speech and hate speech will continue to be blurred as the Peterson example so clearly demonstrates (Jeffords, 2018).

While Ford has not been in office for very long, his government has already made a number of decisions that have the potential to impact efforts to address campus sexual violence. Immediately upon taking office, Ford repealed the revised version of the sexual education curriculum introduced by the previous government and re-instated the curriculum from 1998, which does not address queer relationships, gender identity, affirmative consent, sexting, or social media, among other things (Crawley, 2019c). Ford threatened to discipline teachers who do not comply and proposed to establish a 'snitch line' where those found to be teaching the updated curriculum could be reported (Lenti, 2018). After an unsuccessful legal challenge (Alphonso & Gray, 2019) and significant protest (Lenti, 2018), the government announced a new version of the curriculum that will include topics related to gender identity and consent (Jeffords, 2019). The Ford government also cancelled plans to update the provincial curriculum with content on Indigenous languages and the residential school system in response to the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Crawley, 2018).

Further, the Ford government disbanded a non-partisan roundtable on gendered violence and has declined to provide Ontario rape crisis centres with the 33 per cent funding increase promised to them by the previous government (Hayes & Stone, 2018). In April 2019, they announced that they are dissolving the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board (CICB), which provides financial assistance for victims of violent crime, including sexual assault (Crawley, 2019a). The CICB is an important resource for survivors who rely on the funding to cover expenses such as counseling and legal assistance. Given that the waitlist for free counseling at Ontario rape crisis centres is now up to 18 months long (Rushowy, 2019b), the dissolution of the CICB and the funding cuts to rape crisis centres effectively leaves survivors who are unable to afford private counseling without access to support. The provincial government announced that in addition to problematic reforms to student grants and loans, they are cutting tuition rates at Ontario post-secondary institutions by 10 per cent, which will equate to \$360 million in lost revenue for the institutions (The Canadian Press, 2019). They also introduced the Student Choice Initiative, whereby students will be given the opportunity to opt out of paying additional fees that the government determines are ‘non-essential’ (Friesen, 2019). It is unclear how this lost revenue will affect campus sexual violence services, particularly given these fees pay for many student-run services (The Canadian Press, 2019).¹⁴

Conclusion

¹⁴ In May 2019, CFS-Ontario and the York Federation of Students jointly filed a legal challenge to block the government from implementing the Student Choice Initiative on the grounds that the government did not meaningfully consult students and that this change is motivated by the desire to suppress political opposition from students. The filing quotes a fundraising letter in which Ford writes, “I think we all know what kind of crazy Marxist nonsense student unions get up to. So we fixed that” (as quoted in Friesen, 2019, para. 7). The outcome of this legal challenge has yet to be decided.

While it is by no means an exhaustive account, this chapter has outlined the broader context in which the current research is situated. Both the prevalence research and history of student activism demonstrate that campus sexual violence is not a new concern, despite the fact that it tends to be framed in mainstream media (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014) and by politicians as an ‘epidemic’ (Biden, 2015). While this language contributes to a productive sense of urgency to address campus sexual violence, ahistoric framings of sexual violence obscure its structural dimensions and intersections with systems of oppression (Linder & Harris, 2017). However, I have argued that the persistence of student activists, combined the rise of social media and legislative changes in the American context, has contributed to an unprecedented level of pressure on Canadian post-secondary institutions to respond to campus sexual violence.

This chapter began with an overview of the prevalence research on campus sexual violence. While there are a number of factors that make it challenging to compare study findings, this research has consistently found campus sexual violence to be pervasive. This overview also illustrated that campus sexual violence research often presupposes cisgender male perpetration and cisgender female victimization and obscures differences among these populations. When difference is addressed, it is often limited to demographic data, which contributes to harmful pathologizing narratives about vulnerability rather than an analysis of how this vulnerability is produced at the intersections of sexual violence with systems of oppression (Linder, 2018; Hunt, 2016). Further, when prevalence research starts from the assumption of cisgender female victimization, the disproportionate levels of violence against trans and non-binary people, as well as sexual minorities, become invisible (Bergeron et al., 2016), which demonstrates the urgency of de-centring the ‘ideal’ survivor in responses and prevention efforts. Finally, the findings of the

emerging campus climate research reveal a significant gap in that the majority of students do not know how to report sexual violence or access support on their campuses (CCI Research, 2019).

One of the ways in which students are forming community, seeking support, and sharing information is through social media. Social media has also been an important platform for anti-violence activist organizing (Linder et al., 2016) and has the potential to mediate informal justice practices (Powell, 2015; Rentschler, 2018). In this sense, social media can be conceptualized, as Rentschler (2018) suggests, as a site where student activists ‘do feminism.’ Social media may also create space for activist networking among those who are marginalized within or cannot access more traditional activist spaces (Linder et al., 2016). Given the ways in which social media facilitates connection and the rapid dissemination of information, it has contributed to heightened public awareness of campus sexual violence and pressure on institutions to respond. Mainstream media coverage and investigative reporting, in particular, have also contributed to this pressure. However, as the example of #MeToo illustrates, mainstream media coverage often reproduces the ‘ideal’ survivor and the notion that sexual violence is perpetrated by devious individuals (O’Hara, 2012), which obscures its structural dimensions.

This chapter also discussed the recent introduction of provincial legislation that requires post-secondary institutions to develop sexual violence policies. While this legislation is undoubtedly valuable as a means of compelling post-secondary institutions to respond to campus sexual violence, a number of challenges and concerns have been articulated, particularly with regard to student consultation. Further, intersectional analyses reveal the challenges inherent in turning toward the state to respond to sexual violence. As Sarah Hunt (2016) points out,

legislation introduced by the colonial state is unlikely to address the intersections of sexual violence and colonialism that produce Indigenous women's heightened vulnerability.

As the following chapters will demonstrate, contemporary debates on campus sexual violence cannot be understood outside of the increasing neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary institutions. In this chapter, I have highlighted some of the key impacts of this shift, including changes in institutions' priorities, approaches to management, and teaching labour, to illustrate the ways in which it has exacerbated inequalities within the university. While increasing concern with public reputation may motivate institutions to respond to campus sexual violence (E. Quinlan, 2017), my dissertation findings suggest that these responses are informed by neoliberal logics.

Finally, while the present moment must be characterized as one of significant momentum toward addressing campus sexual violence, it must also be characterized as one of substantial backlash in the form of growing MRA, incel, and alt-right presence at Canadian universities. Though this backlash is coming from different, and at times overlapping, directions, the overarching impact is that it makes gains toward addressing campus sexual violence feel very fragile. While it may be tempting to accept any move toward preventing or addressing sexual violence on campus as a victory, at a time when feminists, racialized students, Muslim students, and trans students are being targeted for violence, this backlash only increases the urgency of ensuring that approaches to campus sexual violence are intersectional. Having established the broader context in which my dissertation is situated, the following chapter discusses my research findings on the development of the policies, their content and utility, and the extent to which they engage with intersectional analyses of sexual violence.

Chapter 4: Sexual violence policies at Ontario universities and the politics of non-performativity

The focus of this chapter is on the sexual violence policies that have been implemented at post-secondary institutions across Ontario in response to Bill 132. The chapter begins with an analysis of the policymaking process and the politics of consultation. I argue that existing inequities within the institution are reproduced in these processes in ways that privilege particular voices while silencing others. I examine how sexual violence is being conceptualized in the policies at Ontario's public universities and how the stakeholders that I interviewed, including students, faculty, and staff involved in anti-violence efforts, view these conceptualizations. While many Ontario universities reference the definition of sexual violence employed in Bill 132, I argue that the policies differ significantly in their approaches to identity. Specifically, while some policies are completely identity-neutral, others explicitly reference the language of intersectionality and commit to intersectional approaches in institutional responses to sexual violence. Finally, this chapter discusses participants' perspectives on the utility and impact of their institutions' sexual violence policies. In so doing, I consider the extent to which Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of policy as non-performative, whereby policies signal a commitment to institutional transformation without necessarily transforming the institution, is a useful tool to analyze the sexual violence policies and their commitments to intersectionality. I conclude that the value of these policies must be measured not by their content alone, but rather by the ways in which they translate into practice.

In analyzing the extent to which the new sexual violence policies are non-performative, it is useful to consider what they accomplish. One of the key functions of these policies, aside from

meeting the legal requirement, is to publicly signal the universities' commitment to addressing sexual violence. As discussed in Chapter 3, this public commitment plays an essential role in creating a positive public image of the university, which is important given the competition to attract students and private sources of funding. For example, there have been reports of alumni withholding donations from their universities in response to institutional mishandling of sexual violence allegations (De Bode, 2014). In 2016, *Maclean's* magazine added a question regarding efforts to prevent sexual violence in their annual ranking of Canadian universities, which many prospective students use to decide which institution to attend. Similarly, *Our Turn* (2017) publicly evaluated and ranked the sexual violence policies at 14 Canadian universities. As such, these policies and responses to campus sexual violence have become measures of the performance of the institution.

Policymaking and the politics of consultation

To better understand the content of the sexual violence policies, it is useful to first consider the processes through which they have been developed and whose perspectives and interests are being represented therein. The majority of the students that I interviewed for this project knew little about the sexual violence policies at their institutions and even less about their development, despite the fact that many of them were involved in campus prevention and education efforts. As one participant explained, "it was just—I don't want to say secretive—but it was [...] not something that we were all aware [of]. It wasn't something that I felt like we could access had we chosen [to...] so I think it was more administrative" (028). A participant who had been involved in the policymaking process voiced similar feelings regarding its transparency: "I feel like it made it look like it was consultative; it looked like there were lots of

players and there weren't" (018). Further, while some institutions publish the names of the policymaking committee members, the proceedings are not necessarily publicly available.

Given the neoliberal governance structures at post-secondary institutions, members of the administration have undoubtedly played a central role in the development of the sexual violence policies. As Chapter 3 discusses, the neoliberal corporatization of post-secondary institutions has impacted their management structures and priorities in ways that have the potential to influence how administrators approach these policies. As one participant who was part of the policymaking process explained, "people in positions of power are not educators. Unfortunately, I don't think this is really an educational institution if you look at really what is valued here. [...] Because there is a separation between academics and business essentially, this is just any other kind of business" (018). From the participant's perspective, this business focus created tensions among committee members who

were raising questions about the priorities of the university and the priorities of those of us who are working on this issue. [...] Are you working to support survivors or are you here to support the university and worry about liability and tuition dollars, etc.? And there were very clear sides. (018)

Given these divergent interests, the level of administrative influence over the policymaking process could have significant implications in terms of whose interests are served by the policies.

One of the key features of this neoliberal approach to management is the assumption that faculty members do not share the same interests as the administration (CAUT, 2018a), which may affect the degree of faculty involvement and consultation in the development of the sexual violence policies. After being asked to join the policymaking committee, one faculty member described feeling "relieved because I know that at many universities, the people who actually had most expertise were not put on the committees, at least that's what I've heard" (025).

Similarly, a participant who teaches in gender studies at another institution questioned why faculty from the department had not been more involved in developing the sexual violence policy. The participant reasoned that the administration wants “to be able to control it and dictate what it is. I think that they know that [gender studies faculty] will be too critical and will probably tear it apart. [...] They probably just see us as activists who would kind of screw up the process, which we probably would” (029). The participant concluded that “the university sees feminists on campus not necessarily as allies and more as people that they have to keep away” (029). In this context, the ability of faculty members to contribute their knowledge and critical analysis of sexual violence in the development of these policies may be limited.

A member of a community-based anti-violence organization that often facilitates workshops and prevention efforts on campus expressed disappointment that the organization had not been consulted in the policymaking process. The participant explained that the organization has provided support and “talked to so many students and so we know from their experiences what isn’t working” and, as such, “we could lend voice to the survivors who have come from those institutions” through policy consultation (003). The participant attributed this lack of consultation to the possibility that the inherently political nature of the organization’s anti-violence work is at odds with the university’s policies “because for them I don’t necessarily think that it’s about supporting survivors but protecting the university” (003). Similarly, another participant suggested that their university’s decision to work with a particular organization was influenced by the fact that “they don’t have rape in the name so it’s one of the safer bets if you are going to get someone from the community” (005). Given these divergent interests, and their

extensive experience supporting survivors, the participant argued that the legislation should have mandated universities to consult anti-violence organizations that provide front-line services.

Bill 132 requires Ontario post-secondary institutions to consult students in the development and revision of their sexual violence policies. However, participants raised a number of issues regarding student consultations; chief among these was their accessibility. As one participant explained, “a lot of people say that the consultations that the university held were inaccessible, were held at very short notice. They were held during exam period, like April, and you had to sign up so there’s only a very limited amount of spots” (001). Further, several participants argued that student feedback was not reflected in the final policies and, as such, that the consultations were done as a symbolic gesture and as a means of meeting the legislative requirement rather than as a substantive engagement with students’ perspectives.

The majority of participants viewed student consultation as essential to the development of policies that respond to students’ lived realities. As one student activist explained,

I think it’s better to have a student-led initiative and, if they’re comfortable, a survivor-led initiative. For one, it could help them gain back that sense of control and everything, you know? And nobody knows it better than somebody who’s gone through it. I can’t have a 40-year-old come and tell me what I’m supposed to feel. (002)

Similarly, another participant argued that students are “both the age group that is most likely to be victimized or to victimize. So I think, again, those are the people that need to be teaching us about what the context is and then inform how we move forward” (018). However, one participant, who is a faculty member and participated in the policymaking process, recognized the importance of student involvement but questioned how much weight should be accorded to student perspectives in that “they think about their own personal experiences or maybe what they’ve heard from other students but they’re not terribly knowledgeable. So you have to be a

little bit careful about how much you're led by the students" (021). My conversations with students as part of this research confirms that they have a wide range of perspectives, knowledge, and experience related to sexual violence. While some students seemed to favour depoliticized and/or security-centred approaches to responding to sexual violence, others shared more critical perspectives, including intersectional analyses and responses. I would argue that on most campuses, these policies would not have been implemented in the first place if it were not for the student activists who have been fighting for decades to bring mainstream visibility and awareness to sexual violence. As such, perhaps the best approach is to expand student consultation to ensure that these different perspectives are represented and to create opportunities for students to dialogue with feminist scholars whose research addresses sexual violence, though administrative buy-in for this approach seems unlikely in the neoliberal institution.

Research participants also questioned whether students should be responsible for bearing the burden of providing input on the policies and demanding accountability from their institutions. As one student leader argued,

it shouldn't really be on students to do it. The university should have a mandate [...] to really do due diligence and ensure that their policy is 1) the best for students and 2) reflects the realities of students and what the people who are most affected by sexual assault and sexual violence would want to see in it. I think the fact that there's so many groups on campus who are doing this advocacy speaks to the resilience and strength of the students on campus but at the same time also speaks to institutional failures because if they're having to do this much work, that shows that the university isn't necessarily doing as much work as they should be doing on the issue. (001)

Other participants involved in student activism discussed the emotional labour as well as the challenge of balancing activism with their studies and other commitments. One student activist, whose work was unpaid and unrecognized by the institution, said, "it's not easy work either. It's so heartbreaking. It's hard work [and...] it drives me crazy that the administration doesn't

acknowledge that” (002). Thus while participants felt that student consultation is important, they argued that students should be fairly compensated and supported.

Participants argued that tensions between students and the administration present another challenge related to student engagement in the policymaking process. As one participant explained, student “union members feel as if they have to be antagonistic, right? And so when you have that stance, you come into a meeting that is about sexual violence and you’re just wanting to stick it to the administration and say they’re not doing this, they’re not doing that” (017). The participant argued that as elected student representatives, union members have a responsibility to engage with the administration: “if you have a beef with the university, whatever it is, you should still sit at that table [...] and give your concerns in a productive and courteous way” (017). Similar tensions also exist between student groups, which underscores the importance of conducting extensive student consultation. One participant, who is a student union member tasked with soliciting input from students to revise the sexual violence policy, said that

students are so critical [...] It’s hard because you’re trying to do something good but you can’t do it perfectly. [...] Different groups work at different speeds and some people are a bit more trusting of the institution than others for very valid reasons. [...] I think there’s a lot of historical friction between different groups and it’s just already there so we’ll just work with it however we can. (026)

A participant from another student union described the positive relationship that they had with the administration and the ways that they had collaborated on the sexual violence policy. They also noted that they had decided not to work with a broader student activist organization based on their perceived anti-administration stance, which would have been counter-productive to the collaborative relationship that they were fostering.

In addition to the level of student involvement in the policymaking process, participants expressed concern regarding how students are selected to participate. As one participant explained,

unfortunately, most administrations only offered one to two seats for students. They oftentimes would do one undergrad and one grad seat and leave it at that. [...] I think it was kind of shocking to see the number of campuses that just didn't even consider students needing to be at the table in the first place or having processes that were very much administrations hand-picking students that worked for them or that were in line with them to be those student voices as opposed to having thorough consultation, town halls, ways to get more students involved, and a diversity of voices around the table. (016)

Similarly, another participant argued that it is important to question

who is being given the opportunity because I know that in some cases when you see committees that have brought on a student, it's often a white, straight, cisgender student who is an A-student and friendly with faculty and was maybe hand-picked or personally invited. So I don't know that the voice of the student body is representative of the diversity of the student body. (028)

As such, the argument for greater student involvement is based not only on the need to represent different perspectives on sexual violence but also on the different lived realities of students. As a participant involved in a student activist organization explained, "there should be representation from international students, Indigenous students, students with disabilities, LGBTQ students. We really needed a holistic approach to make sure that these policies would be useful to any type of student experiencing these things" (016). In this sense, extensive student consultation may be understood as an essential part of ensuring that sexual violence policies live up to their stated commitments to intersectionality.

Research participants also pointed out that it is insufficient to simply include different perspectives in the policymaking process; rather, it is necessary to attend to how privilege and oppression function in these processes in ways that amplify the voices of some while minimizing

others. Participants who were part of the policymaking committee at one of the selected institutions expressed concern that the administrator selected as the committee chair was a “white, straight man” (018). One participant described his leadership as “disheartening to say the least. I’m not sure how he got that role but he was the one leading every meeting so that was kind of strange to me. There were other voices around the table that could have led—female, racialized—however it was a white male” (017). Further, the participant felt that the chair exercised his privilege to silence other committee members: “I felt that some voices were heard more than others. [...] I felt that it was a committee of strong women, strong voices, [and] sometimes those voices were not being heard, specifically racialized voices” (017). It is also important to acknowledge that these dynamics are not necessarily limited to the sexual violence policymaking committees and may instead be understood as a manifestation of the hierarchies embedded within institutions, including structural racism (see Henry et al., 2017).

Rather than understand the ineffectiveness of consultation and inclusion to translate into policymaking processes that meaningfully engage with power and difference as a failure, it may be understood as a strategy that lends legitimacy to the resultant policies without addressing these underlying institutional hierarchies. Ahmed (2014) argues that

consultation becomes an organizational ideal: it suggests an organization is being responsive and has an open ear [...] but if the document goes out for consultation, it does not necessarily mean people’s comments will be included in the redrafting. One of the risks of consultation is that it can legitimize the document as collective without necessarily being collective [...] 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. (93-94)

In this sense, critical faculty, students, and staff may refuse to participate in these consultations to avoid having their critique absorbed in ways that lend legitimacy to the policymaking process

and resulting policies. While consultation is undoubtedly important, its value must be measured not only by the number of consultations but also the degree to which the perspectives of those who are consulted are actually reflected in the policy.

Conceptualizing sexual violence

In order to analyze whether universities are actually doing what it is that they claim to be doing in their sexual violence policies, it is important to first establish the content of these claims. To do so, I analyzed how sexual violence is being conceptualized in the policies at all of the public universities in Ontario (see Appendix B). The majority of the universities have adopted the definition of sexual violence employed by the provincial government in Bill 132.

According to this definition, sexual violence

means any sexual act or act targeting a person's sexuality, gender identity or gender expression, whether the act is physical or psychological in nature, that is committed, threatened or attempted against a person without the person's consent, and includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism and sexual exploitation. (Section 17(1))

The widespread adoption of this definition is unsurprising given that the majority of institutions developed their sexual violence policies in response to this legislation. Institutions that already had sexual violence policies in place or were in the process of developing them prior to the legislation are also required to comply.

There are a few notable exceptions. Gender identity and gender expression are conspicuously absent in Brock University's (Brock) citation of the government definition of sexual violence, though they are included in their definition of sexual harassment. Ryerson University's (Ryerson) policy expands the government definition to include "degrading sexual imagery, distribution of images or video of a community member without their consent, and

cyber harassment or cyber stalking of a sexual nature” (section iv), though what constitutes ‘degrading’ imagery is unclear and reminiscent of the language used by anti-pornography feminists during the sex wars (Rubin, 2011; Khan, 2014). While there is significant overlap with the government’s definition of sexual violence, the University of Windsor’s (U Windsor) policy refers instead to sexual misconduct, which they define as “an umbrella term encompassing all forms of sexually inappropriate behaviour and sexual violence” (section 4.1) and elaborate with a long list of examples. Trent University (Trent) references the government definition of sexual violence but also includes the issue of ‘stealthing,’ which refers to the non-consensual removal of a condom during sexual activity (Mullin, 2017).

The majority of my interview participants were pleased with the broad scope of the definition of sexual violence in these policies. As one participant who was involved in the policymaking process argued, “what we were trying to do was to ensure that a wide continuum of sexual violence was represented and that it was not required that people understood legal definitions of anything in order to use it” (025). However, participants disagreed about whether this broad conceptualization of sexual violence should be organized in terms of severity or seriousness. For example, one participant stated:

I think the very least we could do is break it up into a range of experience rather than just ‘anything over this line is sexual violence.’ [...] Touching somebody’s bum when they’re walking by is not the same as beating someone to an inch of their life and raping them. That’s not the same but I think those things are being collapsed and I think that does a disservice to people who’ve had those worse experiences. (006)

Further, the participant questioned the value of encouraging people to “make sense of that experience, even just minor, as victimization” (006). On the other hand, a participant asserted: “we don’t entertain ideas of what’s worse and what’s less worse. No, anything without consent is

a form of sexual violence, it's reprehensible, and [...] the person experiencing that deserves some form of recourse and some form of support" (016). Similarly, another participant problematized the language of 'seriousness':

I love Liz Kelly's work on the sexual violence continuum and so many times in recent years I've seen her ideas about the continuum used in ways that she actually contradicted. [...] She specifically says this is not a continuum of seriousness. She makes the point that repeated sexual harassment over every day of your life may well be experienced [...] as debilitating compared to someone who is sexually assaulted on one occasion and the rest of their life is relatively straightforward and so it is able to stay in its place. It has consequences but not through their whole lives. And so we also removed wherever possible in the policy, or tried to, this idea that certain things are more serious than others, which I saw in lots of policies. (025 [see Kelly, 1987])

Another participant explained how their institution framed sexual violence in a holistic, non-linear way based on the interconnections of its various forms. The participant preferred this model "because you can't dismiss verbal abuse so easily because it does contribute to [...] rape culture" (026). The potential benefits and limitations of adopting a broad definition of sexual violence are elaborated in the following sections and chapters.

Beyond the stated definitions, the language used throughout the policies provides a broader sense of how sexual violence is being conceptualized. Several institutions, including Algoma University (Algoma), Brock, Laurentian University (Laurentian), the Royal Military College (RMC), Trent, Guelph University (Guelph), and U of O have identity-neutral sexual violence policies. In these policies, there is no acknowledgement of the gendered nature of sexual violence or of the fact that cisgender men perpetrate the majority of sexual violence. There is also no recognition of the ways in which vulnerability to sexual violence and the ability to access supports are shaped by its intersections with systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989). On one hand, this neutral framing could be read as an effort to expand the definition of sexual

violence to include the experiences of those who do not conform to the ‘ideal’ survivor, including queer, trans, and non-binary survivors, as well as cisgender men. However, as Linder (2017) explains, “failing to explicitly name other genders as victims [...] perpetuates the uninterrogated ideal that [cisgender] women are victims and [cisgender] men are perpetrators” (p. 73). Further, by failing to address the intersections of sexual violence with systems of oppression, this framing does little to address the ways in which the experiences of survivors who racialized, Indigenous, poor, and/or disabled, for example, are rendered invisible. This identity-neutral framing thus reproduces the notion that sexual violence is an individual interpersonal issue and conceals the complex power relations inherent in sexual violence (Harris & Linder, 2017). As discussed in Chapter 1, this identity-neutral framing is well-suited to the neoliberal interests of post-secondary institutions.

Other institutions acknowledge the uneven distribution of vulnerability to sexual violence. Carleton’s policy simply states that “individuals who are members of equity-seeking groups who experience intersecting forms of disadvantage [...] may be disproportionately affected by sexual violence and its consequences” (Article 1.1) but does not elaborate. Some institutions go beyond this acknowledgement to specifically name those who face heightened vulnerability to sexual violence. For example, U of T’s policy recognizes that

sexual violence is overwhelmingly committed against women, and in particular women who experience the intersection of multiple identities such as, but not limited to, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, and racialized women [...as well as] those whose gender identity and gender expression does not conform to historical gender norms.

Ryerson uses the same language in their policy but also explicitly names black women and trans women. The Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD) uses similar language in their policy

but they recognize the heightened vulnerability of immigrants and refugees as well. These examples usefully expand the parameters of sexual violence beyond the ‘ideal’ survivor not only in terms of gender, but also in terms of other categories of identity. However, only referencing intersectionality in terms of individual identity and heightened vulnerability risks reproducing harmful pathologizing narratives. As Hunt (2016) explains,

if Indigenous people are mentioned in literature about sexual assault at universities, it is often as one of a list of ‘marginalized’ or ‘at risk’ groups. [...] Absent any information about colonization, this naturalizes risk upon the bodies of Indigenous peoples and ignores our leadership in resisting sexual violence. (p. 7)

This pathologizing framing functions to distance settlers from the vulnerability of Indigenous women rather than address their implicatedness in colonial structures and systems that produce vulnerability (Dean, 2015).

Some policies illustrate how the intersections of sexual violence and systems of oppression may shape survivors’ experiences. McMaster University (McMaster), for example, argues that “survivors of sexual violence may have different degrees of confidence in institutional services and remedies (e.g. courts, police, and official authorities) because of their associations of such institutions with sexism, colonialism, racism, and other forms of systemic oppression” (Section 1, article 7c.). York’s policy also acknowledges the intersections between sexual violence and systems of oppression and that these intersections can contribute to barriers to reporting and seeking support. As such, they strive for survivors “to receive survivor-driven supports and services appropriate to their social identities, including race, Indigeneity, economic status, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, language, age, ancestry, ethnicity, ability, faith and/or immigration status” (Article 4.11). Further, the University of Western Ontario (Western), WLU, the University of Waterloo (Waterloo), Ryerson, Queen’s, Nipissing

University (Nipissing), Lakehead University (Lakehead), UOIT, York, and McMaster commit to taking an intersectional or anti-oppressive approach in developing prevention and education efforts. Understanding whether and how these institutional commitments to intersectionality translate in practice is one of the overarching questions of this dissertation.

In addition to intersectionality, I analyzed the policies for references to rape culture as an indication of potential engagement with radical feminist analyses of sexual violence. The policies at Ryerson, Laurentian, Carleton, and Trent define rape culture as “a culture in which dominant ideas, social practices, media images and societal institutions implicitly or explicitly condone sexual assault by normalizing or trivializing sexual violence and by blaming survivors for their own abuse.” York includes a slightly reworded version of the same definition in their policy. These de-gendered references to rape culture differ significantly from its roots in radical feminism (Brownmiller, 1975). By contrast, while the policies at OCAD and U of O do not make explicit reference to rape culture, they acknowledge “broader societal attitudes about gender, sex, and sexuality that normalize sexual violence and undermine women’s equality.” Though referencing women’s equality recognizes the gendered nature of sexual violence, it also highlights one of the potential limitations of rape culture as a concept rooted in radical feminist analyses in that it re-centres gender and obscures the ways in which other systems of oppression shape vulnerability and experiences of sexual violence (Warren, 2016; Phipps et al., 2017).

The inclusion of rape culture in the sexual violence policies was the subject of debate among my interview participants. A student activist explained that when they petitioned their institution to include rape culture in their policy, they responded by “saying ‘no, it doesn’t exist here’ [...] but that’s not true; it’s literally everyday. [...] If you’re not acknowledging that it’s

there, you can't start to work against it and make that shift from rape culture to consent culture" (002). Thus from the participant's perspective, acknowledging the existence of rape culture on campus is essential to addressing sexual violence. However, another participant challenged the politics of rape culture as a concept based on its association with the totalizing way that the so-called sex-negative radical feminists understand cisgender women's sexuality (Dworkin, 2007). The participant explained that the popularity of rape culture as a concept "was worrying to me because I thought it sounded very like second-wave feminism in the way that [...] is anti-sex work because it understands heterosexual sex as inherently violent" (p. 006). As such, while the concept of rape culture is prevalent in mainstream discourses about campus sexual violence, it is important to consider the impact of its deployment, not only in terms of how it constructs cisgender women's sexuality but also how it may obscure experiences of sexual violence outside of this normative framing.

Other institutions do not address rape culture in their policies but do include references to rape myths. For example, UOIT argues that rape myths

contribute to a social context in which individuals who experience Sexual Violence may blame themselves for what happened, worry that they will not be believed, and may reduce reports of Sexual Violence. These misconceptions contribute to victim-blaming responses that excuse perpetrators for their actions. (Article 2)

U Windsor's policy uses similar language but refers to survivors rather than 'individuals who experience sexual violence.' WLU combines the language of both concepts by suggesting that their education and awareness efforts will "address prevalent myths about Sexual Violence that function to blame and stigmatize Survivors, and perpetuate a culture in which this violence is normalized" (Appendix B). These policies do not account for the ways in which rape myths are shaped by racism, colonialism, heteronormativity, and ableism, for example, and how this

impacts survivors' experiences reporting sexual violence and accessing support (Crenshaw, 1991; Anderson, 2000).

While references to intersectionality, rape culture, and rape myths signal conceptualizations of sexual violence that acknowledge its structural and systemic dimensions, albeit in contradictory ways, the policies did not necessarily reflect on how these structures and systems are embedded within academic institutions. As one participant suggested, "I think for it to be talking about structural issues would be too self-critical maybe" (026). This gesture of condemning campus sexual violence without acknowledging how it is institutionally embedded recalls Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of non-performativity and has the effect of constructing the institution as a neutral space (Hunt, 2016).

Most institutions used the language of 'survivor' in their policies, which is also the term used by the majority of my research participants. However, some used more depoliticized terms; for example, the policies at U of T, Waterloo, and UOIT do not use the terms 'victim' or 'survivor' and instead refer to individuals who experience or have been affected by sexual violence. The term 'complainant' is also commonly used to describe a survivor who has made a report of sexual violence through the formal processes established by these policies. The term 'respondent' is commonly used to refer to the person formally accused of perpetrating an act of sexual violence. For one interview participant, the use of the term 'complainant' demonstrates the extent to which these policies are not survivor-centric. As the participant explained, "you are framing people who are going to go through this process as 'oh they're complaining' and then they have to justify themselves continually. Just from the get-go, it's painting this kind of negative picture or it's not encouraging for people to want to pursue this" (026). However, the

use of the term ‘survivor’ in the context of formal reporting processes has also been criticized for presupposing the guilt of the respondent (Kipnis, 2017). In this sense, the use of these terms illustrates not only the quasi-judicial nature of the reporting processes but also institutions’ careful attention to ensuring that these processes appear to respect ‘fairness’ and ‘due process,’ which is likely related to the complaints about Title IX investigations in the United States.

This is far from an exhaustive account of the content and the differences and similarities between the sexual violence policies at public universities in Ontario. These examples illustrate that although the majority of policies employ the provincial government’s definition, differences in the way that they approach and conceptualize sexual violence become apparent when the deployment of intersectional language and concepts such as rape culture are examined. Further, while some of the policies incorporate the language of intersectionality, rather than accept this commitment at face value, it is essential to analyze whether it actually translates in practice in institutional responses to sexual violence, particularly given the institutional incorporation of intersectionality (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016) and the ways in which these references might function to construct universities as being particularly ‘progressive.’

The utility and effectiveness of sexual violence policies

One of the key questions that I asked interview participants was whether the new sexual violence policies are effective, which generated interesting discussions regarding the role and utility of institutional policies. In general, the interview participants expressed mixed feelings on this subject. Some highlighted the role that policy plays in indicating institutions’ commitment to addressing sexual violence. One participant argued that “anyone who reads it learns something about what the university’s values are in that moment and what the university cares about and

how they care” (025). The participant suggested that the policies also provide an indication about whether this “is a deep or it’s a shallow commitment, because sometimes policies show that it’s a shallow commitment and that’s important to know too” (025). Similarly, another participant asserted that the value of the policy flowed from the process through which it was created in that “the intentions in drafting it were very powerful and important” (023). Given that for many years institutions were reluctant to address sexual violence for fear of being labelled ‘the rape school’ (016), this public commitment could be read as progress, particularly at institutions where policy development preceded the legislation that made them mandatory.

However, in the context of heightened public attention to the issue of campus sexual violence, this public commitment is also an important means of projecting a particular image of the institution that is necessary to compete for scarce tuition dollars. As one participant suggested, it is, “from the university’s perspective, a tool that they hope that they can use to keep us out of the newspapers” (021). Further, given that student organizations such as Our Turn (2017) and various media outlets have ranked institutions’ policies comparatively, having sexual violence policies that rank well is another area in which universities can bolster their reputation. As such, having a strong policy might serve as evidence of an institution’s commitment to addressing sexual violence without necessarily translating into practice in a way that meets the needs of survivors or substantively addresses how sexual violence is institutionally embedded.

In this sense, participants asserted that the value of these commitments must be measured based not on what the policies say, but on what they do. As one participant explained,

institutions can kind of point to it as [...] ‘this is what we’re committed to doing in terms of sexual harassment or sexual assault’ but I feel like if you have no actions that flow from that or no services that are available, then it’s really pointless. [...] I think in some

cases it just becomes very performative¹⁵ in the sense that it's just there so that we can say that 'we've done this, look how good we are for having this kind of policy' but it's not manifest in the culture. (031)

Similarly, a participant argued that without substantive action, the policies are “just paper. They're like laws; they don't actually prevent anything at all and if that's all you're doing then it's not even close to enough” (025). The extent to which the commitments made in these policies translate into practice will be analyzed in greater detail in the following chapters.

One participant suggested that the policies themselves might have educational value in that “a policy that shows the broad continuum of sexual violence is educating the people who read it that there is broad continuum and that it doesn't have to be penetration and that it doesn't have to be this particular constellation for it to be serious” (025). In this sense, a strong policy can expand the way that sexual violence is understood. In so doing, the policy might also enable those whose experiences of sexual violence fall outside of this narrow definition or who do not conform to the construct of the ‘ideal’ survivor to access support. However, this educational potential may be limited by the fact that the majority of my interview participants had not directly engaged with the policy and several described it as being inaccessible to students.

Participants also pointed out that the policies serve to outline institutions' processes for investigating and adjudicating formal complaints of sexual violence. As one participant explained, “it really would be incredibly disheartening to have no policy and not be able to hold people to account when there is a desire to hold them to account” (021). Another participant argued that prior to the introduction of the policy, the process for responding to sexual violence complaints was “not survivor-centric [...and] so opaque that nobody knew what the process

¹⁵ This use of ‘performative’ appears to refer to the policy as being like a window dressing without substance rather than as a performative speech act in the way that Austin (1955) theorizes.

was” (025). Thus the policy plays an important role in outlining the process “so somebody can walk into that formal complaint fully knowledgeable and not have the surprise that most of us had in the years previous where you would tell somebody and the next thing you knew, the whole world would be turned upside-down” (025). Similarly, another participant claimed that “before the policy came into play, it was very much ‘we call the police right away’ [...] and that’s how the process used to work” whereas the policy theoretically provides survivors with the option to receive support without filing a formal complaint or engaging with police (027).

However, one participant argued that their sexual violence policy is not survivor-centric or accessible and does not clearly outline this process. As the participant explained,

they don’t really go into when you actually decide to report, what it looks like. Timelines, what your rights are, who you would be in contact with [...], the legal implications, they just really don’t go into that. If I was reading that as a survivor who wanted to go through it, I would be pretty intimidated and it’s this black hole and you’re kind of putting your faith in [the university] when you decide to go down that road. (026)

Given the legal language of these policies, some institutions have developed companion modules or guides to make them more accessible to students, faculty, and staff. However, some participants noted that these modules are not particularly useful due to issues of accessibility and the fact that they are voluntary and not well-advertised.

Participants were also critical of the fact that the policies focus primarily on responding to sexual violence once it has already occurred and there is very little content on prevention efforts. One participant argued that policies are “acting retroactively. So you’re always acting in response to something that you wish had never happened in the first place [...] ideally what would be effective [...] is preventing this problem in the first place” (010). Similarly, another participant said:

there doesn't appear to have been much of a desire to make prevention a big part of these policies, which I found to be bizarre. They mention prevention but it's really in passing in comparison to these sort of court-like processes that are very detailed in terms of their description in the policy. (006)

On one hand, it is possible to read this emphasis on response rather than prevention as a signal of the shallowness of institutional commitment to actually addressing campus sexual violence.

However, one participant suggested that institutional commitments to prevention are perhaps better-suited to a strategic mandate document rather than policy, and, as such, it is possible that institutions have detailed these commitments elsewhere.

Other participants pointed to the fact that the policies were, in many cases, developed in response to the legislation. One participant stated: "I don't think that [the university] cares about survivors. I think that they care about meeting the requirements, checking that off and if they were to get audited by the powers that be or whatever that process looks like, they're covered" (005). Similarly, another participant who was involved in the policymaking process argued that "it's all about satisfying the requirements. What's the bare minimum that we need to do? Is there a way to do this so that it makes us look good? It seemed to be completely reactive" (018). In this sense, participants suggested that the policies did not necessarily represent a genuine commitment to addressing sexual violence but rather served to fulfil their legal mandate.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the new sexual violence policies at Ontario universities are not neutral but rather are produced through processes laden with complex power relations. These power relations shape whose perspectives and interests are represented and who is excluded or silenced in the policymaking process. In the context of the neoliberal corporatization of the university, these processes appear to be largely administratively-driven, which raises

serious questions regarding the extent to which the resultant policies function to project a particular image of the institution and fulfil a legal mandate rather than representing a genuine commitment to transforming the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded. In this sense, while some of the policies include commitments to intersectional responses to sexual violence, the value of these commitments must be assessed on the basis of how these policies translate into practice, starting with the policymaking process.

While the majority of Ontario universities employ the same definition of sexual violence in their policies, they differ in terms of how they address identity. Several institutions have adopted identity-neutral language, which appears to be inclusive but fails to engage with the gendered nature of sexual violence and its intersections with systems of oppression (Harris & Linder, 2017). While other policies reference intersectionality, in some cases this reference is limited to heightened vulnerability, which risks reproducing harmful pathologizing narratives (Hunt, 2016). Some policies commit institutions to approaching support services and prevention efforts from an intersectional analysis. However, in the context of the institutional incorporation of intersectionality (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016), these commitments may function to distinguish the university as particularly 'progressive' without necessarily translating into practice, and could therefore be understood as non-performative (Ahmed, 2014).

Finally, this chapter discusses participants' perspectives on the utility and effectiveness of sexual violence policies. Some participants argued that the policies are valuable as a means of educating members of the university community about the support services available on campus and the formal reporting process. However, given that the Ontario campus climate survey, which was conducted over a year after the sexual violence policies were implemented, found that few

students knew how to access support or file a report (CCI Research, 2019), it is clear that this potential is not being realized. Further, participants raised concerns regarding the accessibility of the policies and whether their institutions are motivated by a genuine commitment to addressing sexual violence. As such, the following chapter analyzes whether these commitments to addressing sexual violence, and to intersectionality in particular, translate into practice with reference to universities' support services for survivors and formal reporting processes, or whether they are indeed 'just paper' (025).

Chapter 5: Institutional responses to sexual violence

As the previous chapter demonstrates, the new policies address the mandate created by Bill 132 and serve to publicly signal universities' commitment to addressing sexual violence. The policies also establish how institutions plan to respond to sexual violence through the creation of formal reporting processes and supports for survivors. The policies generally differentiate between informal disclosures of sexual violence and formal reports. In theory, survivors are able to access supports and accommodation through informal disclosures and should have the right to determine whether or not they would like to proceed with a formal report.¹⁶ When a formal report is filed, an investigation is triggered through the processes established in the sexual violence policies. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the differences between institutions' processes for responding to disclosures and reports, it is useful to highlight some of my interview participants' perspectives on these processes and on the supports available for survivors to illustrate whether and how the commitments articulated in the policies are translating into practice.

I begin this chapter by discussing my research participants' perspectives on support services for survivors. Specifically, I consider the extent to which these services are accessible and grounded in an intersectional analysis of sexual violence, as well as the various challenges that staff in sexual violence support roles face. I conclude that the administration often constrains the ability of staff to support survivors through strict oversight, inadequate support, and

¹⁶ The policies typically outline circumstances under which the institution may proceed with a formal investigation and/or involve the police without the consent of the survivor, such as when the sexual assault is deemed to pose a threat to the university community. Student activists have criticized the general language used in these sections of the policy and argued that it is unclear what criteria will be used to establish such a threat and who has the power to make that determination.

unreasonable workloads and that these constraints must be read as an indication of the shallowness of institutional commitments to addressing sexual violence.

Drawing on my interview findings, this chapter also briefly addresses the formal reporting processes developed in conjunction with the sexual violence policies. Participants discussed a number of challenges and concerns related to these processes and highlighted the ways in which they fail to meet the needs of many survivors, particularly those who are marginalized within the institution. I conclude the chapter by considering the potential benefits and limitations of implementing alternative justice approaches within the context of post-secondary institutions.

Support services for survivors of sexual violence

Research participants pointed to the creation or expansion of support services for survivors on campus as one of the outcomes of the sexual violence policies. As one participant explained, “before we had a policy, you could google our website until very recently and you would find nothing [...] If something had just happened to you, you couldn’t figure [out] what you could do, so policy also has that function of making resources visible” (025). At many institutions in Ontario, the sexual violence policies have coincided with the creation of a specific staff position to address sexual violence and some of the larger institutions have created separate sexual violence offices with multiple staff members.

On one hand, the creation of these staff positions dedicated to addressing sexual violence can be read as an important step toward ensuring that survivors on campus are supported and as an indication that the policies are actually doing what claim to be doing. On the other hand, in the context of diversity work, Ahmed (2017) warns that hiring someone to transform the

institution does not necessarily mean that the institution is willing to be transformed. As she explains,

diversity work becomes embodied in the diversity worker: institutions do this work insofar as they employ somebody to do this work. [...] An appointment can even be about an appearance: being given a diversity mandate might be how an institution appears willing to be transformed. (p. 94)

In this sense, creating sexual violence support staff positions does not necessarily reflect willingness to address the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded and in fact may serve to stand in for such transformation. This is not to say that the work done by these staff members is not important, but rather that the institution can point to this labour as a symbol of transformation without actually transforming.

In general, participants spoke highly of the staff tasked with providing support services on their campuses. One participant said that “when it comes to supporting survivors and being a navigator for students, they’re incredible” (027). Another participant felt that the staff were “absolutely committed and I think that’s lost sometimes when you have other clubs or unions that think that they’re not doing enough” (017). I also interviewed students who had accessed supports from these staff members and most described their experiences as positive. One participant went as far as to claim that the staff member had “saved my academic career” (007). While participants generally spoke favourably about the staff in sexual violence support roles, they raised a number of important challenges and considerations that may impact these services.

One of the biggest challenges that participants articulated was the accessibility of support services. On one hand, a participant who works in a sexual violence support role argued that the broad definition of sexual violence makes support services more accessible:

[the policy] has been written broadly enough that it has captured the scope of experience for people who have come to me. Now it doesn't capture the scope for all people. If people have, you know, historical experiences, they might not have the option of filing complaints, but in terms of having access to resources and supports, I've never had to turn someone away on the principle of 'oh, I don't think your experience falls within our policy'. [...] I think that students are connecting with it and using the resources, faculty and staff less so, though that's also to be expected because proportionally they are experiencing likely less violence overall. (010)

Another participant suggested that the identity-neutral language in their sexual violence policy makes support services more accessible: "I don't think anyone is excluded because it doesn't specify your race, your ethnicity, whatever, right? In terms of supports and services, no one is really excluded because everyone has the opportunity to reach out" (017). Participants also pointed out that prior to the creation of the sexual violence policies, support services for survivors on many campuses were limited and/or fragmented. In theory, the creation of these new support roles and offices is meant to address this fragmentation and centralize services to make it easier for survivors to access support.

On the other hand, some participants argued that the support services on campus continue to be inaccessible because many students are unaware of their existence. As one student participant explained, "I think that people don't know that [the support staff] is there until it's too late" (007). Similarly, another student participant felt that "there's no one really talking about sexual violence on campus. [...] There are resources that are available but nobody really knows about them" (019). Participants also cited the inaccessibility of the policy language and described trying to navigate the processes and resources outlined in the policy as "overwhelming" (011). Some participants linked this inaccessibility to the administration's investment in preserving the institution's public image and reputation. For example, one participant stated: "I don't think [...] that the school wants people to know about this just because it's a headache for them to have to

deal with” (026). The participant went on to explain that the inaccessibility of the policy translated into the physical inaccessibility of the sexual violence support office:

it’s really hidden [and...] I could not find it. [...] Why are we hiding this all the time? It’s happening and then if people do need the service or when they need the service, they know it’s there. Because as of now, you wouldn’t know where to find it and as a new student maybe you don’t even know this exists. (026)

As these examples demonstrate, the utility of the sexual violence policy and the associated support services and response processes may be limited by a lack of awareness, which could potentially be remedied with greater visibility and education.

Some of the faculty and staff members that I interviewed also expressed uncertainty regarding the support services and response processes outlined in the sexual violence policies. One participant, who teaches in gender studies, said that while teaching assistants in the department frequently receive disclosures from students, they have not been provided with any training on the new policy or the supports available on campus. The sense of uncertainty about how to respond to disclosures left the participant with the impression that although the teaching assistants wanted to be helpful,

there’s this feeling of like there’s nothing we can do or we’re not supposed to be held responsible so we should just pass it on to the next person, which is just a counsellor or campus police [...] but I think when you’re in that culture people feel like they can’t do anything and just nothing happens. It’s just more silence. (029)

The lack of training for faculty and staff on how to respond to disclosures and assist students in accessing supports not only leaves them feeling uncertain, but also has the potential to contribute to negative responses. As one participant explained,

I think now more than ever professors need to start getting training on how to receive disclosures. I’ve had a lot of people tell me ‘last year I disclosed to a professor via email or I talked to them in person and they told me it’s really difficult to file a complaint and

do you really want to do that?’ And I’m like how are these still the responses that students are getting? (022)

As these examples demonstrate, the need for education on the sexual violence policy and support services is not limited to students. Some institutions, including York and U of T, have released online modules that aim to address this gap. However, the modules are voluntary and not well-advertised so their utility may be limited.

Participants also discussed the accessibility of support services with reference to the intersections of sexual violence and systems of oppression. As one participant explained,

if you’re talking about identity, in terms of socio-economic, in terms of sexuality, in terms of race, I don’t know that there’s that understanding at the university level, just taking in all of those factors and why it may be difficult for one survivor versus another to come forward or to access different services. (003)

Several participants highlighted the importance of seeing their identities reflected in the staff members hired to provide support services. For example, one participant said that while the sexual violence policy includes intersectional language, “you then need to structurally address that, not just address it in policy. [...] How do you think about that as a queer person, as an Indigenous person? [...] The biggest thing would be having counsellors that can deal with different types of sexual violence” (026). Similarly, another participant expressed that “it’s important for people when they are coming into these spaces to see people of their own colour and I’m glad to see that they’ve hired some racialized individuals on staff. I did see a male there one time when I went there, which is good too because men do experience sexual violence” (017). As such, some participants felt that the way that institutions approach hiring is an indication of the extent to which commitments to intersectionality translate into practice.

Other participants argued that while hiring is important, it is not sufficient to address the barriers that marginalized survivors may face in accessing support. For example, one participant claimed that while their institution had hired counsellors “from various backgrounds, various religions and sexualities and orientations,” the office “doesn’t do a good enough job of showing the fact that it can support people of various backgrounds” and, as such, more effort needs to be made to address intersectionality in the promotion of counselling services (027). Another participant pointed out that identity alone did not guarantee that support staff would approach sexual violence from an intersectional perspective:

just because you see that someone working there is a black woman and you’re a black woman, doesn’t make you think ‘Oh, they’re intersectional or they understand this,’ right? So I think they need to actually put out written materials to talk about who they are, where they come from, how they identify—not just the people working there but their philosophy, their mission. (003)

Further, another participant highlighted the importance of validating the fact that marginalized survivors “deserve to seek support as well” and of de-pathologizing the barriers that they may experience (030). As the participant explained,

I don’t think that it’s anyone’s fault if people don’t feel like they’re included because it’s just how we’re taught to identify with certain things. And that’s why it’s important to have a certain community set priorities for themselves when it comes to talking about how they access support and care just because [...] there may be fears they have about disclosing that make them feel like they’ll never be part of a supportive community of survivors or people who care about survivors. (030)

As an illustration, the participant discussed work that they are doing with Muslim students to understand how their student-run support services can better serve their particular needs.

In addition to these accessibility concerns, participants cited administrative oversight as a factor that may limit the level of support that staff can provide. One participant argued that

the problem is that we still have certain people who are [...] in control and who are making the policies and are so disconnected. And so it makes it really hard when you have well-meaning, well-intentioned people in the office who are providing counselling, who are providing workshops. [...] They're coming up with a great campaign but it has to pass through five hoops before they can institute it. (003)

Another participant who previously worked in a support staff role described being micromanaged and effectively blocked by the administration on several projects: "I really felt like nothing got done between January and August and that was fine with them" (018). As such, regardless of how well-intentioned sexual violence support staff are, their efforts may be constrained by the administration. This administrative oversight can be understood as a response to the threat that the support staff may pose to the institution's reputation. As Ahmed (2017) explains, "the diversity worker could be described as an institutional killjoy. [...] She too poses a problem because she keeps exposing a problem" (99). Thus while having support staff is critical to the university's ability to project the image of taking sexual violence seriously, their work must be carefully managed to ensure that it does not draw attention to the way that sexual violence is institutionally embedded.

Several participants raised questions regarding institutions' priorities when hiring staff to provide support to survivors of sexual violence. One participant argued that "they seem to want to hire people internally based on their experience navigating the institutional structures rather than experience supporting survivors or actually addressing sexual violence" (030). Another participant, who has a graduate degree in gender studies and extensive experience working in community anti-violence organizations, remarked: "I feel like if I was a president of a club, I would have more chance of being hired" (005). The practice of hiring staff from within the institution rather than those with direct experience raises concerns about the level and quality of

support that survivors will receive. It may also stem from the administration's desire to maintain a de-politicized approach to sexual violence; by hiring someone from within the institution, they may be less likely to challenge the administration. That said, post-secondary institutions can be challenging to navigate and someone with institutional experience may actually be better able to leverage the administration.

It is important to acknowledge that there are notable exceptions, including, as several participants pointed out, the hiring of Farrah Khan, a well-known queer woman of colour community anti-violence organizer, at Ryerson. However, Ahmed (2017) would likely argue that this hiring is not immune to the challenges that she describes; she notes that “those who do not quite inhabit the norms of the institution are often those given the task of transforming these norms” (p. 135). As one participant suggested, “there’s been sort of a [...] blurring between grassroots and administrative personnel so that now university administrations are hiring grassroots people to be part of their mechanisms of dealing with or preventing sexual violence” (006).

This is not to say that the anti-violence work done by staff does not have transformative potential but that the institution may take up that work as a sign of transformation in and of itself. As Ahmed (2017) explains, “feminist work in addressing institutional failure is appropriated as evidence of institutional success. The very labor of feminist critique ends up supporting what you critique. The work you do to expose what is not being done is used as evidence of what has been done” (p. 111). One participant acknowledged the possibility that their anti-violence labour was being used to improve the image of their institution but argued that

at the end of the day, I’m less concerned about why they’re doing it and more concerned about the fact that they’re doing it. And once that opportunity has presented itself, we’re

going to maximize all of that potential that exists in that opportunity. [...] I am strategic; if they're going to open a window for us to do radical intersectional work, we're going to take it. (023)

Despite the possibility that this critical work will be appropriated by the institution, Ahmed (2017) argues that it is important to continue exposing the violence of the institution to make the institution more liveable for those who were “never meant to survive” (Lorde, 1978, p. 31). However, Ahmed (2017) also characterizes this work as having to constantly keep pushing and suggests that the labour required could render this work unsustainable, particularly when it is placed on those who are already marginalized within the institution.

Several research participants suggested that staff in sexual violence support roles are tasked with an unrealistic workload. At many institutions in Ontario, a single staff member is responsible for the work of receiving disclosures, supporting survivors, helping them navigate the formal reporting processes, and implementing prevention initiatives. As one participant argued, “that’s too big of a job. I really think that’s sort of a bundling up and thinking ‘ok, we’ve taken care of that’” (021). Another participant said that the job postings for sexual assault advocate positions “mak[e] you want to throw up because they’ve got five jobs [...] and usually they’re selected for one of those jobs, right? Their expertise is probably in one or two of those” (025). This unrealistic workload may serve to limit the capacity of the support staff to critique the institution. As one participant who is currently employed in a contract support staff position explained,

universities now have these policies and these people in place but they only want to hire one person [...] you can barely cover your shit if it’s one person because you have to see students, you have to run programming; that’s enough on its own. But figuring out how to fix the programming, how to institute change that we want, is a whole other thing. (028)

The participant also argued that employing support staff in short-term contracts is unsustainable because it impacts their ability to be taken seriously within the institution and affects the long-term consistency of the support services that they are able to provide.

Further, participants noted that the staff members in these positions often do not receive adequate institutional support. One participant who was previously employed in a sexual violence support role argued that there is an urgent need for more opportunities for staff in these positions to connect and for “more support for people in this position because it seems like we are quite isolated, purposely” (018). Another participant felt that it is important to consider “not just offering hours for therapy but also who is accountable for checking in on these people? Who debriefs with these people? Because oftentimes you’re the one person counsellor and who do you talk to” (028)? The participant concluded that “we’re just a few more breakdowns from somebody kind of realizing that you can’t just have one person doing this work” (028). Ahmed (2017) reads this lack of institutional support as a sign of the shallowness of institutional willingness to transform and suggests that it is as though “being ‘just there’ is enough” (p. 95). These arguments seem to be supported by the high rate of turnover that I have observed in these staff positions at local institutions over the last few years.

In addition to the support provided by university administrations, there are also student-run support services available on many campuses. Participants highlighted the complex relationships that exist between student-run support services and the administration. For example, one participant expressed frustration that the administration does not provide funding for the student-run support line but are eager to claim their labour:

anytime someone says ‘there’s a sexual assault at [...the university], what is [...the university] doing?’ The communications spokesperson will come on and say ‘we have a

24-hour student support line and it's always available.' And it's like really? You're going to pawn it off on the students who are volunteering? That's unacceptable. (018)

Another participant who works at a student-run service argued that rather than providing their organization with support, the administration essentially replicated the work that they have been doing for over three decades. As the participant explained,

one of the challenges of being student-run or peer-led is that [...] you don't necessarily get to move up in some ways. It becomes a job for some people and I guess that's what we're kind of disappointed about because we do have passion about it and some people are survivors. [...] How do we get fairly compensated for the work we're doing? (030)

As these examples illustrate, appropriating and rendering student labour invisible is a central technology through which the institution produces itself as committed to responding sexual violence. Further, these examples raise questions about how the creation of sexual violence support staff and/or offices on Canadian university campuses replicates the neoliberal professionalization of anti-violence services (Bumiller, 2008; Linder, 2018).

At the same time, participants discussed some of the ways in which student-run services and university staff could collaborate to ensure that survivors are supported. For example, university staff are able to access academic accommodations more easily than student-run services because "they can leverage their institutional capacity" (030). Further, a participant who works at a student-run service argued that "the beautiful thing is that we're not beholden to any structure so we [...] get to say things that they may not be able to say but as long as we continue to provide that feedback then they say 'ok, well we spoke to this group and they said this' and it helps them" (030). In this sense, there are opportunities for strategic collaboration.

Student-run services may also conceptualize and approach sexual violence differently than administration-based services, which has the potential to make them more accessible to survivors. As one participant explained, their student organization

operates from a feminist, anti-racist, anti-oppressive, survivor-centric framework. So I think by virtue of that, we don't have a traditional view on survivorship. Some spaces might. We view violence in its varied ways [...] and that makes it a lot easier for people to access our service. (030)

The participant also discussed how their organization had resisted pressure from the institution to limit their services to students and exclude the surrounding community, which is underserved. The participant argued that “survivorship isn't about your status as a student. [...] Our view of survivors isn't class-based. It isn't based on status. [...] So we kind of have to make our services a lot more flexible for people who have untraditional pathways” (030). Several participants argued in favour of maintaining student-run supports for survivors on campus and suggested that the administration should provide them with greater funding and institutional support, though this may impact their autonomy to define sexual violence and the parameters of their services.

Participants discussed the fact that for some, support services on campus are inaccessible based on the ways in which post-secondary institutions themselves have been a site of exclusion and violence (Henry et al., 2017; Tuck, 2009). As such, community anti-violence organizations also play an important role in supporting survivors of campus sexual violence. One participant who is a member of a community anti-violence organization said that sometimes survivors prefer “to come to an outside support system that's been around for so long and is also peer-led [...] who can help them navigate [the university] system” (003). The participant also noted that students often approach the organization to support them through the process of filing a formal report at their institution and the investigation that follows. Therefore, the participant suggested

that it would be useful for institutions to develop “a friendlier relationship” with community organizations “so that it’s not so secretive [...and so that we are] able to actually refer them to a person we know that’s going to support them and we know exactly what the procedure is” (003).

In addition to supporting survivors directly, the participant described how the organization provides support to university staff: “sometimes we’ll get calls from counsellors at universities asking for support because they [...] feel ill-equipped to support those survivors and so they will call and ask us for our expertise” (003). Having personally received several of these calls while volunteering at TRCC, I can confirm that it is a regular occurrence. Further, a participant pointed out that many institutions refer students to community anti-violence organizations: “our relationship with community organizations was essentially delegating our work to them. There wasn’t even a conversation; it was just like ‘we’ll put your number on our brochure because we don’t have anything like this’” (018). This is particularly troubling given the glaring differences in resources and the fact that many community anti-violence organizations are already over capacity. For example, the participant working at a community organization noted that “the recent media attention like #MeToo has increased the amount of advocacy and support requests that we’re getting. Our wait list is 18 months long” (003). As such, if universities are going to rely on community anti-violence organizations, the participant suggested that “it would be nice to kind of have a memorandum of understanding and some cash flowing our way because we’re a non-profit and these are huge institutions that have lots of money” (003). Several other participants echoed this sentiment and felt strongly that institutions should partner with community anti-violence organizations.

At many universities in Ontario, the implementation of the new sexual violence policies has been accompanied by the creation or expansion of support services available on campus for survivors of sexual violence. However, as this section has demonstrated, there are a number of factors that may affect the accessibility and availability of these services. Further, while participants felt that the staff are generally well-intentioned, their ability to effectively support survivors may be limited by the administration through inadequate resources, unreasonable workloads, and strict oversight. While these services are undoubtedly important, the challenges discussed in this section indicate a shallowness in the way that institutional commitments to addressing sexual violence and to adopting intersectional approaches are translating into supports for survivors.

Formal reporting processes

In addition to these support services, the policies outline the process for responding to formal reports of sexual violence. One of the interview participants is currently employed as the staff member responsible for receiving disclosures and formal reports and supporting survivors throughout the process. The participant reported that “from the first year to my second year here, there was a quadruple jump in the number of people that I was seeing, which tells me that this is a service that’s needed and the way we’ve designed it is working for people” (010). Of the survivors accessing their office, “the overwhelming majority of people are using the disclosure option. They’re seeking support.” (010). In terms of formal reports, the participant said that there has also been an increase but that

proportionate to the number of potential complaints, the number of actual complaints that we have is still small. I don’t think that’s necessarily a good or a bad thing because I think that any complaint process is not necessarily survivor-centred, even when you try

for it to be. It's just a hard thing. So I don't think that that's always the right course of action for people. (010)

Several other participants echoed the notion that the formal reporting processes are not survivor-centric. While few participants had direct experience with these processes, they reported that survivors have “left feeling completely humiliated and completely misheard” (030) and have found the processes to be “retraumatizing” (001).

Participants pointed to the often long and unpredictable timelines of the investigation process as a source of anxiety and frustration for survivors. One participant who works at a student-run support service said that survivors frequently reported that the formal process “dragged on for a long time and that they didn't really come to any kind of resolution. And so it was kind of like a meaningless prolonging of whatever situation had happened to them and having to talk about that” (030). The participant who is currently employed by the administration to provide support recalled a particular case that they felt that the institution had taken “really seriously:”

they hired an external, really high quality investigator, who is expensive and from out of town, and flying here, and putting a lot of money and resources into it. And those things take time [...] At one point, [the survivor] was like ‘I feel like you're the only one who's trying for me and the rest of the school is actively trying to sabotage me.’ And I just felt so sad because her feelings are so legitimate because it's just going on forever and she doesn't feel like she can get enough information or answers. At the same time, I actually know intimately the people who are working in this particular case and I know that they're trying really hard [...] to do a high quality investigation that would stand up to scrutiny. (010)

In this sense, the length of institutional investigations may serve to discourage survivors from filing formal reports.

Participants also expressed concerns regarding those who hold power during the investigation and adjudication processes. As some participants noted, the people tasked with

investigating sexual violence complaints are often internal to the institution, which raises questions about their impartiality. As one participant explained,

I think what we need to change is the university to be able to remove itself from the investigations and the mediations. I think that they are so embedded when a report does come forward and [...] you're not just saying that this person is a rapist but you're taken as you're accusing the whole university, right? So I think having a more independent investigation and a more independent body who you report to. (003)

Similarly, depending on the specific process of adjudicating sexual violence complaints, which varies from institution to institution, those tasked with making the final decision are generally internal and part of the administration. Researchers and student activists have called for those involved in the investigation and adjudication processes to undergo specialized training on sexual violence and rape myths, as well as for external oversight of these processes by community organizations (Chiose, 2018a). While some of the new sexual violence policies reference rape myths, few include provisions to prevent these myths from being used to discredit survivors during the complaint process (Chiose, 2018a).

The relationship between sexual violence investigations and other bureaucratic processes can prolong the timelines and create additional complications for survivors. As the participant who is currently employed to provide support explained,

depending on who the parties involved are, that's going to influence which other parallel procedure we need to engage with [...] If the accused person is a faculty member versus a student, those are different policies that we're going to use because we don't have the same jurisdiction to discipline students and faculty in the same way. Faculty are protected by their collective agreement so our sexual misconduct policy needs to work with the procedures in that collective agreement, whereas if it's a student misconduct case then we can use our non-academic misconduct policy. But because our sexual misconduct policy doesn't supersede labour law or doesn't supersede Occupational Health and Safety, being bound to work in tandem with those procedures means that even if you write a policy that is intended to overcome bureaucratic challenges, you're still trapped. (010)

These other procedures can also impact the process by shaping survivors' access to information about the outcomes of complaints against faculty. For example, some Canadian institutions have signed non-disclosure agreements as part of their settlements with faculty who perpetrate sexual harassment or sexual violence to avoid long arbitration processes and defamation lawsuits.

However, these agreements often prevent survivors from finding out the results of the investigation and allow the offending professor to seek employment at other institutions without disclosing this history (Ward & Gollom, 2018). Workplace health and safety regulations may also limit the ability of institutions to reveal information about complaints against faculty and staff, including the fact that they have been named in a formal complaint (Jones, 2018). Further, some sexual violence policies restrict survivors from discussing their formal complaints, which some have framed as 'gag orders' (Jones, 2018; Lindeman, 2018).

In addition to the challenging and potentially re-traumatizing nature of the formal investigation processes, survivors are faced with the possibility that the outcome might not be favourable. As discussed in Chapter 2, one of the interview participants shared their experience of navigating the formal reporting process after a classmate raped them. While they said that they felt supported throughout the process, their classmate was ultimately not found responsible due to "lack of evidence" (020). Both the research participant and the accused are students in a small, specialized program. As a result of the outcome of the investigation, the participant explained: "I have to be in all the same classes as him. He's in every single one of my classes, every single day. [...] So next semester I'm actually going to go talk to the Associate Dean to see if I can switch my classes to a [different] major" (020). Further, because their program is so small, the participant said that

as a result of this, I have experienced major bullying throughout my program. I have heard things behind my back: ‘oh, we don’t want to be in a group with her because [...] this happened.’ I get looks. I’m the girl who cried wolf pretty much. That’s the only thing; even though there is support through the university, you don’t know what the people around you are going to do, people who you thought were going to speak on your behalf. (020)

Given this experience, it is unsurprising that only a small percentage of students who experience sexual violence choose to file formal reports. It is also important to note that the sexual violence policies at some institutions, including Lakehead, Guelph, U Windsor, and the University of Hearst, contain clauses that stipulate that ‘vexatious’ complaints or complaints made in ‘bad faith’ can result in sanctions against the complainant. Such clauses may exacerbate the fear of not being believed and further discourage survivors from filing a formal complaint.

Several participants referenced highly publicized cases, including Mandi Gray’s efforts to hold York accountable, as evidence that despite what the policies may claim, in practice these processes are not necessarily survivor-centric. According to her HRTO complaint, when Gray was sexually assaulted by a fellow graduate student she had to disclose to more than 15 university employees to find information on York’s process for responding to sexual assault (Hoffman, 2015). Further, after her assailant was criminally charged in February 2015, the administration permitted him to return to campus following a 10-day suspension (Hoffman, 2015). While Gray’s experience predates the implementation of the new sexual violence policies, several participants highlighted it as an example of how institutions are perceived to treat survivors. A few participants also discussed how the institutional failures that Gray experienced are exacerbated for those who experience less privilege. As one participant who works at a student-run support service explained, while Gray is

not racialized [...] the trans woman who did come and access services here as a black woman [had...] no support and [was] essentially kicked out of school. So there are so many people who have different privileges and who are accessing the spaces differently who won't be taken up in certain ways just because [of how] their bodies are read. (030)

In this sense, the intersections of sexual violence and systems of oppression, including racism and cissexism, can have a significant impact on how institutions respond to survivors (Linder, 2018).

Several participants questioned the quasi-judicial nature of these reporting processes and highlighted a number of flaws in this approach. One participant reasoned that “we’ve all seen that the justice system doesn’t treat survivors fair and justly and equitably and that it’s very hard to get justice in the justice system so then to me it’s like well what other alternatives are we exploring?” (016). The debates about ‘due process’ and the rights of students accused in Title IX investigations in the American context illustrate just how easily the dynamics that often make it so challenging for survivors to access any form of justice through the criminal justice system can spill over into campus sexual violence investigations.

Another participant raised concerns about the relationship between responses to campus sexual violence and the expansion of bureaucratic (Halley, 2018) and carceral feminism (Bernstein, 2012): “the fact that these students seemed interested in imbuing that kind of authority on the university [...] suggests a blind spot in people’s ostensibly critical perspectives. [...] I think it’s second-wave feminism all over again. I think it’s punitive and carceral approaches to sexual ‘immorality’” (006). Similarly, as discussed in Chapter 1, scholars have argued that these processes lack transparency and risk infringing on academic freedom (Kipnis, 2017), regulating sexuality (Gersen & Suk, 2016), disproportionately impacting queer academics (Duggan, 2017).

The similarities between campus processes and the criminal justice system are also concerning given the way that racism is embedded in both institutions (Henry et al., 2017; Richie, 2015, Incite!, 2006). One participant said that while “we don’t have, I think, enough complaints historically to look carefully at this data and find anything statistical,” they suspected that racialized men were more likely to have complaints of sexual violence filed against them at universities (010). They noted that this might be the result of racism at multiple levels, from the institutional to “the level of the individual even before they engage with the complaint process. So just your decision to bring it forward is quite likely higher if it’s a racialized man” (010). The potential for campus processes to reproduce the myth of the black rapist (Davis, 1981) and the racism inherent in the criminal justice system must be taken into account in the mandatory data collection on these reporting processes. It also highlights the inseparability of racism and sexual violence and the need to develop prevention efforts and responses grounded in an intersectional analysis (Crenshaw, 1991).

Further, participants challenged the punitive nature of campus sexual violence processes and argued that there is a need to create opportunities for people who commit sexual violence to acknowledge the harm that they have caused and make amends, which is a central tenet of alternative justice models (Chen et al., 2011). As one participant explained, what is missing “in terms of the follow-through of a sexual assault story is what happens to that person who’s done it and how are we empowering them to do the healing and the work that they need to do to become upstanding members of society” (016). Another participant agreed and commented that “sometimes we forget that the perpetrators tend to be survivors themselves and that support does need to be provided for them. [...] People should still be able to answer for their actions but it

isn't necessarily helpful to just kick them out of the community and lock them away" (004). As such, participants advocated for alternative approaches that focus on education and transformation rather than on punishment.

The possibilities and limitations of employing alternative justice approaches in response to campus sexual violence has been the subject of recent debate. While many of the universities in Ontario reference the possibility of resolving complaints through mediation in their sexual violence policies, six institutions specifically reference restorative justice processes. For example, Ryerson's policy defines restorative justice as:

an approach used in situations that require a deep understanding of the harm done, the needs of those affected, and the strategies for moving forward as a community and creating lasting change. Using processes such as accountability circles or community conferencing, those who have done harm and various stakeholders are actively engaged in understanding what happened, the impact of a harmful situation and hold those who have done harm accountable and responsible not only for their past actions but for shaping the future. (Section 3c)

I am concerned by these decontextualized references to 'community' and the uptake of restorative and transformative justice practices given the ways in which they are often grounded in the justice practices of specific communities (Chen et al., 2011).

In October 2018, I attended a two-day symposium organized by the Office of Sexual Violence Support and Education at Ryerson called *Can Justice Heal? Exploring Accountability Models to Address Sexual Violence on Campus*. The symposium featured a range of speakers and panels and explored alternative approaches to justice. While the speakers expressed excitement about the possibilities for employing alternative justice models to address campus sexual violence, they also cautioned that these processes are intensive with respect to the amount of resources and support required and questioned whether institutions would invest enough to allow

these processes to be done responsibly and effectively. Given that alternative justice approaches tend to address not only individual responsibility but also community accountability (Chen et al., 2011), I would argue that they risk exposing the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded and may thus be viewed as a threat to the institution's reputation and image.

The potential limitations of using alternative justice practices to address campus sexual violence are illustrated by the case of Dalhousie, where a restorative justice process was used in response to the Faculty of Dentistry scandal in 2015 (Halsall, 2015). While the university administration presented this process as productive and voluntary, several female dentistry students publicly reported feeling pressured to participate in the process (A. Quinlan, 2017). In an open letter to the university president, four of the female dentistry students wrote: "we feel that the University is pressuring us into this process, silencing our views, isolating us from our peers, and discouraging us from choosing to proceed formally. This has perpetuated our experience of discrimination" ('4 women,' 2015). The voluntariness of the process must also be questioned with respect to the male dentistry students given that they were required to complete the process to avoid the possibility of academic dismissal (Backhouse, McRae, & Iyer, 2015). The restorative justice process went ahead despite these concerns and the university president subsequently framed it as a model that other institutions could adopt. As such, there is a risk that institutions will adopt alternative justice models to indicate their 'progressiveness' and commitment to addressing sexual violence without attending to the needs of those involved in the process or to the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded. This is not to say that alternative justice approaches are not appropriate responses to campus sexual violence but

rather to highlight the importance of ensuring that these processes are survivor-centric and conducted in a way that effectively addresses the harm done.

Conclusion

This chapter considers how the new sexual violence policies at Ontario universities translate into practice in terms institutional responses to sexual violence. While the policies outline the processes through which survivors of sexual violence can access support and make a formal complaint, my interview participants highlighted a number of shortcomings in these processes. As one participant summarized, at best, the policy

doesn't prevent anything; it doesn't guarantee justice. A good policy makes some occasional justice more likely. Most survivors never report to anyone, they disclose [...] and if the policy goes along with other things like disclosure training for front line staff, like we've done here, then hopefully there's a higher chance that someone who does disclose to somebody to get support or a particular remedy will actually get better treatment. (025)

However, based on the participants' perspectives, it would appear that some institutions have a long way to go before survivors feel adequately supported or before justice is a likely outcome of the formal reporting processes.

While the new sexual violence policies have been accompanied by the creation or expansion of support services available on campus for survivors, the staff in these support roles are often constrained through strict administrative oversight, unreasonable workloads, and inadequate institutional support. Post-secondary institutions also continue to rely on students and community organizations to support survivors, often without acknowledging or compensating their labour. Further, participants reported that students continue to face a number of barriers in accessing campus support services. As such, while these services are important, my dissertation

findings may indicate the shallowness of institutional commitments to addressing sexual violence, and to intersectionality in particular.

Similarly, this chapter discussed the ways in which the formal reporting processes fail to meet the needs of survivors. I have argued that the quasi-judicial nature of these processes may limit the likelihood of justice for survivors and that it risks replicating the racism inherent in the criminal justice system. This chapter also briefly considers the potential benefits and limitations of implementing alternative justice approaches within post-secondary institutions and the importance of ensuring that they are not used as another marker of institutional ‘progress’. Moreover, rather than simply responding to violence once it has already occurred, institutions must engage in efforts to prevent sexual violence on campus. The following chapter analyzes some of the most prevalent approaches to prevention at Canadian universities and discusses how sexual violence is conceptualized in these efforts, their strengths and limitations, and the extent to which they reflect an intersectional approach.

Chapter 6: Prevalent approaches to preventing sexual violence on campus

While the sexual violence policies at Ontario universities focus primarily on responding to violence once it has already occurred, the majority also include a commitment to providing education on sexual violence and to implementing prevention efforts. These commitments tend to be very general and few provide specific details on the types of education and prevention that will be available or who the target audiences of these efforts will be. While the policies do not emphasize prevention, arguably the extent to which institutions have invested in effective prevention efforts is a strong indication of the depth of their commitment to addressing sexual violence. Thus in determining the degree to which the policies are non-performative (Ahmed, 2014), it is useful to analyze how institutions approach sexual violence prevention. Further, analyzing prevention efforts reveals the ways in which sexual violence is being conceptualized and the extent to which commitments to intersectionality translate into practice.

At the three institutions chosen as case studies, few participants reported changes in efforts to prevent sexual violence specifically related to the introduction of the policies. As I discussed in Chapter 2, there are significant differences between the selected institutions in terms of the level of administrative investment and the substantiveness of the prevention efforts offered, though these differences predate the policies. Participants did note, however, that there is an increasing awareness of sexual violence on campus, which they generally attributed to heightened attention in the media and on social media. One participant explained that “when I was first starting university [...] folks didn’t take it as seriously but I feel like that has really shifted over time as the culture around talking about sexual violence has shifted” (016). Several participants highlighted the circulation of #MeToo as an example of this shifting culture. One

participant argued that “universities’ hands are being forced a little bit because of the #MeToo movement. Because of what’s happening in the media, there’s more pressure to at least appear to be supportive of survivors, [and to] believe survivors” (029). Similarly, another participant suggested that

the #MeToo movement and our culture overall in North America is kind of starting to talk about that shit more and hold people accountable. And I think it’s natural that it’s going to be reflected in younger people’s lives and in institutions because we’re like a microcosm of the bigger space. (009)

Thus while the introduction of the sexual violence policies may not have changed the way that universities are approaching sexual violence prevention, increasing student awareness and heightened media attention have the potential to pressure institutions to invest in prevention.

In this chapter, I analyze some of the different types of prevention and education efforts that are offered at universities in Ontario, including training modules, consent education, bystander training, critical masculinities efforts, women’s resistance training, orientation strategies, and heightened securitization. In so doing, my findings reveal that prevention efforts tend to conceptualize sexual violence as a depoliticized, interpersonal issue with little attention to its intersections with systems of oppression. When intersectionality is acknowledged, it rarely translates beyond the level of individual inclusion or representation. As such, I conclude that these prevention efforts not only fail to address the underlying causes of sexual violence but also risk reproducing other forms of violence and exclusion.

Online training modules and information workshops

Several institutions in Ontario have developed online training modules as part of their sexual violence prevention and education efforts. The focus of these modules varies from the content of the new sexual violence policies to responding to disclosures. While one participant

noted that the modules are better than pamphlets, in general participants were quite sceptical regarding their utility as a method of prevention or education. One participant pointed to the inaccessibility and voluntary nature of the online modules as serious limitations: “it’s an eight-step process to even get to it. You have to open your blackboard, go to this tab, open that, go to this, etc. [...] While initially they were talking about [making it] mandatory, now it isn’t” (001). In June 2019, McGill announced that all students will be required to complete an online course on consent and sexual violence before they can register for classes (Leavitt, 2019). Faculty and staff will also be required to complete the course (Leavitt, 2019). Student activists at McGill responded to the announcement by citing concerns regarding the lack of student consultation on the content of the course (Leavitt, 2019) and the fact that the demands that they had articulated during the walkout in 2018 have not yet been met (CBC, 2018).

Another research participant noted that online modules are limited because “they don’t stick with you; they’re so boring and you can skip through them easily or just play it in the background” (026). Further, the participant raised concerns regarding the fact that online modules are not conducted in a supportive environment in the way that in-person efforts might be: “a topic as serious as sexual violence, I really don’t think, should be something that you’re doing alone and also something that you’re facilitating for yourself” (026). While online modules may appeal to institutions as a cost-effective method of education with the potential to reach a large audience, as these examples demonstrate, participants were critical of their effectiveness.

Participants also challenged the content of the online training modules. As one participant argued, “it’s not really acknowledging that a) this is a real problem and people are assaulted [...] and then b) providing adequate help if they were. It’s like ‘oh your professor makes a comment,’

[...] ‘is it sexual harassment?’ [...] It’s really not recognizing the cultural issues that we have” (026). The participant also noted that the examples included in the module tend to reproduce the dominant heteronormative framing of sexual violence and felt that it was not intersectional. The training modules that I have accessed tend to frame sexual violence as a depoliticized interpersonal issue, which obscures its structural dimensions and intersections with systems of oppression. While the modules may be a means of communicating information regarding the new policies and resources available, they are unlikely to address the roots of sexual violence and are therefore unlikely to be a particularly effective means of prevention.

Similarly, participants discussed information workshops offered by the sexual violence support staff on campus about the new sexual violence policies and basic introductions to themes around consent and sexual violence. These workshops tend to be offered by request rather than delivered systematically. In general, participants suggested that these workshops are better than having no prevention and education efforts at all but did not feel that they are particularly effective.

Consent and awareness-raising campaigns

Consent is one of the most common themes of prevention and education at Canadian universities. On one hand, a recent study by the Canadian Women’s Foundation (2018) found that more than two-thirds of Canadians do not accurately understand the legal definition of consent and that 44 per cent of Canadians surveyed felt that consent education is essential. On the other hand, the results of the Ontario campus climate survey suggest that post-secondary students understand consent and overwhelmingly (90%) disagree with false or potentially harmful statements about it (CCI Research, 2019). Thus it is unclear whether consent education

should remain an ongoing priority at post-secondary institutions. One participant claimed that at a personal level, gaining a “greater understanding of consent [...] has been the most valuable to me [...] because I think the lack of knowledge of consent is the root cause of sexual violence” (024). Another participant argued that while they are aware that “consent education is not going to solve sexual violence, [...] students want it and it’s an entry point to learning more” (028). Similarly, one participant suggested that international students who are not familiar with the Canadian definition and language around consent and sex could benefit from consent education and that it might make other forms of prevention more accessible to them.

A few participants discussed the CFS’ consent campaign, which has been popular on Canadian campuses since the 1990s. As one participant explained, “the initial scope of the *No Means No* campaign in the early ‘90s was particularly focused around education around date rape drugs, how to go to a bar and be safe, cover your drinks, never leave a drink alone, things like that” (016). While this description of the campaign reproduces the notion that the onus is on the potential victim to avoid being raped rather than on the potential perpetrator, Jen Gilbert (2018) describes experiencing the *No Means No* campaign as an expression of agency. As Gilbert (2018) explains, “coming of age in the wake of the feminist sex wars, ‘no’ marked a refusal to participate in a sexual economy of violence and fear. ‘No’ was a powerful word” (p. 271). The interview participant also discussed the shifting language of the campaign from *No Means No* to *Consent is Sexy* and, most recently, to *Consent is Mandatory*. This shift corresponds to the changing legal definition of consent in Canada toward an affirmative understanding of consent where “only yes means yes” (Gotell, 2008).

Some participants challenged the language of *Consent is Sexy*. For example, one participant said: “I just kind of feel like it’s an easy thing for like—this is going to make me sound like a bitch—but bro-dudes to be like ‘consent is sexy’ and it’s easy to really co-opt that message, like ‘yes means yes’ but there’s a freedom to engage in what you want but there’s also a freedom from” (009). Similarly, Harsha Walia (2014) argues that while this slogan is catchy and challenges the misogynist notion that coercion is sexy, it fails to address the way that entitlement to sex regardless of consent is embedded in normative constructions of masculinity. Further, she argues that it does not acknowledge the ways in which normative constructions of what is considered ‘sexy’ intersect with systems of oppression:

given the disproportionate magnitude of sexual violence against those who are deemed inherently ‘undesirable’ and hence ‘rape-able’—Indigenous women, migrant women, Black women, trans women, poor women, sex workers, women with disabilities—it is potentially disastrous to sexualize consent and link it to desirability. (para. 10)

As such, for some the shift to *Consent is Mandatory* is welcome.

Others highlighted the general absence of pleasure and desire in consent education, which tends to focus on the legal definition. One participant acknowledged that the concept of consent is broader than sexual violence but stated that “one of my biggest grievances about sexual violence work is [...] the de-sexualization of sex” (027). Another participant suggested that “consent is the bare minimum standard” that must be expanded to consider “sexual ethics,” including “consideration for their feelings; their sense of safety; their desire; their pleasure; and taking care of them before, during, and after” (010). Similarly, another participant argued that this legal focus “really changes the conversation from [...] ‘what feels good for you’ [...] to ‘how do I get this person to consent and say yes’” (009). Further, one participant made the point that reducing consent to “negotiation [...] is just not a realistic approach to sex [...because]

people don't necessarily know what they want and, let's be honest, young people probably often aren't sober and sure" (006). In this sense, the participant argued that there is a need to have more nuanced conversations about consent that centre pleasure as well as exploration and discovery. Similarly, scholars have echoed the need to distinguish between pleasurable sex and consensual sex and have raised concerns about the limits produced by centring the law in these conversations (Matthews, 2018; Gilbert, 2018; Cossman, 2018).

One participant problematized the relative absence of pleasure as a continuation of the so-called sex-negative radical feminist equation of female sexuality and danger during the sex wars (Vance, 1984; Rubin, 2011). The participant said:

one thing that I've been getting into reading a lot lately is the other second-wave feminists that don't seem to get any play anymore, people like Carol Vance and Gayle Rubin, who talk about how a focus on sexual violence monopolizes the entire frame so that there's no room for sexual agency or pleasure and this is what I think is happening with this kind of prevention education. It's still situating women in this victim identity or this vulnerable space and pleasure is nowhere. (006)

Further, the participant argued that it is essential to "be more serious about critiquing gender roles in sex [...because] this expectation that men take the lead in sex is still happening" (006). Unless other possibilities of sexuality are explicitly named, consent education has the potential to reproduce the heteronormative framing of sex that constructs cisgender women as responsible for managing cisgender men's sexuality. In this context, the participant argued that approaching consent as a negotiation "doesn't work [...] because women are still trying to negotiate this in a broader social context where they're still raised to be pleasing" (006). This argument is supported by the fact that the same survey conducted by the Canadian Women's Foundation (2018) found that 50 per cent of the cisgender women surveyed reported feeling pressure to

consent to sexual activity. Thus unless these broader social norms are addressed, consent education is limited as a form prevention.

Participants also challenged the widespread use of consent education on the basis that it fundamentally misrepresents sexual violence as a depoliticized issue caused by miscommunication and a lack of knowledge about consent (Beres, 2018). As one participant explained,

part of the reason why I don't think of consent education as necessarily being prevention education is because the research would suggest that most people who are perpetrating are not perpetrating because they don't understand consent. They understand it. They get when someone is refusing. [...] The majority of people who are being rapey or who are being purposefully predatory [...] aren't doing it because they don't understand the difference. And so to my mind, we aren't going to change the problem with consent education if we're not addressing that reality. (010)

Similarly, another participant argued that “I think that when you talk about sexual assault and sexual harassment, it's not so much that this person didn't say no or that you thought that they had said yes or whatever, it's that in many cases people feel entitled to sex and sexual acts” (031). These arguments are supported by the literature, which suggests that people not only understand verbal refusals but also non-verbal cues (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999; O'Byrne, Hansen & Rapley, 2008).

Framing sexual violence as an issue of miscommunication is premised on the neoliberal individual who has the freedom and autonomy to ‘just say no’ (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012). As mentioned above, this framing does not account for the entitlement to sex that is embedded in normative constructions of masculinity, as evidenced by the infamous “no means yes, yes means anal” chant by members of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity at Yale University in 2010 (Orbey,

2018). As such, consent education must explicitly address the gendered power relations inherent in sexual violence (Beres, 2018).

This identity-neutral, depoliticized framing of consent also risks reproducing the ‘ideal’ survivor. One participant discussed their involvement as a student union representative in efforts to make consent campaign materials more inclusive: “you see sexual violence campaigns on campus that have imagery that kind of portray that whole ‘perfect survivor’ and it’s all white women, white men, etc. [...] so we revamped it and made it a lot more intersectional” (001).

Similarly, another participant argued that

we started to see more and more young, racialized, black, and Indigenous women getting involved in student unions and that drastically changed the way that we talked about sexual violence. We no longer talked about it as the perspective of a white woman experiencing sexual violence and we weren’t kind of coming at it from a historically white and Western approach. (016)

In this sense, participants viewed representation as an important step in making consent education more intersectional.

While representation is important, it does not disrupt the focus on the individual level and is thus insufficient to address the ways in which systems of privilege and oppression intersect with sexual violence and produce certain populations as sexually available and always already consenting and thus inherently unrapeable (Crenshaw, 1991; Anderson, 2000) while constructing others as inherently threatening, as evidenced by the myth of the black rapist (Davis, 1981). As one participant explained,

I feel like it doesn’t count if your poster campaigns are people of colour. [...] If you’re not taking a truly and deeply intersectional approach to sexual violence, it’s going to keep happening because people are going to continue to feel entitled to things. People are going to continue to consciously or unconsciously take advantage of people in certain situations because they’ve been raised in that mindset that ‘this is for me’ or ‘this is how

this works, this is the process, this is the social script.’ And I think if you want to disrupt it, it’s not enough to just [say] ‘consent is sexy.’ (031)

As such, there is an urgent need to contextualize consent within broader systems of privilege and oppression rather than simply focusing on the individual level. Ryerson’s *Consent Comes First* campaign provides a notable example of how intersectional, politicized consent education might look. In 2018, they distributed Valentine’s Day cards that explicitly tied consent and sexual violence to other social justice issues including racism, migration and forced displacement, and trans rights. The cards featured illustrations of prominent racialized activists including Anita Hill, Miss Major, RJ Jones, and Tarana Burke, among others. They also included captions such as ‘no border is bigger than our love;’ ‘let’s start a movement together;’ and ‘dissent in the streets, consent in the sheets.’

Bystander intervention training

Bystander intervention training is a popular approach to preventing sexual violence on campuses across North America, including in Ontario. It was endorsed by the Obama administration as a “promising” prevention strategy in the White House Task Force (2014) report on campus sexual violence and the 2013 Campus SaVE Act requires that all incoming post-secondary students and new employees receive some form of bystander training (Coker et al., 2015). The most widely recognized and rigorously evaluated bystander interventions are the *Green Dot* program, which was developed at the University of Kentucky, and *Bringing in the Bystander* (BITB), which was developed at the University of New Hampshire. Bystander intervention training generally focuses on teaching students how to recognize and safely intervene in situations that could lead to sexual violence (Senn & Forrest, 2016). Evaluation research suggests that BITB is effective at changing bystander knowledge and efficacy (Banyard,

Eckstein, Plante, & Moynihan, 2007; Moynihan et al., 2015) and that *Green Dot* may result in lower rates of sexual violence among undergraduate students (Coker et al., 2015). The *Mentors in Violence Prevention* (MVP) program, which originated at Northeastern University with a focus on engaging male athletes as leaders in prevention, is another example of bystander training (Katz, 2018).

In the Canadian context, post-secondary institutions approach bystander training in a variety of ways. For example, U Windsor, the University of Manitoba, and Humber College use the BITB workshop. U Windsor has taken a novel approach by embedding BITB into the curriculum and the workshop is facilitated by upper-year students who complete two courses for credit: one on contextualizing sexual violence within the broader social context and one on learning how to facilitate the workshops (Senn & Forrest, 2016). During the 2018/2019 academic year, U Windsor offered all of its first-year students a \$50 credit for the university bookstore to participate in a three-hour bystander workshop (CBC News, 2018b). Other institutions, such as York and Queen's, have opted to create their own bystander intervention workshops. At York, these workshops are offered primarily to student orientation leaders and by request. U of O, along with several other institutions, offers bystander workshops periodically throughout the year and has also developed a short video about being a bystander.

In general, my research participants felt that bystander intervention training is a useful and important approach to preventing campus sexual violence. As one participant explained, bystander training addresses

the attitudes, beliefs, and social norms on our campus when it comes to recognizing violence and feeling a sense of responsibility for intervening and preventing that from happening. So it's [...] about being mindful about the way that our actions and inactions

affect other people and seeing the harm done to other people and feeling the sense of community responsibility to somebody else. (010)

Several other participants echoed the theme of developing a community of responsibility through bystander intervention. Similarly, Rentschler (2015) suggests that recent anti-violence activism reframes the bystander position as “always already one of participation that comes with consequences” (p. 21), regardless of whether or not they intervene. In this framing, bystanders can either disrupt violence or enable it by remaining complicit.

One participant noted, however, that bystander intervention might be limited in its ability to directly prevent sexual assault:

in terms of perpetration, bystanders are present in about 17 per cent of cases. So is it making a significant dent in perpetration? My guess is probably not. But is it shifting cultural attitudes so that we're less supportive of those behaviours? Hopefully. To me, [bystander intervention] is a 20-25 year initiative; you will not see the changes in the immediate. (010)

The absence of bystanders in the majority of instances of sexual violence is also articulated in the literature as a potential limitation of this approach to prevention (Mellins et al., 2017; Grigoriadis, 2017). Further, in cases where there are bystanders present, scholars argue that more research is needed to measure whether the impacts of bystander training on participants' knowledge, efficacy, and intention to intervene actually translate into practice in the form of bystander behaviour (McMahon et al., 2017).

While bystander training tends to be associated with the image of intervening at a party when someone may not have the capacity to consent to sexual activity, my research participants argued that the training has broader utility. One participant suggested that

there's a lot of emphasis on trying to get people to actually address [...] the things that are not as recognized as violence like rape jokes or catcalling, or the sexual comments, or, you know, things that people are like 'oh, that doesn't actually physically harm

somebody.’ And we’re like ‘no, but it sets a standard for what we’re willing to put up with and that does influence the direct acts of violence, maybe not directly but through what it normalizes.’ (010)

Another participant noted that bystander intervention is also relevant after a sexual assault has occurred, such as when a video of the assault is circulated on social media. The participant claimed that “part of being a bystander would be not sharing that video or telling people to take down the video or something like that because even though you [...] may not have been able to prevent it in that moment, you’re still part of the narrative” (007). This expanded approach thus has the potential to address the critique that the utility of bystander training is limited because there are often no bystanders present (Mellins et al., 2017; Grigoriadis, 2017).

In general, participants tended to locate the value of bystander training in its potential to change attitudes and cultural norms. As one participant explained, “this education empowers students to challenge and to feel like they have the capacity to say ‘you know what, I’m not comfortable’ and ‘you know what, that actually isn’t funny.’ So I am convinced that it’s working” (023). Some participants who had been involved in bystander programming also discussed its impact at the personal level. For example, one participant said: “I’m challenging my friends day-to-day. [...] I have a five-year-old step-son and I’m teaching him these things. [...] So what I’ve learned here has already translated into my life [...] I hear catcalling and stuff like that and if I am able to say something I do” (012). This anecdotal evidence illustrates the potential for bystander training to translate into practice.

As participants pointed out, however, the potential for the impacts of bystander education to translate from the individual level to the broader community is related to the scale of the programming. One participant argued that reaching a larger audience not only increases the

likelihood of shifting “the cultural norms on campus, but also [...] that one of them is going to be in a situation where some form of sexual violence is going to be happening and they can be present to try to do something about it” (015). In this sense, U Windsor’s efforts to incentivize bystander training for all first-year students seems far more likely to contribute to sexual violence prevention than offering a handful of workshops throughout the year.

Participants also suggested that bystander training is a useful way of involving cisgender men in efforts to prevent sexual violence. As one participant explained, while bystander training does not necessarily explicitly focus on cisgender men, it encourages them

to see the necessity of speaking up because what they say is important. We know that the tone of the situation can be shifted by what men in the room are thinking of doing [...] The value of [bystander intervention] is for the men because women will often do this behaviour. (021)

Another participant argued that bystander training’s ability to attract cisgender male participation lies in the fact that “you’re not going to a group of men and seeming like you’re talking to perpetrators or potential perpetrators [...] You’re talking to men as a way of like ‘you are part of the solution’ rather than ‘you are the problem’” (018). However, another participant argued that it is important to avoid “benevolent sexism” in that “some versions of the bystander [...] are] about encouraging men to stand in their hero space with their capes and these poor women who can’t do anything for themselves and who need them” (025). Further, one participant questioned the notion that bystander intervention “suggests that the perpetrator is somebody else” (006) rather than recognizing the ways in which workshop participants may be implicated in sexual violence. The participant concluded that “maybe they see this as more palatable [...] but I just find it weird that it wouldn’t begin by just saying ‘don’t do it yourself’” (006).

While gender-neutral approaches to bystander intervention may function to make it more palatable to cisgender male participants, these potential limitations have been echoed in the literature. Katz (2018) argues, for example, that these depoliticized approaches leave unaddressed the ways in which normative masculinity contributes to sexual violence. Michael Messner, Max Greenberg, and Tal Peretz (2015) argue that in the absence of a critical analysis of gendered power relations, bystander interventions risk strengthening patriarchal cultures by “harness[ing] men’s sense of responsibility to the male group, [whereby] intervening in a potential sexual assault preserves the integrity of the team, the frat or the military unit by preventing men in the group from getting into trouble” (p. 121-122). The potential benefit of encouraging cisgender male participation through gender-neutral approaches to prevention must be weighed against these potential limitations.

As mentioned above, approaches to bystander intervention vary widely. Some programs conduct gender-segregated workshops based on evidence that they are more effective for cisgender male participants (Katz, 2018). As one participant explained, “the research shows that women [...] can be transformed or educated in contexts with men but [...] if women are in the group, [men are] just like ‘it’s not for me.’ So you need to get them alone and target them” (010). However, another participant who had taken part in a gender-segregated bystander workshop felt that this format contributed to pressure to conform to gendered expectations. The participant illustrated this pressure with a personal example:

when I was in grade two the teacher made us go around and say what we wanted to be when we were older and I was after five guys and they all went hockey player, hockey player, hockey player. I can’t even skate and in my head I’m like ‘I want to be an engineer’ but I said hockey player. So in terms of running these programs gender-segregated, it might not always be the best thing because you’re going to get these group mentality things. (012)

In this sense, while the gender-segregated approach may be more likely to attract cisgender male students, the transformative potential of these workshops may be limited if normative constructions of masculinity are reproduced rather than challenged.

Research participants expressed concern that this gender-segregated approach “brings up the question of whether we are reinforcing the [gender] binary again” (018). While some institutions have attempted to address this issue by allowing non-binary students to choose which workshop they prefer to attend, participants recognized that this does little to challenge binary gender norms. Given that for many the imposition of binary gender norms is itself a form of violence (Simpson, 2015; Saffin, 2015), there is an urgent need to disrupt this logic. However, given the gendered nature of sexual violence, a gender-neutral approach also presents potential limitations (Katz, 2018). One participant suggested that it might be useful to consider facilitating separate workshops for LGBTQ students who are not comfortable attending the gender-segregated workshops.

Several participants were also critical of the ways in which some approaches to bystander intervention reproduce the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence by centring gender and focusing on cisgender men’s violence against cisgender women. Participants noted that this focus has the potential to exclude those whose experiences of sexual violence do not conform to this normative framing, including queer and trans survivors, and cisgender male survivors. One participant discussed how they attempted to disrupt this framing when they facilitated bystander workshops:

the workshop itself didn’t reflect an intersectional approach until we started including the scenarios that include other groups of people [...] Oftentimes I will be like ‘hey, so we talk about rape but what about rape against sex trade workers?’ And I will try to include it because I think if we’re not making visible the invisible forms of sexual violence, we’re only touching half of it. (022)

Similarly, a couple of participants described their efforts to encourage the prevention coordinator on their campus to include gender identity in the definition of sexual violence used in their bystander training. Notably, in these instances individual facilitators were responsible for challenging the dominant framing of sexual violence, which highlights the need to ensure that this content is formally embedded in the workshop scripts and in facilitator training.

Participants also argued that training that reproduces the ‘ideal’ survivor might affect bystanders’ ability to recognize sexual violence and intervene. As one participant explained,

if we only talk about the heterosexual forms of violence, if we only talk about violence that happens to women without contextualizing who those women are, most students who are white and straight and heterosexual will assume that it is also a white, cisgender, heterosexual woman and then will they intervene on behalf of other folks? Because the research kind of already says that, that people won’t intervene on behalf of people that are different from them. (028)

For example, research suggests that white, cisgender women are less likely to intervene when the potential victim is a black, cisgender woman because they feel less personally involved in the situation (Katz, Merrilees, Hoxmeier, & Motisi, 2017). As such, bystander training must explicitly address these differences and challenge participants to think critically about how it may shape their likelihood of intervening (Bang, Kerrick, & Wuthring, 2016).

Bystander intervention training has also been critiqued for reproducing white, masculine protection scenarios that do not account for the ways that privilege and oppression impact bystanders’ ability and safety to intervene (Rentschler, 2017; Elk & Devereaux, 2014; Bang et al., 2016). One participant argued that the tendency to frame “everyone as being equally able to speak up—I mean even just that language—has to do with ability, white privilege, male privilege, cisgender [privilege]” (018). Further, the participant highlighted how systemic racism

in policing and the criminal justice system might affect a bystander's ability to intervene: "there was really no structural analysis at all and in terms of being an active bystander, no conception of the risks and the limitations. Like [if] a black man jump[s] into a situation and cops come, who's going to be seen as the aggressor?" (018). Similarly, another participant, who attended a bystander training workshop said:

I felt like it was very much geared towards white womanhood and a sense that you have the ability to intervene and people won't call the cops on you. There's just this entitlement or comfort that you feel like you can intervene in every situation [...] If you are witnessing something and you want to intervene but you have citizenship considerations or this is not your neighbourhood, it didn't feel sensitive to that. It felt very much like 'just because I feel comfortable intervening, that means I should' and I don't feel like everyone has that ability. [...] Which is all to say no, I don't see intersectionality in a lot of these programs and I think it would benefit a lot. (031)

Bystander training that encourages participants to call the police may also be critiqued on the basis that it legitimizes carceral approaches to justice (Rentschler, 2017) and may function as "a pretext for criminalization and further violence" (Elk & Devereaux, 2014, para. 17).

Based on the depoliticized, decontextualized approach that bystander training often takes, one participant questioned whether it is the most effective means of developing community responsibility. The participant said: "it might be an entry-point to the conversation about everybody being accountable to sexual violence and gender-based violence but I don't know how [...] meaningful it can be" (030). Rather, the participant argued in favour of community accountability models that attend to the ways in which structures of privilege and oppression shape the capacity to intervene and are grounded in the specificities of communities. The participant explained that there is a "black feminist perspective on this that says that we're not doing this right unless we're interested in transformative justice and that's a lot different than bystander. [...] It just means that we are looking to intervene in that moment in meaningful ways

that actually curb violence” (030). Similarly, Rentschler (2017) advocates for an alternative approach to bystander activism that is grounded in a feminist politics of care and transformative justice models rather than the carceral system. Lauren Chief Elk and Shaadi Devereaux (2014) ask “what if we intervened not as bystanders in individual situations but collectively against institutions, cultures and state apparatuses of violence? [...] We don’t need more heroes, but a new structural understanding of sexual violence” (para. 17). Given the emphasis on measurability and evidence of effectiveness in the broader context of funding for anti-violence efforts (Katz, 2018; Messner et al., 2015) and in the neoliberal university (E. Quinlan, 2017), securing administrative buy-in for such political and transformative approaches to sexual violence on campus may prove challenging.

Critical masculinities efforts

Despite the fact that cisgender men perpetrate the overwhelming majority of sexual violence and that cisgender male violence against cisgender women continues to be the focus of many prevention efforts, few Ontario universities have implemented efforts that focus on addressing constructions of masculinity. The lack of emphasis on masculinities is consistent with the identity-neutral framing of sexual violence that many of the universities articulate in their sexual violence policies. It is also important to note that while some of the policies explicitly name groups who experience heightened vulnerability to sexual violence, none explicitly name cisgender men as perpetrators or normative masculinities as contributing to sexual violence. While this depoliticized framing may be a strategy to avoid generating backlash, particularly in the context of rising men’s rights activism on campus, it also raises serious questions regarding the potential impact of efforts to prevent sexual violence. How can overall rates of perpetration

be reduced without actively engaging those most likely to cause harm? There are also practical challenges that limit the possibility of implementing critical masculinities initiatives on campus. For example, as one participant pointed out, “we would benefit from having men on campus take the lead on that because I think that most of us doing this work, at least in this institution, but I think really everywhere, are women and I think that there’s some space for men to do that work meaningfully” (010). Thus developing critical masculinities initiatives would necessitate identifying and training male facilitators.

Another factor that may contribute to the dearth of efforts focused on men and masculinities is that there is relatively little research data that suggests that these efforts are effective. As one participant explained, “the programs for men had a way worse history with none of them having positive behavioural effects and some of them having backlash effects where you’re actually teaching men new tricks [...] so there were real limits” (025). Similarly, another participant argued that more research is needed to determine the most effective methods of engaging cisgender men:

to properly do prevention work with the people who are likely to cause harm is this whole other big piece [...] but really, the literature is more limited in that area. It seems that what we do know is that the work that challenges masculinity and how men see themselves and really tries to counter the effects of hyper-masculinity, that seems to be the work that offers the most promise. So that would be a direction to go in. [...] I know that people are like ‘well why didn’t you begin there?’ And the reason that we didn’t begin there is that we’re pragmatists who know that the research doesn’t support that as a successful strategy in the same way that it does [...other prevention strategies]. So we had to make what we felt was the pragmatic decision, not the one that feels like the morally right decision. (010)

As mentioned above, in the context of neoliberal institutional cultures, violence prevention efforts are evaluated based on cost-efficiency, with an emphasis on quantifiable and measurable

outcomes (E. Quinlan, 2017). As such, institutions are more likely to invest in programs that have already been evaluated and proven to be effective, such as BITB.

Despite these challenges, many participants argued in favour of implementing prevention efforts focused specifically on masculinities. As one participant explained,

when it comes to re-shaping masculinity, the way that it is right now you have men growing up in this box that completely flattens and narrows their lives. ‘You can’t be emotional, you can’t be this, you can’t be that.’ ‘Women are currency,’ right? We celebrate violence. You’re never going to end sexual violence unless you change our idea of masculinity. (012)

Several participants discussed the importance of creating spaces where these norms can be challenged in productive ways. One participant described taking a course where “the whole dynamics of toxic masculinity relating to rape culture” were discussed. They felt that “men are very responsive to learning about that and that they learn a lot about themselves and their upbringing and the hypermasculine environment they’re often in” (015). The participant concluded that “for a lot of guys, that’s a really liberating experience” (015). Another participant suggested that these spaces might also provide an opportunity to have conversations about sexuality, “especially the portion about ‘what do I like and what is comfortable for me?’ Because that is not a conversation that male-identified folks ever have” (027). In this sense, participants framed masculinities work as simultaneously challenging harmful norms while also opening up space for alternative possibilities and exploration. This gender-transformative approach is supported by a recent review of evaluations of anti-violence work with cisgender men and boys, which found that the most effective interventions were those that critically address normative constructions of masculinity (Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015).

Some participants spoke of the need to engage with cisgender men as survivors as part of these efforts given that their experiences are often rendered invisible in the normative framing of sexual violence. As one participant explained,

my own life story has led me to a deep exploration of masculinity and, in particular, meeting and knowing a lot of males who've negotiated the experience of sexual violence as children, who are trauma survivors now, who have been suffering in silence and, as a result, have engaged in a lot of self-destructive behaviour, a lot of drugs, alcohol, promiscuity, all kinds of stuff, and recognizing that that pain isn't seen and that we still aren't equipped to deal with that so that's one piece for sure. (023)

Similarly, another participant acknowledged the limited availability of support services for cisgender male survivors of sexual violence and highlighted why it is insufficient to simply include them in existing programs designed for cisgender women:

we know that [male survivors'] experiences are just as legitimate. We also know that this particular program is based on years [...] of literature and research that's about the experiences of women in heterosexual relationships and we cannot assume [...] that this is going to make sense or work for you. (010)

As such, there is a need for programs for cisgender male survivors that address the specificities of the complex relationship between normative masculinities and sexual violence, including the ways in which these norms may act as a barrier to prevent cisgender men from seeking support.

Other participants discussed the necessity of complicating the 'good guys' framework that positions cisgender men as part of the solution and of addressing the potential for them to cause harm or be complicit with violence. As one participant explained,

I want to see more initiatives targeting men [...] and kind of talk about how they are a part of problem, whether they are perpetrators or not and how they have this opportunity, possibly the most opportunity, in different situations to prevent it from happening and make all this change. [...] There is a lot value in them being uncomfortable and acknowledging their complicity and their own kind of involvement in the past. (015)

Another participant discussed their involvement in a new group on campus for "male-identified folks" and how they are approaching "toxic masculinity" and framing participants as both part of the problem and the solution (004). However, one participant was hesitant to focus on men who cause harm in masculinities work because it risks reproducing the dominant narrative: "I'm afraid to say that the male-identified group is concentrating on what it's like to be a respondent because I feel like that's the standard; male-identified folks within the spectrum of sexual violence are always the respondent, right?" (027). It is important to acknowledge that addressing cisgender men's experiences as survivors and their potential complicity or harmful behaviour is not mutually exclusive; research demonstrates that experiencing childhood sexual abuse is a predictor of cisgender men's perpetration of sexual violence (White & Hall Smith, 2004; Senn et al., 2000; Casey et al., 2017).

As several participants pointed out, one of the challenges of addressing the potential for cisgender men to commit violence or be complicit is that it may discourage them from participating. As such, there is a tendency to frame participants as 'real' men, 'good' men, or as 'protectors' while those who perpetrate sexual violence are 'othered' (Masters, 2010; Messner et al., 2015; Scheel et al., 2001). Though framing male participants as 'good' men, 'real' men, or as 'protectors' might encourage participation by addressing the blame and alienation associated with anti-violence efforts that are perceived to label male students as potential perpetrators, it leaves unaddressed the relationship between masculine norms and sexual violence and, in the case of the 'protectors' example, reproduces inequitable gendered power relations (Masters, 2010). Similarly, while the 'real' men framing may address male students' fear of experiencing negative backlash from their peers for participating in anti-violence efforts (Casey et al., 2013;

Flood, 2012), it reproduces the problematic and cissexist notion that there is a single way to express and embody masculinity.

In the context of growing men's rights activism at Canadian universities, participants also cautioned that there is a need to differentiate critical masculinities interventions and ensure that they are not hijacked by MRAs. As one participant who is part of a critical masculinities initiative explained,

we are [...] hoping to have more female-identified people join the committee [...] because we don't want it to devolve into sort of a male rights group. [...] We do want to provide services for male-identified people or folks as survivors, but also we just don't want it to become a group or a room for just men to come and voice their frustrations about society because that's not very helpful. (004)

While it is a delicate balance, I would argue that if these critical masculinities initiatives are done in a way that effectively engages with the complexities of cisgender men's experiences of privilege and oppression, they might actually be able to counteract some of the appeal of men's rights activism.

As with other sexual violence prevention efforts, critical masculinities initiatives must be grounded in intersectional analysis that addresses the complex relationships between masculinity and other categories of identity and the uneven ways that power is distributed through them (Crenshaw, 1991). As one of the participants argued,

there needs to be spaces for all men but there needs to be spaces for men of colour in particular because I think that our experiences are very different. [...] So, for example, you're walking down the street, there's a woman in front of you, she clutches her purse, and crosses the street. That only happens to men of colour. [...] We need safer spaces where black, racialized males can talk about those experiences and kind of decipher what that means. How do we try as much as possible to make female-identified individuals [...] feel comfortable without necessarily discrediting our identities or apologizing for who we are? (004)

Anti-violence efforts must also acknowledge, for example, that in Canada's settler colonial context, violence against Indigenous women may be used to stabilize not only masculinity, but also white supremacy (Razack, 2000). The ways in which racism shapes popular notions about the perpetration of sexual violence (Davis, 1981; Ikeda & Rosser, 2010) must also be addressed, particularly with respect to decisions regarding the role of campus security and the criminal justice system in institutional responses to sexual violence. Further, rather than simply including queer and transmasculine students by deploying the terms 'masculine-' or 'male-identified students,' anti-violence efforts must engage with the ways that queer and trans masculinities might challenge or complicate normative masculinity and its relationship to sexual violence (Jourian, 2017; Jourian, 2018; Brabaw, 2018). As these examples demonstrate, if efforts to engage male-identified students in preventing sexual violence fail to account for these complex intersections and power relations, they risk reproducing other forms of violence and oppression, including racism, colonialism, cisnormativity, heteronormativity, and ableism.

Women's resistance training

Another form of sexual violence prevention found at some universities in Ontario focuses on women's resistance to sexual violence. In many instances, this type of intervention is limited to women's self-defence workshops. However, U Windsor, Queen's, and Carleton have implemented a more substantial program called the *Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act* (EAAA) sexual assault resistance program, also known as *Flip the Script* (SARE Centre, n.d.). Developed by Dr. Charlene Senn at U Windsor, the EAAA program is delivered in four three-hour units that focus on training participants to assess the risk of acquaintance sexual assault, overcoming emotional barriers to resisting, developing verbal and physical resistance strategies, and

exploring sexuality and relationships (Senn et al., 2015). The program has been found to be highly effective: women who finished the program experienced a 46 per cent reduction in completed rape and a 63 per cent reduction in attempted rape in the year following their participation in comparison with women who did not participate in the program (Senn et al., 2015) and these effects have been proven to last for at least two years (Senn et al., 2017). It is also important to acknowledge that the EAAA program is grounded in radical feminism and is framed specifically as resistance rather than as prevention or ‘risk avoidance’ to counteract victim-blaming narratives and to communicate that perpetrators are solely responsible for sexual violence (Senn, 2011).

Few research participants had direct experience with women’s resistance training programs but those who did generally spoke favourably of them. One participant argued that these efforts are effective in that after participating in the program, “the women carry themselves differently and they are just less willing to take shit, whether that’s someone being sexually coercive or just someone disrespecting them in general. I feel like this is a bit of a confidence boost for women” (009). Another participant who was in the midst of navigating their institution’s formal reporting process for a recent sexual assault when they participated in resistance training described it as an “empowering” experience (020). The participant said that “it was hard at times because I was right in the middle of my case [...] but I realized that there was such a good support system and I needed that safe place to go where other women would be supportive” (020). Similarly, another participant, who had experience facilitating resistance training, claimed that “both women who have experienced an assault [...] and those who haven’t say at the end they had such a sense of community and sisterhood in the program that they just

feel supported. And they feel more confident and safer and just better about their experiences overall” (009).

Despite these experiences, participants discussed resistance to implementing anti-violence efforts that focus on women. One of the primary sources of this resistance is the perception that anti-violence efforts that focus on women are inherently victim-blaming. For example, one participant stated: “I understand the value in teaching females ‘oh these are some situations to worry about and stuff’ but to me it’s putting a lot of pressure on the potential victims or the people in those situations” (012). However, another participant challenged this perception:

there is [...] a small proportion of feminists for whom any kind of self-defence is now seen as woman-blaming, which I have to say I just don’t get. We talk about the language of resistance for racism [...] and no one is suggesting that by saying we should resist racism that we’re blaming people who it’s aimed at. I mean it’s very clear that you’re resisting something that’s already existing and that you’re not standing for it anymore, that you’re going to challenge it, that you’re not taking it. (025)

Kipnis (2017) also rejects the critique that women’s resistance training is inherently victim-blaming and argues that it is necessary given that “feminine deference and traditionalism persist amid all the ‘pro-sex’ affirmations and slogans” (p. 218). Another participant acknowledged that some might ask

‘why do women have to resist?’ And our point is that you shouldn’t fucking have to. It’s bullshit that we do. But until we are able to change the whole world, we want to give you some tools so that you can be like ‘fuck you, no.’ And then if you do that or you don’t do that and something happens to you, we’re not saying that it’s your fault. (009)

Finally, another participant said: “would this be my personal political preference for how we stop rape? No, I would like men to stop committing rape” (010). However, given the effectiveness of the EAAA program, the participant concluded that in the interim, “if we have a program that

means that [...] fewer women are living with the consequences of having their right to bodily integrity violated, I'll take it" (010).

Participants also discussed whether women's resistance programs are inclusive of trans women and non-binary people. A couple of participants claimed that Wen Do, a popular women's self-defence program, excludes trans women. As one participant explained, "we didn't do Wen Do last year because, again, we had a coordinator who is trans and non-binary and was having a really hard time because they only wanted [...] cis women in the space" (030). Another participant claimed that Wen Do facilitators had welcomed non-binary people to attend self-defence classes. Some programs, including EAAA, are open to trans women. However, participants acknowledged that the extent to which the programs address the fullness and particularities of trans women's experiences and identities may be limited. As one participant explained,

I've had lots of trans women in the program [...] and generally they leave with the same skillset and the same tools in their toolbox that we want all women to leave with. But I feel like there are pieces where it just doesn't speak to them as much [...] where we're talking about socialization and emotional barriers to responding to coerciveness. [...] How do I speak to your lived experience? [...] If you're a transgender woman and [...] you were socialized differently from someone who was socialized female at birth, you don't have the same experience. You don't have the same [social] scripts to follow. (009)

The participant concluded that "it's almost like we need an entirely different program to address trans peoples' experience [...] but it can't be developed by a cisgender woman who's hetero. It has to be developed from their lived experience" (009). While I appreciate that the participant's comments are directed toward developing programming that is trans-inclusive, given the ways in which the discourse of 'lived experience' has been used to exclude trans women, as the Nixon

case discussed in Chapter 1 so clearly illustrates, it is important to avoid reifying this difference and to acknowledge the diversity of trans women's identities and experiences (Serano, 2013).

Participants also discussed the importance of language in relation to inclusion in women's resistance programs. One participant said:

for people who are genderqueer [or] nonbinary, because we do use the language of women, I think that's a challenge. They can feel like 'is there a place for me in this? What will my experience be?' We've been very purposeful from the beginning of, you know, saying that we're inclusive of all women, including trans women. There's no distinction there but I do think that as categories of gender identity become more fluid, that is something that we have to wrestle with. [...] Is there other language that we could use that would be more inclusive? And it just feels like everything that we've tried still feels insufficient in some way, like we're still trying to box people in or make them fit. (010)

Similarly, another participant described how "there are pieces in the workshop that will talk about all genders and all identities and there will be disclaimers, you know, 'women can have all types of bodies.' But I think that sometimes those feel kind of tacked on" (028). The participant explained that the program continues to privilege cisgender women on the basis that they are likely to constitute the majority of participants. Another participant discussed the differentiation between 'women' and "people who identify as women" in the program content and said that their friend had written to the facilitators to request that they change the language because "just by the way that it's written, you're segregating these two groups of people" (012). In this sense, the participant suggested that it is important to avoid language that might suggest that trans women are somehow not 'real' women.

The question of whether trans women feel welcome in these anti-violence programs was also raised. One participant who is involved in facilitating women's resistance training described efforts that they are making to be more inclusive: "we've been really thinking about things like

putting pronouns on nametags and overtly welcoming transgender women into our workshops.

[...] Transgender women have never been excluded [...] but I think we've been really purposeful to say [...] 'this is a space for you'" (028). Given the long history and ongoing reality of trans exclusion within the anti-violence movement (Pyne, 2015; Findlay, 2006; Elliot, 2004), explicit statements of trans inclusion may be an important means of addressing barriers to trans women's participation in these programs.

The challenge of addressing the range of women's experiences is not limited to gender identity. For example, one participant described facilitating resistance training with a group of racialized, cisgender women: "they said that the party scenarios, the dating style, the way that you guys talk is so white. And it is so white. I think we only have one person of colour in our actual video demonstration of things. Visually it's very white, but culturally it's very white as well" (009). Participants also acknowledged the importance of addressing these differences in women's resistance initiatives, particularly with reference to the ways in which they may shape women's safety and ability to resist. As one participant explained:

black women, in particular, and Indigenous women fighting back are far more likely [...] to be criminalized. So women do raise questions about criminality and like 'am I going to be charged?' And it's true, for the most part we're saying 'no, likely not' because what we're telling them is use the amount of force that's proportionate. So if someone makes a comment, you don't break their collarbone, right? [...] I don't think that we do interrogate the fulsomeness though of what is proportionate when you are a woman of colour. (010)

Similarly, another participant said that

we know for sure that one of the additional obstacles to resistance for African American women and also probably for Indigenous and black Canadian women is that perception that if you fight back you are more likely to be criminalized. And so the facilitator training deals with that in case it comes up. It's not brought up because, again, you're trying to go with what's in the room to help women overcome their own barriers but they are trained to know that so they make sure that they don't dismiss that possibility and, at

the same time, that they encourage women to do what they need to do to get out of a situation and count on the fact that the rest of the women in this room will back you up. (025)

While racialized cisgender women may experience a greater risk of criminalization, as the cases of Cece McDonald, Eisha Love, Ms. Campbell illustrate, trans women of colour are particularly vulnerable to incarceration and violence when defending themselves (Matos, 2018).

Finally, women's resistance training has been critiqued for reproducing the framing of sexual violence as an individual issue rather than a social and structural issue (E. Quinlan, 2017). The emphasis on 'empowering' individual women to resist sexual violence is particularly concerning given its compatibility with neoliberal logics (Murphy, 2018). As Bell Murphy (2018) explains, while the research supports the effectiveness of women's resistance training,

what is not so clear from this literature is how we might define a *feminist* empowerment approach to self-defence teaching, one which is clearly distinguishable from neoliberal iterations of "empowerment" in the context of sexual violence prevention. [...] This is important because of neoliberalism's tendency to appropriate the discourses and symbols of progressive social movements, emptying them of critical content and subversive power and selling them back to us as "uncanny doubles" (Fraser 2013, p. 224). (as quoted p. 74).

Senn (2011) acknowledges that while the EAAA program discusses how social norms and beliefs contribute to sexual violence, participants do not necessarily adopt this analysis.

However, she argues that the program's effectiveness is tied to its emphasis on the individual level:

we need to individualize (i.e. personalize) the risk to women so that they will feel the material in the programme is relevant to their lives and will be open to exploring the cognitions and emotional and behavioral response necessary for them personally to resist the violence and coercion that will come from men they know. *We must* also firmly focus on individual male responsibility to ensure that blame is placed where it belongs with the coercive man in the interaction with them. [...] However, when we are doing this intense focus on individual application, we are inadvertently and simultaneously countering

messages about the social influences on sexual assault rates and acceptance. (p. 130, emphasis in original)

Senn (2011) concludes that because of this limitation, women's resistance programs should be implemented in conjunction with other prevention efforts that address how social norms contribute to sexual violence. Senn (2011) points to U Windsor as an example where EAAA is implemented alongside their *Bystander Initiative*, though bystander programs have been similarly critiqued for focusing on the ability of individuals to intervene (E. Quinlan, 2017).

Orientation strategies

Given that research demonstrates that post-secondary students are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence during their first year (Mellins et al., 2017), which is often referred to as 'the red zone' (Flack et al., 2008; Kimble, Neacsiu, Flack & Horner, 2008; Cranney, 2015), many universities include prevention and education initiatives as part of their student orientation activities. In addition to their heightened vulnerability, one participant argued that it is important to target first-year students because "not all of them have had sexual experiences yet [...] so we find that as this becomes a [...] self-exploration period, [...] it's so important to know how to keep yourself safe in those moments" (011). Another participant framed the emphasis on first-year students as "a pre-emptive strike, trying to acculturate them into understanding sexual violence isn't ok so [that] before you get onto this campus and you start living a little more free than you used to, [you] understand this" (019). Similarly, another participant reasoned that "it's because they're the easiest to influence in the sense that they haven't come to campus and made concrete habits yet or haven't been exposed to this education at all" and because "freshman are just starting so I think they have an opportunity to be influenced and influence others over the rest of their degree" more than students in their final year would (022).

Other participants highlighted challenges associated with targeting first-year students. As one participant explained,

they are all over-programmed and I think of it like Maslow's hierarchy of needs. They get here and they are down at the bottom of their hierarchy just trying to find food [...] So when we're trying to be like 'no, we want you to think of these higher order social problems and how you're responsible,' they're like 'No! I don't know where to go to the bathroom yet!' (010)

Drawing on their experience as a mature student, another participant pointed out that not all first-year students attend orientation activities and, as such, if prevention and education efforts are limited to orientation, they may not be accessible to everyone.

Participants discussed the various types of prevention and education initiatives that different institutions use during orientation week, along with their potential benefits and limitations. While one-time workshops and guest speakers seem to be a common approach to sexual violence education during orientation, participants questioned their effectiveness. As one participant explained,

we were spending like 15 grand to bring this speaker from the States, [a] white man. He'd bring a couch on stage and then kind of call people up on stage and get them to act out scenarios. [...] It was interactive so that's great [...] but] because it started raining, everyone left. They were bored and everyone left so no one was there for the consent piece. (018)

The participant cited this as a clear example that "most of the people who were making decisions about this are not educators," given that "we know that people pay attention for about 20 minutes to someone talking" (018). As an alternative, the participant proposed developing a shorter play about consent, which is an approach that several universities, including UOIT, Waterloo, York, and McGill, have adopted in recent years. The participant noted that the administration was initially resistant to the idea:

when we told him that this was what we were doing [he] was like ‘you’ve cut it down from an hour to 20 minutes?’ He was like ‘how is that going to look when people see? They’re going to think that we don’t care as much about this.’ I was like ‘well actually if they’re educators they probably will understand that this is likely a better way to get the information across.’ (018)

This conversation highlights the administration’s investment in ensuring that the prevention and education efforts that they offer contribute to the public image that they are trying to cultivate.

Participants had mixed perspectives on the effectiveness of plays as a format for education during orientation week. The participant who was involved in developing a play suggested that “it was good in the sense that it got students talking to other students about the issues. [...] And that cost us way less than the speaker from the States and provided some employment for the students that were acting” (018). Another participant argued that the play alone was insufficient:

it’s a joke compared to an hour and half session. It’s like a 30-minute play about consent scenarios, right? And that’s great and that’s cool but at the same time it’s nowhere near the amount of work that should be done regarding sexual violence and the amount of preventative measures that you can put in place for that as opposed to just being exposed to scenarios that could happen. (027)

In general, participants suggested that prevention and education initiatives during orientation are often too brief to be effective. Participants were also critical of the fact that prevention and education efforts implemented during orientation are sometimes the only large-scale initiatives in place. As one participant explained, “I think the most glaring limitation is that there is not a consistent effort to always have these conversations. It happens at frosh but after that like nothing. [...] If we’re really committed to eradicating this type of experience, then we have to start talking about doing this all the time” (031). In this sense, while orientation is an important

time to implement prevention and education efforts, there is a need for more sustained engagement rather than one-time interventions.

My research participants also highlighted efforts to intervene in frosh events where alcohol is being served given that alcohol consumption has been linked to increased perpetration and vulnerability to sexual violence (Abbey et al., 2014; Senn et al., 2014; Testa & Livingston, 2018). For example, one participant who is a student union leader said “because we’re bringing 3000 people into a concert where there’s drinking [...] we’ll always bring in consent material but also people who are just there to inform and it helps people if something were ever to happen” (027). The participant also discussed efforts to do sexual violence prevention training with the staff at the bars on campus. Another participant described a similar initiative to communicate that the “venue is responsible for the safety of everyone in there” (017).

In addition to bar staff, participants cited orientation leaders as another important target audience for prevention and education. As one participant explained, “we presented to them about their role as an orientation leader and how the froshies will look up to them and how they have a strong voice within the community. And then we talked about [...] consent [...] and] how to be an active bystander 101” (005). However, the participant argued that the effectiveness of this training was limited by the way that it was planned: “I really don’t think that two hours during a pep rally day was appropriate. It should have been longer and it shouldn’t have been squashed between ‘How to Have School Spirit!’ Like the event this year was pretty poorly planned and people came in [...] an hour late” (005). This poor execution is unfortunate because, as one participant pointed out, orientation leaders have an important role to play in setting the tone for new students: “when I was a first-year going to frosh week, before every event there

would be someone who would go on stage and say ‘remember folks, no means no’ and I just remember how much that meant to me when I heard it” (016). The importance of training orientation leaders is also illustrated by the infamous pro-rape chants led by orientation leaders at SMU (Haiven, 2017) and UBC (CBC News, 2013).

Finally, one participant raised concerns regarding the content of prevention and education initiatives during orientation week. The participant said:

what I’ve heard from a lot of students [is] that the things that they were taught through like the frosh sessions [...] don’t really reflect situations that happen in real life or that [...] they don’t really speak to nuances or certain groups like LGBTQ groups or racialized or religious minority groups where the factors at play are very specific and they can’t just be addressed through an ‘enthusiastic yes’ type approach. (031)

The participant cited a specific example from the consent play performed during orientation week where “the girl was in the library and she was reaching for a book on a shelf and you’ve got guys who are looking under her skirt” and argued that “something similar to that might happen but I think there’s much more relevant and frequent types of sexual harassment or assault that actually happen” and should be addressed. Further, the participant described a conversation with another student regarding how

there’s a very big discrepancy between what you get taught, you know ‘you need to ask for consent’ and [...], specifically in first year, the type of environment that you’re living in in residence. And the person was talking about how there were floors that were ‘jock’ and toxic masculinity-fuelled and you have these concentrations of certain types of beliefs and energies and that’s only being offset by one hour-and-a-half session where no one is taking it seriously. They’re just being lectured at. They’re probably on their phone. It’s like the delivery is not done in such a way that people feel like they are engaging with it, that they feel like it’s relevant to their life, that they feel like they still know what to do in a situation. (031)

As such, the participant concluded that there is no sense that the administration “know[s] what these university students are actually doing, what they are facing, what a party is like” (031) and that the prevention and education initiatives are therefore unlikely to be effective.

Heightened security as prevention

Securitization and increased policing are commonly framed as strategies to prevent sexual violence on campus. As I mentioned in Chapter 3, I recently encountered a group of student activists on my own campus who were gathering signatures to petition the administration to increase security presence and install more emergency lighting on campus. Research also demonstrates that students are invested in these strategies as a means of preventing sexual violence (Gray & Pin, 2017). However, my research participants were generally quite critical of security-based approaches for a number of reasons.

Several participants pointed out that survivors often have negative experiences reporting sexual violence to campus security forces and police. One participant described hearing that campus security officers asked survivors insensitive questions such as “was there penetration?” as soon as they called in to report sexual violence (018). The participant also discussed the pervasiveness of rape myths among campus security officers: “they still hold very strong beliefs about if she comes back and says ‘oh actually it wasn’t this floor, it was this floor,’ then she must be making it up. And they really have that mindset and don’t understand how trauma impacts” survivors (018). As such, the participant argued that there is an urgent need to train campus security officers to respond in ways that are more survivor-centric and trauma-informed. These arguments are clearly supported by the *Globe and Mail*’s investigation into the rates of police coding sexual assault cases as ‘unfounded.’ The investigation revealed that the national rate of

‘unfounding’ for sexual assault was 19.39 per cent, which is at least twice as high as the ‘unfounding’ rates for other types of crime (Doolittle, 2017). As the investigation concluded,

when complaints of sexual assault are dismissed with such frequency, it is a sign of deeper flaws in the investigative process: inadequate training for police; dated interviewing techniques that do not take into account the effect that trauma can have on memory; and the persistence of rape myths among law-enforcement officials. (Doolittle, 2017, para. 28)

Further, one of the participants discussed their experience of being assaulted by a campus security officer, who faced only minor consequences for his actions, as an example of institutional failure to take campus sexual violence seriously.

Participants also discussed the systemic racism and colonialism embedded in policing and securitization. Given the way that the construct of the ‘ideal’ survivor of sexual violence is embedded in and reproduced through the criminal justice system, participants suggested that survivors who do not conform to this image may not be assisted by campus security officers. As one participant who identifies as black explained, “when there were a bunch of sexual assaults on campus [...] it was so scary and then the thing that I knew about security guards is they don’t do anything. They’re not here to protect me” (030). For another participant, these dynamics were confirmed by a recent incident where racialized students were “beaten up by white supremacist protestors at a [university] event. The campus police defended the white supremacists because they were holding the event and these feminists of colour were protesting the event so the police did nothing for them” (029).

Another participant, who identifies as Indigenous, said: “I’ve been placed in vulnerable settings where I’m walking home at night and there’s no one else around but I can’t tell anybody that because the people I have told haven’t really cared” (014). The participant argued that while

there is growing recognition that, because of the history and ongoing reality of colonialism, Indigenous women experience heightened vulnerability to sexual violence, this does not necessarily translate in the campus context. As the participant concluded, “Indigenous women are here but nobody gets that they are here” (014). Similarly, Hunt (2016) argues that there is an urgent need to name the colonial nature of campus sexual violence to disrupt the logic that “the legacy of sexual violence originating in colonial processes and policies, including residential schools, is only felt intergenerationally within Indigenous communities imagined at a distance from th[e] university” (p. 3). This imagined distance not only erases the experiences of Indigenous students, faculty, and staff but also functions to produce the university as a neutral space, thus obscuring its relationship to colonialism and location on unceded territory (Hunt, 2016).

Participants also highlighted the ways in which racism frames the perpetrators of sexual violence as racialized ‘others’ and how this contributes to “international students or black students feeling like they can’t report to police” (026). As one participant explained, “when there were safety concerns on campus, black men were being stopped and asked why they were on campus, as if they couldn’t be students going to class. So yeah, definitely, policing is not always the best response” (030). As a member of a black student organization on campus, the participant described their efforts to resist: “we did a blackout, [...] we had conferences, [and] conventions on police and community safety condemning increase of police” (030). According to the participant, rather than addressing their concerns, the university administration responded by sending the black student organization letters instructing them to cease and desist.

Several scholars have written about racism and security-oriented responses to sexual violence at York specifically. On the subject of York's response to a series of sexual assaults in residence and on campus, Naoko Ikeda and Emily Rosser (2009) argue that

York's public relations strategy involves intentionally disconnecting the campus and university community from the surrounding area. It is located in North Toronto, close to the intersection of Jane and Finch, a low-income area of the city that is often the focus of sensationalized media reports on crime, gun violence, and poverty [...] In administrative approaches to the assaults on campus, what is usually a problem became very useful to the administration by allowing the displacement of campus violence onto the racialized area. (p. 38)

Similarly, Gray and Pin (2017) argue that in this framing,

the university is a site of modernity and progress whereas the neighbouring community represents pre-modernity, poverty and disorder. [...] York University engages strategic and ongoing colonization of the surrounding neighbourhood to disconnect itself from the Jane-Finch community but also strategically scapegoat incidents of sexualized violence onto the community. (p. 102)

This framing obscures the ways in which "the campus itself is deeply implicated and constituted through particular social relations of power, including gender and racial hierarchy" (Ikeda & Rosser, 2009, p. 38). Despite the fact that the perpetrators in the Vanier residence rapes were white and former students of York, linking sexual violence with the campus' proximity to the Jane and Finch neighbourhood perpetuates the myth of black rapist (Davis, 1981) and the notion that the perpetrator is a stranger to the institution (Ahmed, 2017). Constructing the perpetrators in this way not only allows the institution to justify intensifying security measures (Ikeda & Rosser, 2009) but also conceals the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded (Ahmed, 2017).

Security measures are well-suited to the neoliberal corporate structures of Canadian universities. For example, the addition of campus security officers and better lighting are highly

visible and easily measurable demonstrations of an institution's commitment to preventing sexual violence (Gray & Pin, 2017). In the context of heightened public and media attention to the issue of campus sexual violence, Gray and Pin (2017) argue that a 'campus sexual assault industry' has emerged, whereby private companies and research centres have capitalized on the fear of sexual assault to commodify safety measures in the form of smartphone safety apps and campus security audits. These securitized measures allow the institution to project the image that they are responding to sexual violence "because they are commensurate with well-established rape myths. They root sexual violence in the construction of the racialized Other, the non-student, who comes to campus for the purpose of sexually assaulting students" (Gray & Pin, 2017, p. 104). However, in reality, these measures do little to prevent sexual violence given that in the majority of cases, the perpetrator is known to the victim/survivor, and that they fail to address the underlying structural and social factors that contribute to sexual violence.

Conclusion

While this is by no means an exhaustive account, this chapter has illustrated the wide range of sexual violence prevention and education efforts at Ontario universities, along with their potential strengths and limitations. Overall, this chapter demonstrates that sexual violence is primarily conceptualized as a depoliticized, interpersonal issue by university administrations and that there is little attention paid to its underlying structural and social causes in campus prevention efforts. In particular, there is little recognition of the ways in which sexual violence is embedded within post-secondary institutions and, in fact, as the discussion of enhancing security measures reveals, institutions may implement prevention efforts that reproduce sexual violence as an external issue perpetrated by 'strangers' to the institution. Further, prevention efforts

continue to be framed in a way that seeks to be palatable to cisgender men and leaves unaddressed the ways in which normative constructions of masculinity contribute to sexual violence.

Despite the fact that some Ontario universities have committed to implementing intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention, this chapter demonstrates that intersectionality rarely translates into prevention efforts beyond the level of individual inclusion and representation. As a result, these efforts do not account for differences in the ability to ‘just say no’ and the risk of criminalization and further violence for resisting or intervening. This shallow engagement with intersectionality is also evident in the fact that security measures are framed as prevention, which ignores the racist and colonial foundations of policing and the carceral system. The following chapter considers the challenges of implementing intersectional prevention efforts in the context of the neoliberal university, as well as broader considerations that shape institutions’ approaches to prevention, ranging from the practical to the political.

Chapter 7: The challenges and complexities of preventing campus sexual violence

While the previous chapter analyzes the strengths and limitations of some of the most prevalent approaches to prevention, this chapter examines overarching challenges and considerations that shape efforts to prevent sexual violence in the context of neoliberal post-secondary institutions. Drawing on the findings of my interviews, this chapter also discusses various strategies to address these challenges. These challenges range from the practical to the political, starting with the issue of attracting participation in anti-violence efforts. My findings suggest that prevention efforts mainly attract survivors or students who are already interested in anti-violence activism. While my participants viewed cisgender men as the ideal target audience for prevention efforts, they discussed the particular challenges of attracting their participation. I discuss some of the considerations related to facilitating anti-violence efforts, including participants' perspectives on the benefits and limitations of peer facilitation models and the importance of compensating students for their labour. This chapter also considers the difficulty of ensuring the long-term sustainability of campus anti-violence efforts and how neoliberal corporatization impacts anti-violence work. Further, I briefly examine what it means to be doing anti-violence work in the current political context in Ontario and in light of the growing presence of the alt-right and men's rights activism on campus.

I conclude this chapter by considering the challenges and complexities related specifically to translating institutional commitments to intersectionality into practice in the context of campus sexual violence prevention efforts. These challenges include the desire to avoid possible backlash, resistance to de-centring gender, and the reduction of intersectionality to

calls for individual inclusion and representation. I also highlight the potential limitations inherent in the institutional incorporation of intersectionality more generally.

Overarching challenges and considerations

Participation

Encouraging students to participate in efforts to prevent sexual violence was the most consistent overarching challenge cited by my research participants. As one participant explained, “no one is going to really take it unless you’re interested in taking it already but the people who are interested in taking it aren’t necessarily the people who we are trying to target and who need that training” (001). Another participant said that students who get involved tend to be “people who identify as survivors” and “a lot of queer activist types” (006) The participant acknowledged that sexual violence also occurs within queer communities but suggested that it was not necessarily where prevention efforts were “most sorely needed” (006). Similarly, another participant stated:

I think that the people who resonate the most with *No Means No* are not the people who need the education of *No Means No* [...] It’s young women saying ‘this is the first time that I’m being taught about bodily autonomy, about my right to say no, about my right to not want it.’ [...] The reality is that the audience often ends up being survivors. (016)

A few participants also described how prevention and education workshops with female students often devolve into “a #MeToo group” (011) or disclosure circle. These observations are supported by the fact that a number of my research participants identified as survivors and discussed how their experiences motivated them to become involved in anti-violence efforts.

Given that cisgender men perpetrate the majority of sexual violence, participants identified them as the ideal target audience for prevention efforts. However, they also discussed a number of challenges specifically related to engaging cisgender men. As one participant

explained, cisgender men may be under the impression that “‘this talk or seminar isn’t for me, it’s just for women’ and they don’t want to get involved because they feel like they will be singled out” (019). The participant suggested that this impression is especially common when prevention efforts are explicitly branded as feminist and may be perceived as “man-bashing” (019). Another participant argued that “it’s really, really difficult to get men to open up. It’s because it’s systemic. They’re socialized not to so it’s kind of a pain” (007). Drawing on a personal example, the participant went on to explain that even when cisgender men overcome this barrier, they may be uncertain about how to navigate gendered dynamics in anti-violence spaces in an equitable way:

I felt [...] nervous to talk about it surrounded by women because participation in it as a man is important but it’s not men’s job to take the reins because then it’s no longer women empowering women. It’s like men taking over and being like ‘oh yeah, we’ll do the feminist thing. We’ll make sure that you guys get what you need.’ That’s not the point. The point is that women can do things for themselves so it was like at what point am I over-participating and almost overstepping a boundary, right? (007)

A few participants also suggested that cisgender men may hesitate to become involved because they are afraid of being labelled as perpetrators.

Given these particular barriers to cisgender men’s participation, research participants discussed different strategies to try to encourage their involvement. For example, one participant described reserving half of the seats for male participants and “making sure that men are visible as facilitators” to convince “male students on campus that this might be an interesting thing to do and that it could be a part of their sense of themselves as men” (025). The participant also described a poster campaign featuring “men who are respected on campus” to demonstrate “that they care about this too in the hopes that it would encourage men in their disciplines to get involved” (025). Similarly, another participant reasoned that “it might take some cisgender men

to come forward and be allies and say ‘we need these intervention programs and [...] we’re going to support implementing them’” (003). Participants also suggested that involving specific groups of cisgender male students, such as varsity athletes and fraternities, is an important strategy to encourage broader cisgender male participation. As one participant explained, “I know that there were a couple of guys on the football team that were really involved and I think maybe that might have helped it to shift, mainly because our football team has like a hundred people on it and they can create a lot of change, positive or negative change” (013). Developing prevention efforts focused specifically on masculinities may also address the challenge of cisgender men perceiving these efforts to be for cisgender women, although participants who are part of a new critical masculinities initiative said that thus far the men who are involved are all queer-identified.

In addition to these strategies to specifically encourage cisgender men to participate, many participants argued in favour of making sexual violence prevention and education initiatives mandatory for all students. As one explained, “it’s always the same people who are really passionate about these issues and want to go talk but it’s just like we’re all talking to each other and we know. It needs to be mandatory” (026). Similarly, another participant claimed that “you can change your policy as much as you want but unless you’re forcing students to actually get into it, it’s not going to change” (012). One participant suggested that this is something that could have been included in Bill 132 as a policy requirement: “the fact that it’s not mandatory is really stupid. I just think who is participating in these voluntary trainings tells us a lot and what I’ve seen is that there’s not a lot of straight men. [...] That is a missed opportunity in those policies because they could have said [it is] mandatory” (006). The fact that mandatory training

for all students would require substantial financial resources might explain, at least in part, why it was not included as a requirement in the legislation. Beyond merely making prevention efforts mandatory, it is also necessary to consider which type(s) of prevention that would entail to ensure that these efforts effectively address the underlying causes of sexual violence and do not reproduce marginalization and systems of oppression.

Participants discussed efforts to make sexual violence education workshops mandatory for student clubs by tying attendance to the disbursement of their student union funding. One participant described how this has been successfully implemented on their campus:

you get your first chunk of funding in the fall and then your second chunk in the winter. So the way that we've done it, if you don't take the bystander intervention training—you have to have a minimum of five members come and do it—you're not getting your funding in the winter. So that brought a lot of people to come do our training and we've trained nearly a thousand people now. (002)

However, another participant questioned the capacity of the student union to conduct mandatory training workshops for all of the clubs funded by the union given that there can be several hundred of them on larger campuses. As the participant explained, “clubs have to go to our town halls, which do portions of those things but it's not the full training because we also have over 300 ratified clubs and there's no way that we could do that many trainings” (027). Another participant described how the union is planning to make at least five executive members from each club complete the online training module developed by the administration before they can access union funding. As such, online modules may be useful on larger campuses where the capacity to provide in-person training is limited; however, as the previous chapter highlighted, online modules may not be a particularly effective prevention strategy.

Finally, participants discussed the use of various incentives as a strategy to encourage participation. Several participants highlighted the use of bonus marks as an incentive. One participant said that they had initially become involved in prevention efforts because of an academic incentive and that “if they were to implement that in every single class, there would be so many more students sitting there and engaging” (008). Another participant explained that “sometimes we do gift cards, like \$50 gift cards. There’s a free lunch. We do snacks. We give out certificates at the end so there’s [sic] some incentives to come besides the program itself but again, it’s a money thing. We can’t do that every time” (009). A couple of participants also suggested that it would be useful to formally notate students’ involvement in anti-violence efforts on their academic transcripts. As mentioned in the previous chapter, U Windsor implemented a \$50 incentive for all first-year students to take their *Bystander Initiative* workshop during the 2018/2019 academic year. It will be useful to see whether and to what extent this incentive has been successful in increasing participation rates.

Facilitation

Participants also discussed a number of challenges and considerations pertaining to the facilitation of sexual violence prevention and education efforts. Several participants argued that using a peer-facilitation model is particularly important for prevention efforts targeted toward students. As one participant explained,

it was important for us to do peer-to-peer because for one, you don’t want to be talked down to [...] there’s a power imbalance there too because [...] if you’re having an administrator come in you might not feel comfortable enough to ask them questions [...] Also, we know more about how things are and about the culture on our campus because we’re the ones who are sitting in class hearing about it. (002)

Similarly, another participant suggested that

if you have someone in an authority position telling you what to do it's not as accessible whereas if you have a fellow peer telling you 'this is how *we're* going to change the culture,' I think it's more digestible as well. And then also too, now that you have all these peer facilitators, you have all these students who are already engaged in the campus and going to the regular classes that students can talk to and look to where they otherwise wouldn't with a professor. (022)

From what I have observed, the use of peer facilitation is common at universities across Ontario.

Other participants discussed some of the potential limitations of peer facilitation models. For example, one participant explained that while they felt that peer-to-peer education is effective, students "don't all have a comprehensive knowledge on different intersecting issues with sexual violence. So the effectiveness [...] facilitating the workshop, and being able to combat challenging questions varies from student to student" (015). Similarly, another participant asked: "how much education do they need to have so that they don't go in and start inadvertently reinforcing rape myths?" (018). Finally, another participant argued that "sex is just about so much more than saying yes or no to specific activities [...] If it's peer-education, [...] someone who is 22 doesn't have perspective on just like other shit and how that plays a really important part in intimate relationships" (006). These examples speak to the importance of training student facilitators and ensuring that they have access to the support required to effectively deliver content to their peers.

Participants suggested that the peer expert model is a potential strategy to address these concerns without completely losing the value of peer facilitation. One participant argued that "the people that we are most likely to be influenced by are the people who you perceive as being peers but also perceive as having a particular expertise. And so those are the people we want in these roles" (010). In this sense, a participant who works as a facilitator explained, "we're peer experts so it's students who are in relevant fields of study and have relevant experience, who

have been pulled, interview, vetted, and then we get extensive training” (009). Participants also discussed how limiting the level of autonomy that peer facilitators have in terms of the workshop content could mitigate some of these concerns. Two of the three selected institutions in this study use peer facilitators in their prevention efforts. At one institution, the facilitators were trained to adhere closely to specific scripts whereas at the other institution facilitators described several instances in which they added or modified workshop content. There are potential benefits and limitations to each of these approaches. For example, adhering to a specific script allows for more consistency and rigorous evaluation and, depending on the content of the script, could potentially avoid the risk of facilitators reinforcing rape myths. However, it may also limit the ability of the facilitators to adapt the content to their peers and to connect with them in a meaningful way.

Another challenge related to peer facilitation is that students have many competing demands on their time and may have limited availability. Several participants raised the issue of facilitation capacity as a major factor that can limit the potential to expand prevention efforts on a given campus. As one participant explained,

I think our biggest challenge is that we just don't have enough facilitators. So for whatever reason, whether they have too much coursework or they're no long on campus or whatever it may be, we just don't have enough facilitators and the demand says that we need them. Every workshop is fully registered almost and there's huge waitlists. (022)

Another participant described the responsibility of coordinating workshop facilitation as a “nightmare” and explained that “everyday I'm riddled with anxiety like ‘please don't let anyone call in sick’ because then half of your day is spent calling all of the facilitators for a back-up and if not you have to cancel” (023). As such, the participant said that they hoped the administration

would provide the additional resources necessary to recruit students as facilitators and to provide administrative support.

Participants also highlighted the importance of compensating students who work as peer facilitators. As one participant explained, “when I talk about the importance of centring student voices that comes with a caveat that there has to be compensation. There has to be recognition of the emotional labour and just the work that goes into assisting [...] in these conversations” (016). Compensation was another area where there were very clear discrepancies between the two campuses that employed peer facilitators. On one campus, participants argued that peer facilitators are well-compensated and supported by the administration. On the other campus however, several participants highlighted how little peer facilitators are paid and how this impacts prevention efforts. As one participant explained,

overall the work that is being done is by people who initially are paid very, very big amounts at the top and then the students who are being expected to propagate the work are being paid very little to do that. [...] The Executive Director [responsible for sexual violence] makes ridiculous amounts of money and then the students who [facilitate...] got a \$100 honorarium. (027)

Another participant from that campus described doing “additional workshops for nothing” (005). The participant argued that “you’re going through very intense training and this is such important information [...] I think that it degrades the seriousness of the content. [...] The pay is not reflective of the work and I think it kind of also affects the quality of the work as a facilitator” (005). Similarly, another participant from the same campus reasoned that in the current capitalist context,

volunteer positions don’t tend to get the same level of prestige as paid work because it’s just seen as if it’s truly valuable then you would have been paid for it. So I think even beyond the idea that it’s very vulnerable work and that people should be paid for it because they need to feed themselves and they need to have the energy to keep going

back, I think it's also the idea of they should be paid for it because you need to reflect the idea that there is value attached to this work. (004)

Further, as one participant pointed out, one must have a certain amount of socio-economic privilege to be able to afford to work for such a small honorarium, which effectively excludes some students from becoming involved in prevention efforts as peer facilitators.

Resources and sustainability

Participants also shared their perspectives on what is required to ensure the long-term sustainability of efforts to prevent sexual violence on university campuses. One of the most significant factors that participants identified is whether there are sufficient resources to sustain prevention efforts. As one participant explained, “to get the facilitators to do it, it's an investment. We need so much training and you have to pay people to do the training. And then there's all the physical resources; you need the space, you need the time. It's an expensive program to run” (009). In this sense, the more substantial the prevention effort, the more resource-intensive they tend to be. Given the emphasis on profit in the context of neoliberal corporatization, institutions may opt to implement less substantive and resource-intensive models of prevention regardless of whether they are less effective, particularly if they are more invested in appearing to prevent sexual violence rather than actually preventing it. As one participant argued, “the administration really pushes for [...] things that are flashy and things that look really good but that don't actually do anything” (027). Similarly, Elizabeth Quinlan (2017) claims that prevention efforts that address the underlying social and structural causes of sexual violence lead to “outcomes that cannot all be quantified and measured against their cost of implementation” (p. 63) and are thus unappealing to neoliberal institutions. In this sense, she concludes that “the inner logic of corporatization has a suppressive effect on genuine initiatives

to address sexual violence” (E. Quinlan, 2017, p. 70). However, one participant suggested that investing in effective prevention up-front could actually cost institutions less in the long run by allowing them to avoid costly lawsuits.

Participants also discussed the importance of human resources and capacity as a factor that affects the sustainability of prevention efforts. As one participant explained, “we have made incredible gains and we have an impact that many universities would just love to have and yet every year, the amount of energy, the amount of womanhours it takes to launch this is so ginormous that that is a real challenge” (025). This challenge is particularly clear in the case of institutions where a single staff member has been tasked with coordinating prevention efforts in addition to receiving disclosures and formal reports of sexual violence and providing support to survivors. As the participant stated, “there’s still such under-resourcing, and that includes the human cost that we were talking about, as if one person could do this” (025). Another participant discussed the amount of emotional labour that is required to sustain prevention efforts: there is a need to make “sure that everyone is supported who’s running it, like emotionally supported, because it can be heavy to do this work” (009). As Chapter 5 highlights, the invisibility of this emotional labour in the context of the neoliberal corporatization of institutions is evident in the lack of support for staff members in these positions.

Participants argued that institutionalizing prevention efforts is essential to ensure their sustainability. As one participant explained,

I’m trying to think of how do I play these cards in a way that’s going to institutionalize this? I think it’s so important because sexual violence is having its day right now. This will not always be the issue. 10 years from now, it will be something else. So we need to make it really hard to withdraw resources when the issue changes. (010)

One of the institutionalization strategies that participants discussed was embedding sexual violence prevention and education within the curriculum. As one participant explained, “by embedding it in the curriculum in the context of a university, it gives the issue legitimacy that it wouldn’t have otherwise” (021). Further, another participant discussed how “one thing that doesn’t get cut on university campuses is courses if students are registered” and that embedding prevention in the curriculum ensures that “it’s not seen as something that’s extra but rather that this is the work of the university” (025). Several participants also expressed the desire to make courses on sexual violence mandatory for all students as a strategy to address the challenges related to recruiting participants.

Embedding sexual violence prevention and education into the curriculum necessitates involving faculty and participants highlighted a number of benefits associated with faculty leadership. One participant argued that “faculty, compared to staff, often have more institutional power and so when you can have faculty throw their weight behind something there is better likelihood, in my opinion, that you’re going to get buy-in from your administration” (010). Similarly, another participant reasoned that “because we’re academics, we’re respected in a particular way [... and] it mattered because we could convince people to give us the money, that we were trustworthy. You know, when we said we’ll evaluate and if it doesn’t work we’ll figure out what would, they could trust that” (025). Participants also pointed to the greater job security enjoyed by faculty as a reason why their leadership could contribute to sustainability. One participant described making “a deliberate choice” to embed prevention in the curriculum rather than “put it into Student Affairs because of the turnover problem, because of the here-today-gone-tomorrow money [...] all of those things make for a shakiness that if you are interested in

changing the climate on campus, you're defeated before you start" (021). Participants also argued that faculty members have the research expertise to develop effective prevention efforts. One participant explained that initially, "many of the things that were being done were student-led, that is student-invented, and I heard terrible things about them over a period of time. [...] People who don't know anything about these topics, in some cases, were doing little bits of education" (025). As such, the participant suggested that rather than student-led prevention, institutions should aim for student-engaged prevention, "because it means then that it's being guided by the evidence of what works, as well as being influenced by the students every single year" (025). Another participant suggested that when faculty members "who are tenured and who are in positions of power are willing to really overtly say 'we have a sexual violence problem here and we're tackling it and here is our concrete strategy,'" it could alleviate the pressure that students face to take on this issue (028). Participants also noted that in comparison with staff, the respect that faculty members have means that they are better able to network and collaborate with other faculty members.

In addition to the benefits of faculty leadership, participants acknowledged some of the challenges that may limit their ability to become involved. For example, one participant raised concerns about capacity in that "the professors who are working on these things, usually their workload is rather large. They take a lot on and they're very passionate but they only have so much energy" (012). Similarly, another participant stated that "one of things that I've most found consistently is that when I report on what I do, people are always wanting me to do more" (023). The issue of capacity is exacerbated by the ways in which the neoliberal corporatization of the institution has impacted teaching, particularly with reference to the growing number of faculty

who are in part-time contract teaching positions rather than tenured positions, as discussed in Chapter 3. As one participant explained,

I've seen so many academics who are so good just be used up, chewed up and disposed of [...], killing themselves to teach all these classes and when those courses dried up or they hired a full-time person and they no longer needed that person, they literally just disappeared. [...] For me, a lot of our ethical commitments around sexual violence, around social justice, around race relations, around whatever we profess as an institution and as scholars in our disciplines to care about, as long as we have this myopia about all of these people who are doing so much of this work, it sounds very shallow to me. [...] So that neoliberal context in which all of our teaching and learning is happening, I think is really difficult to reconcile and until we really deal with that, I don't know how we can call ourselves moral leaders on very much. (023)

In this context, adding sexual violence prevention to the list of things that contract faculty members are expected to do seems unrealistic and unethical.

Participants also discussed some of the particular challenges inherent in teaching about sexual violence. For example, one participant said:

in the process of doing this work, it became very apparent to me, in fact I would say painfully obvious, that I couldn't do this work on a temporary contract. Teaching in the area of sexual violence is qualitatively different and it has a lot of challenges that one has to negotiate that don't come with the territory of teaching other classes and I was burning out. The emotional labour piece in particular was really challenging. [...] I didn't have a break between students coming and disclosing in office hours and teaching and it just became emotional and difficult. (023)

Another participant described the tensions of navigating the emotional labour involved in teaching about sexual violence as a survivor:

I remember wondering if I should even teach the class because I was going through so much personally around sexual violence that I was like 'is this actually hurtful to me, traumatizing to me to be teaching this class?' And then I thought 'well it's probably traumatizing for a lot of the students but they are still taking it and it is still an important class.' And I thought like 'I think I have the energy and [...] if I can do this, why not me? And then I can help my students and I can provide them with an avenue to work through these issues rather than just leaving it to somebody else take care of.' So I kind of felt that sense of solidarity and I think I expressed that to students. (029)

In the context of neoliberal corporatization, while this emotional labour is vital to the institution, it is generally unacknowledged and unsupported.

Participants also discussed both the importance and challenges of collaborating with other members of the campus community. As one participant explained,

to have the broad campus impact, you have to collaborate with people [...] but this kind of collaboration means [...]making] a lot of compromises on the way that I say things and being careful, thinking ‘ok, we just want to do this but if we do this, the people who are on staff who are doing this other thing, it may be encroaching so we better make sure that we talk.’ So it’s a lot of emotional labour of a different kind but it’s critically important. (025)

Another participant highlighted how the neoliberal corporatization of the institution makes these collaborations more difficult: “sometimes people resisted the program because they were jealous [of its funding and profile...] People are so overworked and under-supported, it doesn’t create a community of responsibility; it creates a community of competition” (023). Another participant described their unsuccessful efforts to develop a course-based approach to sexual violence prevention and the challenge of finding a department that was willing to collaborate. As the participant explained:

[I] started at the department level, sent in the proposal, and either didn’t get a response, got a response from the traditional department saying ‘you should talk to Women’s Studies’ [...] and then hearing from Women’s Studies especially like ‘we always have to do this stuff. Why should we be taking a course off our books to have this when this is something that the administration should either be paying for or doing themselves?’ [...] We can have these institutional power struggles around our departmental budgets or we can kind of decide if this isn’t going to happen any other way maybe we have to be the ones that do it. (018)

Thus while participants viewed collaboration across departments and levels of the institution as an essential means of ensuring the long-term sustainability of prevention efforts, building these relationships can be challenging. In this context, participants suggested that administrative

leadership, such as including prevention in an institution's strategic mandate agreement, could facilitate these cross-campus collaborations.

Broader political context

Finally, participants discussed how the broader political context impacts efforts to prevent sexual violence on campus. For example, the majority of participants discussed the importance of beginning sexual violence education and prevention efforts from an early age and explicitly challenged the Ford government's decision to repeal the updated sex education curriculum in Ontario. As one participant explained, "we need to be real about the fact that half of the people who are going to experience assault, [it's] going to happen before they get here. [...] The prevention effort needs to start way earlier, which is why revoking sex ed. doesn't make sense" (010). In particular, participants highlighted the need to address consent and cyber bullying from a young age.

Participants also discussed how anti-feminist backlash poses a challenge to sexual violence prevention efforts on campus. As one participant explained, when prevention efforts are explicitly linked to feminism, "some people are just completely opposed to that because they have their views, like the 'social justice warriors' and all that. [...] They put up that wall and they are just like 'oh, you're going to be radical'" (019). Similarly, another participant argued that

because these issues are so visible and so contentious and so divisive, there's a lot of hostility at times to the idea that 'oh great, here comes a feminist' and [...] the notion of 'social justice warrior' [...] People have so many stereotypes of what a feminist is. [...] So, yeah, I would say that what we're doing is radical because most people would prefer that we just shut up and go away. In fact, the more traction we make in challenging social norms and getting institutional responses and getting people fired and showing them that this behaviour is unacceptable and won't be tolerated, the more backlash there is. (023)

Another participant suggested that the anti-feminist backlash is particularly visible around the perceived relationship between sexual violence and abortion access:

the moment that the conversation about reproductive justice opens up it just makes it really difficult to talk about anything around consent or sexual violence or rape culture because all of a sudden it's about abortion rights more than anything else. And I think that's been a really hot topic of conversation over these past few months on this campus. (027)

Further, another participant suggested that making prevention efforts mandatory would escalate tensions with the “very loud and opinionated” far right minority on campus (004).

Another participant highlighted the presence of MRA groups on campus and the way that it can impact anti-violence efforts. As the participant explained,

I've never had death threats but I would be lying to say that I'm not sometimes fearful of extreme right-wing men's groups. [...] There sometimes is a real fear of being branded or being the target of hate because it's real and the more I do this work, the more I see how vulnerable we are to that and I would be naïve to think that it's not real. It is real and I probably don't dwell in that space for too long because it would be paralyzing. (023)

As the threats against feminists at U of T in 2015 (Hopper, 2015) and the violent assault of the student who was protesting men's rights activism at Queen's (Canadian Press, 2014) demonstrate, these fears are well-founded.

Participants also discussed the visibility of the alt-right and white nationalism on Canadian university campuses. For example, one participant said:

it's very hard to go into a classroom and to say to students 'we're going to talk about violence against trans people and why it's such a huge issue' and the next day Jordan Peterson is online releasing a new video attacking trans people. We read Michael Kimmel's work—and of course now there's controversy around him¹⁷—on white men and the next day there was a KKK rally or there was white supremacist posters put up. (029)

¹⁷ Michael Kimmel is a well-known sociologist and critical masculinities scholar whose work addresses cisgender men's violence and the rise of men's rights activism (see Kimmel, 2013). However, in 2018 Kimmel was accused of sexual harassment, homophobia, transphobia, and sexism by a former graduate student (Flaherty, 2018; Ratcliffe, 2018).

Another participant stated unequivocally “white supremacy on this campus is prevalent. It exists” (027). The participant went on to say that when they arrived on the morning of our interview, “all over campus there were posters and it was a picture of a white person, a white guy specifically, and on top of his face were all of the words ‘privileged,’ ‘fragile,’ ‘racist,’ ‘colonizer,’ ‘oppressor’” (027). The poster directed those passing by to the website of a white supremacist group that was started by a former student of the participant’s institution. It is important to recognize that the actions of these white supremacist student groups are not separate from the university but rather are intimately connected to the long history and ongoing reality of deeply embedded institutional racism (Henry et al., 2017), as the example of York’s displacement of campus sexual violence onto the nearby Jane and Finch community demonstrates (Ikeda & Rosser, 2009).

The challenges of approaching prevention from an intersectional analysis

One of the overarching questions guiding this dissertation was whether or not commitments to intersectionality articulated in some of the new sexual violence policies translate into practice in the context of universities’ prevention efforts and responses. As the previous chapters demonstrate, these responses and prevention efforts often fail to meaningfully and substantively engage with intersectionality. This failure has the potential to reproduce the notion of the ‘ideal’ survivor (Richie, 2000; Goel et al., 2015), while rendering other experiences of sexual violence invisible, and may reinforce the barriers that marginalized survivors face in accessing support. Further, this failure may also contribute to anti-violence efforts that reproduce other forms of violence, whether through exclusion or by legitimizing heightened security and carceral responses, for example. Given this failure, I asked my research participants about the

specific barriers and challenges associated with implementing intersectional anti-violence efforts at post-secondary institutions.

One of the most significant barriers to meaningfully translating commitments to intersectionality into practice on campus relates to its politicized nature and the possibility of generating backlash. As one participant explained,

when we think about intersectionality, there's a lot of feelings and a lot of political views that temper into that. So you get people who don't care what happens to people who don't have citizenship or who have precarious citizenship. You have people who don't support LGBTQ rights. You have people who want to be 'colour-blind.' And I think that there is a concern about if you have programs that actually speak to these more political aspects, [...] the administration feel[s] like they are going to get a lot of complaints. They are going to be in the media. There's going to be a whole uproar about it because there are people who are very committed to upholding a cis, heterosexual, patriarchal structure and so on. [...] They might feel that a generic gender-, race-, class-neutral program is going to be just fine and if it's not, then we have the [sexual violence] office, right? I think it takes real guts to put out a program that is going to actually get to the roots of the problem because I think that's what intersectionality does. It identifies what different power dynamics and factors are at play that shape these things and it's not just saying 'well once all of that has manifested, here is something that you can maybe do.' I think that that's a very shallow approach to take. (031)

Another participant discussed the impact of the recent free speech legislation and the Jordan Peterson (Pang, 2017; Bowles, 2018) and Lindsay Shepherd (Hutchins, 2017) incidents, which

really shifted the culture on our campus away from intersectionality in the sense that a lot of groups are still striving for it but the university as a whole is feeling a lot more tentative about it. [...] It became this space that was so heavily focused on freedom of speech and not saying things that could kind of spark this contentious debate. (028)

Given the ways in which public image and reputation matter in the context of the neoliberal corporatization of Canadian universities, institutions may not implement intersectional approaches to sexual violence to avoid controversy, particularly in light of the Ford government's recent cuts and changes in criteria for funding for Ontario colleges and universities (Crawley, 2019b).

Research participants argued that the mainstreaming of intersectionality also presents significant challenges. As one participant explained, “intersectionality has become a buzzword. It’s so trendy, unfortunately, and I think people mention it because you’re supposed to” rather than because they have a deep understanding of and commitment to intersectional praxis (030). Similarly, another participant said:

I think overall we’re definitely seeing a proliferation and mainstreaming, which means a diluting or simplifying of intersectionality. [...] I think it’s great that more people are learning and taking up that feminist language but I think it’s also not necessarily being used properly and people don’t fully understand what it is or where it came from or why it’s important. (029)

In particular, the participant highlighted the way in which intersectionality tends to be emptied of its structural analysis and “become this kind of public call for representation, for more than one story, for putting yourself in someone else’s shoes” (029). In this sense, the participant argued that there is

a real risk with intersectionality for it to be totally pared down to just race, class, gender—we are these different things [...] Intersectionality has now become too much about individual identity rather than about a system of power and a system of violence that it maintains and perpetuates. (029)

Collapsing intersectionality with identity lends legitimacy to neoliberal strategies that focus on individual inclusion and representation rather than on structural transformation (Erel et al., 2010).

The emphasis on inclusion and representation was reflected by the fact that when I asked participants about whether prevention efforts are intersectional, they often responded by pointing to the ways in which particular groups, such as Indigenous women and queer and trans people, experience heightened vulnerability to sexual violence. One of the challenges of approaching intersectionality as inclusion and representation is that some intersections are more visible than

others. For example, as one participant pointed out, “people are starting to acknowledge and see the intersectionalities between sexual assault and trans folks and sexual assault and racialized folks and black and Indigenous folks [...but] people still ignore the intersection between sexual assault and disability” (001). The fact that very few participants mentioned disability may be related to broader discourses that negate the sexuality of people with disabilities (Garland-Thomson, 2002; Esmail, Darry, Walter & Knupp, 2010; McRuer & Mollow, 2012). Another participant argued that religious identity is rarely discussed in relation to sexual violence prevention and education. The relative invisibility of these categories of identity in discourses of sexual violence may thus be perpetuated in anti-violence efforts.

The challenge of accounting for all identities and experiences is exacerbated by the limited timeframe of prevention workshops. As one participant argued,

this is not a Women’s and Gender Studies program; it’s one three-hour workshop. It can only do so many things and indeed when we first floated this idea, [...] people were saying ‘well can’t you do racism too? Can’t you do homophobia too?’ No, it’s a three-hour workshop. One thing cannot serve all difficulties, cannot address all problems. (021)

While time constraints are a legitimate concern, I would argue that the notion that making sexual violence prevention intersectional requires exhaustively accounting for every difference and construct of identity stems from a misreading of intersectionality often referred to as the additive model (Yuval-Davis, 2006). In this misreading,

the claim for inclusion and attention can nonetheless become problematic, where the ‘adding in’ of a specific ‘difference’—a case of see/hear my identity—becomes a matter of adding up, of being able to assert and claim identifications, rather one of challenging power relations in the ways that differences *matter*. (Taylor, Hines, & Casey, 2011, p. 2)

Instead, the construction of these categories of identity must be understood as process of co-constitution. Approaching intersectionality in this way reveals the structural dimensions of

sexual violence and its inseparability from racism and homophobia, along with other systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991; Incite!, 2006). Grounding sexual violence prevention efforts in this understanding de-centres the ‘ideal’ survivor and creates the space to consider implicatedness (Dean, 2015) rather than simply accounting for difference.

As I discuss in previous chapters, while recognizing the ways in which the intersections of sexual violence and systems of oppression render some populations more vulnerable to sexual violence than others is important, inclusion on the basis of vulnerability has the potential to reproduce harmful narratives that pathologize this vulnerability and obscure its structural and systemic roots (Hunt, 2016). As one participant explained, “some narratives of racialization are super traumatic [...] when we normalize violence against racialized bodies or we don’t position them as people who can be empowered at the same time or seek support at the same time [...] how are you reaffirming stigma?” (030). As such, in seeking to develop intersectional responses to sexual violence, it is important to keep the structural and systemic dimensions of violence in view and actively refute pathologizing narratives. The concept of implicatedness (Dean, 2015) may be useful in addressing this concern by bringing into view the ways in which the self is implicated in the structures and systems that unevenly distribute vulnerability.

As one research participant pointed out, part of the resistance to intersectional analyses of sexual violence emerges from reluctance to de-centre cisgender women:

I think that some people feel threatened that if they’re talking about intersectionality or you’re not just talking about violence against women, you’re sort of missing the point, which I get, or taking away from the specific and disproportionate violence that women face, which I totally understand. So I understand that but I also see sort of a way that [white] feminism pushes back against certain groups or marginalizes certain groups. (029)

This investment highlights the continued power and relevance of radical feminism's universalizing analyses of sexual violence (Brownmiller, 1975) in contemporary debates. Given the highly gendered nature of sexual violence perpetration, it is important not to lose sight of these dynamics. However, an intersectional analysis reveals that constructions of gender are co-constituted by the construction of other categories of identity (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). In this sense, de-centring gender does not equate to ignoring gender; rather, it means that gender is never outside of the constructs of race, class, sexuality, and disability, for example. As discussed in Chapter 1, the Incite! collective (2006) argues in favour of centring women of colour in anti-violence efforts because by "shifting the center to communities that face intersecting forms of oppression, we gain a more comprehensive view of the strategies needed to end all forms of violence" (p. 4). From this perspective, the investment in reducing sexual violence to 'violence against women' can be read as an investment in maintaining the construct of the 'ideal' survivor.

Participants also discussed the epistemic value of lived experience and how it impacts efforts to make sexual violence prevention intersectional. As one participant explained,

I just feel a lot more comfortable speaking about LGBT identity because I'm not straight, right? So that's easier for me to talk about. [...] I also had racialized facilitators have those conversations with students because I felt really uncomfortable doing it as a white person, being like 'hey, let's talk about [racism].' [...] And I think there are ways but you have to spend a lot of time thinking about it. You have to do it from an ethic of care and from a really careful understanding of your positionality. (028)

The participant suggested that there is a need for greater collaboration and consultation with different student groups and stakeholders on campus. However, they also acknowledged that for some, due to the historic and ongoing ways in which academic institutions are themselves sites of exclusion and violence (Henry et al., 2017; Tuck, 2009), there is an inherent mistrust of the institution that may serve as a barrier to these conversations.

Further, a few participants discussed the politics of assigning this labour to those who are already marginalized within institutional spaces. As one explained,

the people doing the work are the people living it. We weren't talking about [...] sexual violence against Indigenous women until myself, as a Métis woman, got elected to my student union. [...] I think the challenge around intersectionality is that for intersectionality to happen, it puts a lot of work on the shoulders of people in question and I don't necessarily know what the solution is to that because on the flip side, you don't really want an organization saying 'well you, Indigenous community, this is what you need.' [...] So it's finding that fine line between how to encourage that intersectionality to happen without kind of dictating it from the top-down but also bringing people in in a way that's, again, compensating them for their time, recognizing the emotional labour, recognizing that for a lot of people involved in this work, it's their own stories that are on the line. It's their own personal histories that are on the line and they're reliving it every day that they do this work. (016)

Another participant linked this issue to the broader ways in which institutional racism impacts hiring practices within the university: "I just wonder what the composition is of the people who are administering this [anti-violence] program [...] and whether they actually know what it's like to live at various intersections" (031). While participants expressed a desire to have anti-violence efforts that centre the knowledge and lived experiences of marginalized communities and avoid speaking on their behalf, they also recognized the additional labour that this creates for members of these communities and the responsibility that people in positions of privilege have to do the work of challenging systems of oppression. Hunt (2016) discusses the importance of 'consensual allyship' in campus anti-violence organizing, which for settlers means

confronting the uneasy reality that Indigenous peoples' knowledge, our labor, and our bodies are here, first and foremost, for our own survival. This means taking responsibility for your own learning and your own anger or sadness when confronted with truths of colonial violence that might be new to you. (p. 11)

In this sense, she argues that Indigenous people should not be responsible for doing the emotional labour required for settlers to be allies.

Ultimately, these challenges speak to broader concerns regarding the institutional incorporation of intersectionality within the neoliberal university. Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) argue that this incorporation has distanced intersectionality from its roots in social justice movements and reduced it to a mode of critical inquiry, obscuring its potential as a mode of critical praxis. In this sense, they characterize intersectionality's incorporation as "being invited to settle down within" the neoliberal university, rather than unsettling institutionally embedded inequities (p. 87). This incorporation thus functions to create the image of the institution as progressive and inclusive without necessarily transforming or disrupting these inequities. Thus while implementing intersectional efforts to prevent sexual violence necessitates going beyond individual inclusion and representation, the institution is invested in maintaining a shallow approach that leaves underlying structures and systems of power intact.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed some of the broader challenges and considerations that shape how post-secondary institutions approach sexual violence prevention, ranging from the practical to the political. In so doing, this chapter raises important questions pertaining to the long-term sustainability of campus anti-violence efforts, including the labour involved, emotional and otherwise; the possibilities and limitations of institutionally embedding these efforts; and the impact of the current political climate. In other words, this chapter considers how the momentum that exists in the current context might be harnessed to ensure that anti-violence efforts continue and the challenges that must be addressed in order to do so.

If efforts to prevent sexual violence are going to be effective, they must address its structural dimensions and its intersections with systems of oppression. However, the findings of

my research suggest that prevention efforts rarely engage with intersectionality beyond the level of individual inclusion and representation. As such, this chapter considers the particular challenges and complexities related to translating institutional commitments to intersectional responses to sexual violence into practice. As intersectionality has been mainstreamed, simply referencing it in the policy may serve to construct the institution as being particularly ‘progressive.’ However, the desire to avoid generating backlash in the current political climate serves as a disincentive to substantively engage with intersectionality in practice. My findings also suggest that intersectionality is being misread *as* identity, which contributes to additive approaches, and that there is resistance to de-centring the ‘ideal’ survivor in anti-violence efforts. Finally, I argue that these challenges relate to the broader tensions inherent in the institutional incorporation of intersectionality. In the Conclusion, I discuss the relevance of these findings and their implications for future research.

Conclusion

In the context of heightened public attention to the issue of sexual violence at Canadian universities, this dissertation has critically analyzed how sexual violence is being conceptualized in the new policies at Ontario universities and how this translates into practice in institutions' responses and prevention efforts. This research is grounded in an intersectional analysis of sexual violence, which de-centres the 'ideal' survivor (Richie, 2000; Goel et al., 2015) and challenges the dominant depoliticized framing of sexual violence as an interpersonal issue by revealing its underlying structural roots and inseparability from systems of oppression (Crenshaw, 1989; Davis, 1981; Combahee River Collective, 1977). An intersectional analysis also demonstrates what is at stake to the extent that the way that sexual violence is conceptualized has different and uneven material impacts in terms of whose experiences of violence are rendered (in)visible and, therefore, who is able to access support (Richie, 2012). Further, the failure to address the intersections of sexual violence with systems of oppression has the potential to contribute to responses and prevention efforts that reproduce marginalization and other forms of violence, including racism, colonialism, ableism, heteronormativity, and cissexism. In this Conclusion, I summarize the main arguments of my dissertation and reflect on its key findings. I discuss the significance of the study and its limitations. Finally, I discuss the implications of this dissertation for future research.

Summary and key findings

In Chapter 1, I outlined the theoretical framework for this research, which, for the reasons highlighted above, is grounded in an intersectional analysis of sexual violence. I also discussed radical feminist analyses of sexual violence and the central tensions of the sex wars. As I have

demonstrated throughout this dissertation, radical feminist analyses continue to influence some anti-violence efforts by centring cisgender women. Some of the tensions of the sex wars have also re-emerged in the context of contemporary debates on campus sexual violence, particularly with reference to how sexual violence and consent are defined and the expansion of bureaucratic power. Chapter 1 contained a brief overview of the ways in which neoliberalism has impacted anti-violence organizing, including increasing professionalization; the conceptualization of sexual violence as a depoliticized, interpersonal issue between decontextualized individuals; and greater emphasis on individual freedom and autonomy. These trends emerged in my research findings and, as such, my dissertation reveals the extent to which neoliberalism shapes institutional responses to campus sexual violence. I concluded Chapter 1 by arguing that Ahmed's (2014) conceptualization of policy as non-performative is a useful tool to understand how sexual violence policies might serve to create the perception that institutions are committed to addressing sexual violence without necessarily responding to the needs of survivors or investing in prevention efforts that address the structural roots of sexual violence and its intersections with systems of oppression.

As I outlined in Chapter 2, this dissertation is also grounded in an intersectional methodology, which informed how I situate myself relative to this research and how I approached participation, research methods, and data analysis. In particular, while I sought to recruit a range of stakeholders, I was committed to centring the voices of those whose perspectives and experiences are typically marginalized within mainstream research and responses to campus sexual violence. I also discussed the ethical considerations of this project, as well as the challenges that I encountered during the formal ethics process and in my attempts to

establish relationships with the sexual violence offices at two of the three selected institutions and at the institution that I was ultimately unable to include.

In Chapter 3, I outlined some of the key factors that have contributed to the unprecedented pressure that Canadian post-secondary institutions are facing to respond to campus sexual violence, including the long history of student anti-violence activism, the rise of social media, heightened mainstream media coverage, and legislative developments in both the Canadian and American contexts. I highlighted some of the key implications of the neoliberal corporatization of Canadian universities, such as changes in priorities, management structures, and labour. In particular, I argued that this corporatization has led to a greater emphasis on institutional reputation, which incentivizes universities to publicly commit to responding to campus sexual violence but also to invest in prevention efforts that are easily quantified and measured, rather than those that involve broader structural transformation. Finally, I contended that while the growing presence of the alt-right and men's rights activism on Canadian campuses makes gains in addressing sexual violence feel fragile, this backlash only increases the urgency of ensuring that approaches to campus sexual violence are intersectional.

Building on my theoretical framework and drawing on my research findings, in Chapter 4 I began to consider the sexual violence policies at Ontario universities. My findings reveal how the power relations inherent in the policymaking processes privilege certain perspectives while silencing others. I argued that in the context of the neoliberal corporatization of the university, the policies may serve to promote the interests of the administration by signalling a public commitment to addressing sexual violence on campus. The shallowness of consultation with students and feminist scholars implies that institutions are more invested in consultation as a

means of legitimizing policy rather than a genuine commitment to embracing their perspectives or representing their interests. As such, my dissertation demonstrates the urgent need to expand consultation to allow for a diversity of student and faculty perspectives to not only be represented but also reflected in the final output of these processes.

In Chapter 4, I also discussed the findings of my analysis of the conceptualization of sexual violence in the policies at public universities in Ontario. This analysis revealed that policies differed very little in terms of the definition of sexual violence. However, there are significant differences in the way that the policies address identity; while some policies are completely identity-neutral, others reference the language of intersectionality to discuss the uneven distribution of vulnerability to sexual violence. Some go as far as committing to intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention efforts and responses. The policies also differ with respect to the inclusion of concepts such as rape culture, which is rooted in radical feminist analyses of sexual violence as a manifestation of patriarchy. In the current context of heightened attention to campus sexual violence, the student activist organization Our Turn (2017) publicly evaluated and ranked these policies, and, as such, I argued that they have become measures of the performance of the institution. In this sense, having a strong policy may be cited as evidence that the university has addressed sexual violence without actually doing so. Further, in the context of the institutional incorporation of intersectionality (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016), I argued that references to intersectionality may be understood as a way of constructing institutions as being particularly ‘progressive.’ As such, I concluded that the sexual violence policies and the value of their commitments to intersectionality should be evaluated based on how they translate into practice rather than on their content and existence alone.

As I discussed in Chapter 5, one of the ways in which the sexual violence policies translate into practice is the development of staff positions to coordinate sexual violence services on campus. My findings demonstrate that while the staff hired in these roles are generally well-intentioned, there are a number of challenges and limitations that affect the impact of their work. Research participants argued that these supports are often inaccessible to students and highlighted the fact that marginalized students continue to face particular barriers. They also revealed the ways in which university administrations constrain the work of sexual violence staff, whether through impossible workloads, a lack of support, or restrictive oversight. Further, they discussed the invisible and unpaid labour of student groups and community organizations that fill the gaps created by the inadequate investment of post-secondary institutions. These dynamics are a reflection of the shallowness of institutional commitments to providing support for survivors on campus and to intersectional approaches and suggest that the sexual violence policies are, at least to some extent, non-performative.

Another way that the policies translate into practice is through the formal reporting processes implemented to respond to sexual violence. The research participants described the shortcomings of these processes and the ways in which they fail to be survivor-centric. Participants were also critical of the quasi-judicial nature of these processes, given the failures of the criminal justice system to deliver justice to sexual violence survivors and the racist and colonial foundations of this system. As such, participants gestured toward the possibility of creating alternative justice processes that centre community accountability and provide perpetrators with an opportunity to acknowledge and address the harm done. However, it is important to make sure that alternative justice processes do not simply become another measure

by which institutions can construct themselves as being ‘progressive’ and ‘responsive’ and that there is sufficient investment to ensure that they are conducted in a way is accountable to the needs of survivors.

While the bulk of public attention on campus sexual violence has focused on the policies and formal reporting processes, I have argued that prevention efforts are an important site of analysis to determine the depth of institutional commitments to addressing sexual violence. In Chapter 6, I demonstrated that prevention efforts continue to frame sexual violence as a depoliticized interpersonal issue and/or as the product of miscommunication, rather than as an issue grounded in systems of oppression. Participants discussed the potential benefits and limitations of various prevention efforts and my research findings suggest that effective sexual violence prevention necessitates implementing multiple strategies rather than simply focusing on consent or on orientation activities, for example. Further, it is important to ensure that institutions base their decisions on which prevention efforts to implement on evidence of effectiveness and the potential to transform the underlying social and structural causes of sexual violence rather than on immediate visibility and measurability.

I argued that prevention efforts tend to construct students as neoliberal autonomous subjects with the capacity to ‘just say no’ or to intervene or resist in incidents of sexual violence with little consideration for the ways in this capacity is inherently shaped by privilege and oppression. Efforts to make prevention more intersectional have primarily relied on the neoliberal logics of individual inclusion and representation rather than on structural transformation. Further, the emphasis on increasing campus security measures and policing demonstrates institutional investments in constructing the perpetrators of sexual violence as

(racialized) ‘strangers’ to the university, which serves to obscure the ways in which sexual violence is institutionally embedded.

My findings also highlight the extent to which prevention continues to be framed in a way that is palatable to cisgender men. These efforts frame cisgender men as part of the solution and avoid addressing how normative constructions of masculinity contribute to sexual violence. This strategy is legitimized as a means of avoiding backlash in the current context of rising men’s rights activism on Canadian university campuses. However, efforts to prevent sexual violence are unlikely to be effective if they do not address the gendered nature of perpetration.

This dissertation demonstrates that the labour of preventing and responding to sexual violence continues to be placed on survivors and on cisgender women and racialized, Indigenous, queer, and trans people. My findings raise important questions regarding the sustainability of sexual violence work, particularly when it is understood as a threat to the institution and is thus unsupported, as in the case of student activists. In Chapter 7, I discussed possibilities for embedding this work within the institution in ways that might ensure its sustainability, such as making sexual violence prevention part of the curriculum. However, this raises complications of its own given the ways in which the neoliberal corporatization of the institution has impacted the structure of teaching labour and tends to appropriate critique as evidence of its own progress.

Chapter 7 also featured an analysis of the challenges of implementing intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention. These challenges included the heightened potential for backlash and the level of institutional investment in depoliticized strategies. The broader collapse of intersectionality into calls for inclusion and representation is also clearly visible in the context

of campus sexual violence. While representation and inclusion are important, my findings illustrate not only the ways in which efforts to prevent and respond to campus sexual violence fail to be inclusive, but also the ways in which this strategy leaves unaddressed the structural dimensions of sexual violence and its intersections with systems of oppression.

At the same time, my findings resonate with the broader challenges inherent in the institutional incorporation of intersectionality, including depoliticization (Hill Collins & Bilge, 2016). In this sense, institutional commitments to intersectionality in the sexual violence policies construct the university as being ‘inclusive’ and ‘progressive’ without transforming inequities within the institution. Further, the burden of trying to transform the university often falls on those who are most acutely affected by these inequities, which impacts the sustainability of these transformation efforts (Ahmed, 2017). In this sense, as Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) explain, “the fundamental dilemma of institutional incorporation lies in the tension between aiming to bring about institutional transformation, yet being aware that one is changed in the process of trying” (p. 86-87). Rather than framing this unsustainability as a failure, I would suggest that it could also be understood as a technique through which the university avoids such transformation.

In this sense, I have argued that Ahmed’s (2014) conceptualization of non-performativity is a useful tool to understand how universities construct themselves as being committed to addressing sexual violence without necessarily responding to the needs of survivors, particularly those who are marginalized within the institution, in terms of supports available on campus and the formal reporting processes. Further, despite institutional commitments to intersectional approaches to sexual violence prevention and response, in reality these commitments tend to result in individual inclusion and representation. It is important to note, however, that the non-

performativity of policy does not mean that they are not useful; instead, Ahmed (2014) argues that non-performative policies can be used as a means of demonstrating that institutions are not doing what they claim to be doing. In this sense, the failure of the institutional commitments articulated in the sexual violence policies to meaningfully translate into practice can be used to hold institutions accountable.

Significance

Given the current context of heightened media and public attention to the issue of campus sexual violence, my dissertation addresses a timely and relevant topic. As mentioned in the Introduction, to date, the majority of the research on campus sexual violence has been conducted in the American context, which differs significantly from the Canadian context. Further, the existing literature reveals that research that approaches campus sexual violence from an intersectional analysis is relatively limited. As such, my dissertation responds to these gaps in the literature by analyzing institutional efforts to prevent and address sexual violence at Canadian universities through an intersectional framework. This research also contributes to the literature by illustrating the limitations inherent in the institutional incorporation of intersectionality.

While students are frequently included in research on campus sexual violence as survivors or as perpetrators, few studies investigate student activism (Krause et al., 2017). My findings highlight the importance of student activism in raising public awareness about the issue of campus sexual violence and pressuring institutions to develop responses. This dissertation also sought to engage with student activists and to amplify their voices and perspectives. In this sense, this research confirms that students are important agents of change on their campuses and seeks to lend support to their efforts to hold their institutions accountable to their public

commitments to addressing sexual violence and to intersectionality. Further, this dissertation is one of the first Canadian studies to analyze students' perspectives on their institutions' sexual violence policies, responses, and prevention efforts in the current context.

My findings also demonstrate the importance of approaching campus sexual violence research from an intersectional methodology that centres the voices of those who are typically marginalized in research and public discourses on campus sexual violence. Specifically, this methodology challenges the reproduction of the 'ideal' survivor of sexual violence and the mainstream framing of sexual violence as a depoliticized, individual issue. Research participants drew on their own lived experiences and shared how the way that sexual violence is conceptualized affects access to support services and approaches to prevention. In this sense, using an intersectional methodology allows the research to engage with the material conditions produced by the intersections of sexual violence and systems of oppression.

I am hopeful that the findings of this dissertation will translate into changes in the way that institutions approach sexual violence responses and prevention efforts. Specifically, these findings demonstrate the importance of addressing the structural dimensions of sexual violence and its intersections with systems of oppression and of avoiding prevention strategies that reproduce violence and marginalization, such as enhanced security measures. Further, my dissertation highlights the need to go beyond individual inclusion and representation to address how these intersections shape vulnerability to violence and barriers to accessing support.

Finally, this dissertation has the potential to inform future policy and legislation. The federal government is currently consulting stakeholders to develop a national framework on campus sexual violence. As such, I plan to translate the findings of this research into a report to

share with policymakers and stakeholders. I also plan to share the findings of this research with the participants and with student activist organizations in the hopes that they can use the findings to support their efforts to address campus sexual violence.

Limitations

For reasons of consistency and feasibility, this dissertation focused on three Ontario universities as case studies. As such, the findings are not necessarily representative of all universities in Ontario or in Canada. Given that education is a provincial responsibility, institutions in other provinces are subject to different legislative requirements and may have access to more or less government funding, which may impact the development and content of their sexual violence policies. This research also focused primarily on Ontario institutions with regard to the prevention efforts that are commonly implemented on campus. Thus while the findings may certainly be relevant in other provinces and contexts, they do not necessarily capture the full range of prevention efforts at Canadian institutions.

This dissertation was informed by an intersectional research methodology and, as such, sought to centre the voices of those who are typically marginalized within research and public discourses on campus sexual violence. However, as I discussed in Chapter 2, the complex process of obtaining ethics approval shaped the recruitment of participants for this project in important ways. For example, I received more responses at the institution where the faculty and staff involved in sexual violence prevention agreed to circulate recruitment materials on my behalf. As such, there were more participants from that particular institution than from the other two selected institutions where the sexual violence staff were less supportive. Further, as I discussed in Chapter 2, to my knowledge none of my participants identified as trans or as having

a disability. These limitations may be related, at least in part, to broader structural barriers that impact marginalized students' access to academic institutions and ability to volunteer their time to participate in research. I am also aware that given the ways in which academic research has historically been and continues to be a site of harm (i.e. Tuck, 2009), potential research participants may have decided not to participate based on my positionality as the researcher and/or due to distrust of academic research in general.

Implications for future research

Future research might expand on the current project by comparing the sexual violence policies and prevention efforts at Ontario institutions with universities in other provinces. This comparative analysis has the potential to reveal how differences in the legislation and institutional cultures translate into policy and practice. Given Canada's regional diversity, a comparative analysis might also highlight regionally-specific challenges and concerns. Further, expanding the analysis beyond three institutions may reveal additional strategies to address the challenges and concerns raised by the research participants in this dissertation.

My research participants highlighted the possibility of developing alternative approaches to justice on campus to replace or supplement the problematic quasi-judicial processes that are currently in place. Given that many alternative justice approaches are community-specific, further research is needed to explore whether and how these approaches can and should be translated into institutional processes. Moreover, there is a need to consider the capacity and politics of embedding these processes within academic institutions, particularly given the risk that they might appropriate these processes as a sign of their 'progressiveness' without investing

the resources and care necessary to ensure that they meaningfully respond to the needs of survivors.

Finally, additional research is needed to explore how intersectional analyses of sexual violence can be translated into prevention efforts in meaningful ways that go beyond mere inclusion and representation. For example, I am planning to build on the findings of this project to research whether and how campus prevention efforts targeted toward male students address normative constructions of masculinity. This research will be conducted with an intersectional framework to analyze the transformative potential of these efforts. Similar research on other prevalent forms of sexual violence prevention would be useful. Further, future research might seek to engage directly with those whose perspectives are not adequately represented in this dissertation, including trans students and students with disabilities. It would also be interesting to investigate the specific needs and experiences of graduate students.

Conclusion

While there are differences between institutions' approaches to addressing campus sexual violence, this dissertation reveals that the commitments articulated in the policies do not necessarily translate into supports and formal reporting processes that meaningfully respond to the needs of survivors. Prevention efforts generally conceptualize sexual violence as a depoliticized, individual issue with little recognition of its structural roots, its intersections with systems of oppression, and the ways in which it is institutionally embedded. As a result, these responses and prevention efforts risk reproducing marginalization and harm. Ultimately, this dissertation demonstrates the limits of investing hope for addressing campus sexual violence

within the university administration and the need to continue pushing for broader institutional transformation both from within and outside of the institution.

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Appendix A: List of abbreviations

Algoma	Algoma University
BITB	Bringing in the Bystander
Brock	Brock University
CAFE	Canadian Association for Equality
Campus SaVE Act	Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act
Carleton	Carleton University
CAUT	Canadian Association of University Teachers
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDN	Community Disclosure Network
CFS	Canadian Federation of Students
CFS-NS	Canadian Federation of Students Nova Scotia
CFS-Ontario	Canadian Federation of Students Ontario
CICB	Criminal Injuries Compensation Board
Clery Act	Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act
Concordia	Concordia University
CUPE	Canadian Union of Public Employees
Dalhousie	Dalhousie University
EAAA	Enhanced Assess, Acknowledge, Act
ESSIMU	Enquête Sexualité, Sécurité et Interactions en Milieu Universitaire
GSS	General Social Survey
Guelph	Guelph University

HRTO	Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario
Incels	Involuntary celibates
Lakehead	Lakehead University
Laurentian	Laurentian University
LGBTQ	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer
McGill	McGill University
McMaster	McMaster University
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MRAs	Men's Rights Activists
MVP	Mentors in Violence Prevention
Nipissing	Nipissing University
NSSE	National Survey of Student Engagement
OCAD	Ontario College of Art and Design
OCR	Office for Civil Rights
Queen's	Queen's University
RAINN	Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network
RMC	Royal Military College
RQCALACS	Quebec Coalition of Rape Crisis Centres
Ryerson	Ryerson University
SES	Sexual Experiences Survey
SFCC	Students for Consent Culture
S/M	Sadomasochism

SMU	Saint Mary's University
SSMU	Student Society of McGill University
TERFs	Trans-exclusionary radical feminists
TRCC	Toronto Rape Crisis Centre
Trent	Trent University
UBC	University of British Columbia
UNB	University of New Brunswick
U of O	University of Ottawa
U of T	University of Toronto
UOIT	University of Ontario Institute of Technology
U Windsor	University of Windsor
VRRWS	Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's Shelter
WAP	Women Against Pornography
Waterloo	University of Waterloo
WAVPM	Women Against Violence in Pornography and Media
Western	University of Western Ontario
WLU	Wilfred Laurier University
York	York University

Appendix B: Public universities in Ontario

The following is a list of all of the publicly funded universities in Ontario, which were included in my analysis of the sexual violence policies.

1. Algoma University
2. Brock University
3. Carleton University
4. Lakehead University
5. Laurentian University
6. McMaster University
7. Nipissing University
8. Ontario College of Art and Design University
9. Queen's University
10. Royal Military College
11. Ryerson University
12. Trent University
13. University of Guelph
14. University of Hearst
15. University of Ontario Institute of Technology
16. University of Ottawa
17. University of Toronto
18. University of Waterloo
19. University of Windsor

20. Western University

21. Wilfrid Laurier University

22. York University

Source: The Government of Ontario. Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-universities>

Appendix C: Sample Interview Guide

- 1) Can you tell me a bit about yourself and how you came to be working on the issue of sexual violence?
- 2) Can you tell me about your involvement with the new sexual violence policy at X university?
- 3) How is sexual violence conceptualized in the new sexual violence policy at X university?
- 4) Do you think that the new policy is an effective means of addressing sexual violence at X university? Why or why not?
- 5) Can you tell me about the different sexual assault prevention and/or education efforts on your campus?
- 6) How do these efforts define sexual violence and which aspect(s) of sexual violence do they address?
- 7) Have any of these efforts been changed or introduced since the implementation of the new sexual violence policy?
 - a) If so, in what ways have these efforts changed?
- 8) Who are the target audiences of these prevention/education efforts? Why?
- 9) Who, if anyone, might feel excluded or not see themselves reflected in these efforts? Why?
- 10) Who is responsible for implementing these efforts? Why?
- 11) What has the response to these efforts been? By students? Faculty? Staff? Community organizations?
- 12) In your view, are these prevention and education efforts effective at preventing sexual violence on X university campus? Why or why not?
- 13) Have there been any challenges in implementing these efforts?
- 14) Is there anything you would change about these efforts?
- 15) What, if anything, makes it challenging to do intersectional anti-violence work on campus in the current context?
- 16) Is there any other information you would like to share with me or anything that you thought that we would talk about that we didn't get to?