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# No More Silence: How Federal Policies Address the Culture of Sexual Violence on College Campuses

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No More Silence:

How Federal Policies Address the Culture of Sexual Violence on College Campuses

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History 7415 M1: History Matters, Advanced Work in Practical Application of Historical  
Knowledge of Women and Gender

Professor Lyde C. Sizer

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## Introduction

Almost every day there is a new story on social media about women being assaulted at college. While the most popular stories today are about Brock Turner, tomorrow a different young man will undoubtedly steal the spotlight. The outpouring of stories about sexual violence seems to begin in 2012 when the social media scene was set ablaze by the story of a sexual assault at Columbia University. The reason the event garnered so much media attention was because the victim, Emma Sulkowicz, had been carrying her mattress around campus since the time of the assault. She did this in protest of the university's decision not to expel the assailant, another Columbia student. This was the first story that took to the news and didn't easily fade into the background, probably because alternative media sources were providing the coverage. While Emma's story is important and historic, it is simply one of the many stories of sexual violence on college campuses that was not adequately handled by school administrations, especially when the allegations are against fellow university students. In instances where a student is raped or sexually assaulted by someone who is not another student, college administrations are more likely to follow their own procedures, pushing for filing with the police and seeking justice.<sup>1,2</sup> While most of these cases remain invisible to outsiders, this particular case could not be ignored, because Emma chose to fight the injustice.<sup>3</sup> Emma ultimately turned this terrible experience into a senior thesis project titled *Mattress*

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<sup>1</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 166.

<sup>3</sup> Caroline S. Turner, foreword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), vii.

*Performance (Carry that Weight)* with an accompanying short film *Ceci N'est Pas Un Viol (This is not a Rape)*. The purpose of this project was to create change and shed light on the injustice of her experience, which tragically is not individual or unique.<sup>4</sup>

Across the United States sexual violence is a serious issue on college and university campuses. One in five students will experience sexual violence during their college years and one in four women will face sexual violence in their lifetime.<sup>5,6,7,8</sup> The biggest problem is the disconnect between the ideals and priorities of college administrators and the ideals and priorities of students.<sup>9</sup> College administrations often fail to deal with the problem of sexual violence in a number of consistent ways: insufficient reprimands of student perpetrators, inadequate protection of the rights of student victims, false and inaccurate reporting of crime and assault statistics to the federal government, and complacency when dealing with Title IX policy implementation.<sup>10,11,12</sup> Through working on the Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence

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<sup>4</sup> Sulkowicz, Emma. 2015. *Ceci N'est Pas Un Viol*. [www.cecineestpasunviol.com](http://www.cecineestpasunviol.com).

<sup>5</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 8.

<sup>6</sup> Kelly Field, "How Much Can Campus-Crime Reports Tell Us About Sexual Assault?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>7</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, "Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape," *Ms. Magazine* blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>8</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>9</sup> Max Lewontin, "Final Federal Rule on Sexual Violence Emphasize Training," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A4.

<sup>10</sup> Merril D. Smith, *Sex Without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America*. New York: New York University Press, 2001, 284 and 288.

College, facilitating a Bystander Intervention program at a local community college in Connecticut, and reaching out to individuals in policy positions I have seen firsthand how and why students are not being protected by the laws intended to keep them safe.

Sexual violence on college campuses, specifically rape and sexual assault, is not a new phenomenon; it is simply one of the many types of violence that women and girls are subjected to throughout their lifetimes. Since the 1970s students have been activists on campus around the issues of sexual violence.<sup>13</sup> This activism has ebbed and flowed over time with peaks in support coming in the early 1970s, early 1990s, early 2000s and the present.<sup>14</sup> For a long time students on college campuses have experienced date and acquaintance rape, leading them to understand that the way rape is portrayed in the media and through societal beliefs is inaccurate; most rapes are between known parties, not strangers.<sup>15</sup> A 2013 study shows that 55.5% of rapes are perpetrated by attackers the victim knew either well or very well; 38.4% of the time the attacker was a “current or former significant other” and 36.7% of the time the attacker was a classmate.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Andy Thomason, “U.S. Finds Basis for Sexually Hostile Environment at U. of Virginia,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 2, 2015): A4.

<sup>12</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>13</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 173.

<sup>14</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 166.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

Research shows that sexual violence victims on college campuses have historically received very little support from their academic institutions.<sup>17,18,19,20,21</sup> Too often colleges put their reputation, legacy, and finances ahead of what is best for the victim, often siding with the perpetrator or failing to provide any type of disciplinary action.<sup>22,23,24,25,26</sup>

Colleges have historically been more concerned about their reputations, prestige, and keeping the parents of prospective students happy than handling sexual violence reports

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<sup>17</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, 43-44.

<sup>18</sup> Andy Thomason, "U.S. Finds Basis for Sexually Hostile Environment at U. of Virginia," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 2, 2015): A4.

<sup>19</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, "Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape," *Ms. Magazine* blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>20</sup> Eilene Zimmerman, "Campus Sexual Assault: a Timeline of Major Events," *The New York Times*, June 22, 2016, <http://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/06/23/education/campus-sexual-assault-a-timeline-of-major-events.html>.

<sup>21</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 142.

<sup>22</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>23</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 8.

<sup>24</sup> Andy Thomason, "U.S. Finds Basis for Sexually Hostile Environment at U. of Virginia," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 2, 2015): A4.

<sup>25</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

<sup>26</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5.

appropriately.<sup>27</sup> This means administrations are burying statistics about crime and making it difficult to find any information regarding sexual violence policies on their campuses.<sup>28,29</sup>

College administrators seem to think that having prominently displayed statistics in these categories would be negative and push prospective students away. If there aren't any reports of sexual violence it is likely that the school has a hostile environment where students are afraid to report.<sup>30,31,32,33</sup> This will be explored more in depth later, in the section about my work with the Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence College. One explanation for this reaction by college administrations is that we live in a world characterized by a pervasive culture of violence, especially sexual violence against women and girls.<sup>34,35</sup> This is known as rape culture. According to Maria Bevaqua rape culture is a culture in which "sexual assault is tolerated, violent and sexual images are intertwined, women are blamed for being raped, sexist attitudes

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 3 and 5.

<sup>28</sup> Merrill D. Smith, *Sex Without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America*. New York: New York University Press, 2001, 7.

<sup>29</sup> Kelly Field, "How Much Can Campus-Crime Reports Tell Us About Sexual Assault?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

<sup>32</sup> Merrill D. Smith, *Sex Without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America*. New York: New York University Press, 2001, 7.

<sup>33</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>34</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>35</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

prevail, and male sexual privilege goes unquestioned.”<sup>36</sup> The definition used in the Where Do You Stand? Training is similar, “rape culture describes a culture in which prevalent attitudes, norms, practices, and media condone, normalize, excuse, or encourage sexualized violence.”<sup>37</sup>

Recently a few students sexually assaulted in college, joined together in protest of their treatment. Fortunately they were able to turn the provisions of Title IX legislation, petitioning the federal government to live up to its promises. In their complaint the students alleged that a hostile environment was created and this was impacting their right to an education free from gender-based discrimination and violence.<sup>38</sup> This process was documented through the film *The Hunting Ground*, which was released in 2015.<sup>39</sup> This movement for change started out at the grassroots level and made it all the way to the federal government, where the student activists were successful in getting the legislation changed. Title IX was amended and broadened to include sexual assault on college campuses as a violation. Part of this change included expanding the definition of sex discrimination to include sexual harassment and sexual violence.<sup>40</sup> The government then created compliance guidelines for schools to follow such as instituting Title IX

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<sup>36</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, “Where Do You Stand?” PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

<sup>38</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 171.

<sup>39</sup> Dick Kirby, Amy Ziering, Regina Kulik Scully, Paul Blavin, Dan Cogan, GERALYN White Dreyfous, Julie Smolyansky, et al., *The Hunting Ground*, Film, CNN Network, 2015.

<sup>40</sup> Pennsylvania Bar Institute, *Prevent, Handle and Investigate Complaints of Sexual Assault & Violence on College Campuses*, 2014, 79.

Coordinators, having sexual assault taskforces or response teams on campus, and requiring bystander intervention programs.<sup>41,42,43</sup> The Cleary Act, which deals with crime statistic reporting, also clarified its standard around the reporting of sexual assaults on college campuses, where new categories were created for violent and nonviolent offenses instead of all statistics being lumped together under the guise of safety reporting.<sup>44,45,46,47,48</sup> Additionally, an amendment was made to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), which clarifies and expands on the reporting of sexual and domestic violence crimes required by U.S.

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<sup>41</sup> Zoe Heller, “Rape on the Campus,” *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 8.

<sup>42</sup> Eric Kelderman, “What California’s New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>43</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 1.

<sup>44</sup> Kelly Field, “How Much Can Campus-Crime Reports Tell Us About Sexual Assault?,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>45</sup> Max Lewontin, “Final Federal Rule on Sexual Violence Emphasize Training,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A4.

<sup>46</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, “Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape,” *Ms. Magazine* blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>47</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>48</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 170-171.

colleges.<sup>49,50,51</sup> According to the law, a single instance of sexual violence on campus is enough to create a hostile environment.<sup>52,53</sup>

Several histories have been written on the subject of sexual violence and there is also an abundance of writing on the new guidelines and procedures that the federal government has mandated.<sup>54,55</sup> As a result of the efforts of the women in *The Hunting Ground*, several colleges have been identified as having the most problems with administrative practices around sexual violence.<sup>56,57</sup> Any school that was identified in this way was put on a newly created federal watch list. The initial list contained 75 institutions of higher learning which were at risk of losing

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<sup>49</sup> Pennsylvania Bar Institute, *Prevent, Handle and Investigate Complaints of Sexual Assault & Violence on College Campuses*, 2014, 26.

<sup>50</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 10.

<sup>51</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 171.

<sup>52</sup> Pennsylvania Bar Institute, *Prevent, Handle and Investigate Complaints of Sexual Assault & Violence on College Campuses*, 2014, 89.

<sup>53</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A13.

<sup>54</sup> Claire McCaskill, *Sexual Violence on Campus: How too many Institutions of Higher Education are Failing to Protect Students*, Washington: United States Senate Subcommittee on Financial & Contracting Oversight-Majority Staff, 2014.

<sup>55</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>56</sup> Dick Kirby, Amy Ziering, Regina Kulik Scully, Paul Blavin, Dan Cogan, GERALYN White Dreyfous, Julie Smolyansky, et al., *The Hunting Ground*, Film, CNN Network, 2015.

<sup>57</sup> Sarah Brown, "At Harvard Law, a Sex-Assault Case That Won't Go Away," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 8, 2016): A10.

their federal funding due to noncompliance. Since its inception the list continues to grow; as of October 16, 2015 the list was up to 144 colleges.<sup>58</sup> The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is in charge of working with these schools and providing them with measurable goals to attain in order to be back in compliance with the law and off the list.<sup>59,60</sup>

The purpose of these investigations and the watch list is not to stop sexual assaults from occurring completely, but rather to make sure when a complaint is made there is a proper procedure in place to provide fair and just student misconduct hearings.<sup>61</sup> Many institutions are worried about having statistics that show sexual assaults occurring on their campuses. More than likely any zero statistics simply indicate a campus culture and climate that is not conducive with disclosing incidents of sexual violence to administrators.<sup>62,63</sup> The OCR investigators look at the school through documents across a three year period, as well as the current complaint that ignited the investigation. During this time college administrators are supposed to work with the OCR to

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<sup>58</sup> Robin Wilson, “As Federal Investigations of Sex Assault Get Tougher, Some Ask if That’s Progress,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 16, 2015): A6.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Department of Education, “U.S. Department of Education Releases List of Higher Education Institutions with Open Title IX Sexual Violence Investigations,” May 1, 2014, <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-list-higher-education-institutions-open-title-ix-sexual-violence-investigations>.

<sup>60</sup> Robin Wilson, “Federal Reviews of Campus Sexual-Assault Cases Take Years to Resolve,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16.

<sup>61</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, “Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape,” *Ms.* Magazine blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>62</sup> Robin Wilson, “How ‘Yes Means Yes’ Already Works on One Campus,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A6.

<sup>63</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

address compliance issues and make positive policy changes, even before an official report is completed.<sup>64,65,66</sup>

My research joins an ongoing conversation about sexual violence on college campuses in the United States. Many scholars have undertaken similar projects resulting in books, articles, and dissertations on the subject. In 1994 Kristen Day wrote a dissertation titled *Assault Prevention as Social Control: Women and Fear of Sexual Assault on Urban College Campuses*, which looks at the ways fear of being raped impacts the lives of women on university campuses. Besides assessing attitudes around the fear of sexual violence, Day also had participants take pictures of areas they felt were safe and areas they felt were unsafe. Her research suggested that women's fears surrounding rape and sexual assault are tied to the false narrative of violent stranger rape as the most common form of assault.<sup>67</sup> Day took issue with the ways universities care more about protecting their legacy than protecting students and felt particularly strongly about the need for the dissemination of informative educational materials.<sup>68,69</sup> These materials

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<sup>64</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "U.S. Department of Education Releases List of Higher Education Institutions with Open Title IX Sexual Violence Investigations," May 1, 2014, <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-list-higher-education-institutions-open-title-ix-sexual-violence-investigations>.

<sup>65</sup> Robin Wilson, "As Federal Investigations of Sex Assault Get Tougher, Some Ask if That's Progress," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 16, 2015): A6.

<sup>66</sup> Robin Wilson, "Federal Reviews of Campus Sexual-Assault Cases Take Years to Resolve," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16.

<sup>67</sup> Kristen Day, *Assault Prevention as Social Control: Women and Fear of Sexual Assault on Urban College Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1994, 1, 39, 88-9, 104.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 9, 20, 36, 43, 257, 375.

would address the myths surrounding sexual assault and correct the narrative to reflect the reality that most sexual violence is perpetrated by someone the victim knows; in this type of assault the perpetrator is often coercive rather than physically violent.<sup>70,71</sup> While this dissertation is framed through a different lens (rape as social control) than the way I examine sexual violence throughout this paper, Day touches upon many of the same topics including: the role of college administrations, the need for educational materials, the necessity of changing the sexual violence narrative, rape culture, and, most importantly, an assessment of current policy with a look to the future for policy changes.<sup>72,73</sup>

The topic was addressed again in 2003 by Jami Lynn Brown in a dissertation for the University of California Riverside titled *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*. This time the frame of the paper was a focus on the impact of drugs and alcohol on the prevalence of sexual assaults. The results suggest that there is a correlation between alcohol consumption and sexual assault for both male and female students.<sup>74,75,76</sup> Brown's writing is extremely problematic due

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<sup>69</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>71</sup> Kristen Day, *Assault Prevention as Social Control: Women and Fear of Sexual Assault on Urban College Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Irvine, 1994, 78.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 7, 20, 22, 35-7, 43, 78, 257, 375, 380.

<sup>73</sup> Caroline S. Turner, foreword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), vii.

<sup>74</sup> Rebecca Koenig, "Amid Partying at UVA, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

<sup>75</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A12.

to the way she victim blames and rapist sympathizes. For instance, Brown states that rape should be understood as a sex act rather than an act of coercive power and control.<sup>77</sup> She insists that the motivation behind sexual violence, in date rape situations, is “sexual gratification” and if control or domination is a factor that is merely secondary and “incidental.”<sup>78</sup> However, it is widely understood that sexual violence is never simply about sex.<sup>79</sup> Even so, the writing does address many of the same topics I address in this paper, centering around the topic of sexual violence on college campuses in the United States. Some of these topics include: the way the victim is blamed for the assault, the way college campuses aid in facilitating sexual violence against women, the role of college administrations in this process and their lack of accountability to the female student body, and most importantly an assessment of current policy with ideas for policy changes in the future.<sup>80</sup> Regarding the ways that colleges facilitate a culture of violence Brown states, “the college social environment may create and support an atmosphere conducive to sexual assault with little consequence.”<sup>81</sup> This assessment proves true when looking at the history of how sexual violence has been dealt with on campus.<sup>82,83,84,85</sup> While I disagree with the

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<sup>76</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, vii, 13-4.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>79</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 58.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 3, 6-7, 13-4, 23, 25, 40, 43-4, 76, 113-4, 116, 142.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>82</sup> Zoe Heller, “Rape on the Campus,” *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 10.

majority of what Brown writes, it is vital to address these dissenting ideas to make my own research and conclusions even stronger.

Besides dissertations geared toward an academic audience, other scholars have taken up the issue of sexual violence by looking at consent.<sup>86</sup> Several books that address the topic of sexual violence in this way, by analyzing the meanings and definitions of consent and consent laws, are tailored toward a much broader audience. These texts allow even the most basic reader, with no prior knowledge of the concept of consent, to consume and understand the debate. As with the legislation surrounding rape and graduated offenses of sexual assault, consent is another facet of the law which differs in each state. Each state defines these terms in a different way and requires differing levels of proof to determine whether or not an individual actually experienced some level of sexual violence.<sup>87</sup>

For instance, Connecticut has some of the strictest language regarding rape; in Connecticut a victim must fight back throughout the entire assault, using as much physical force as possible. If a victim does not fight back, under the law, they have not been raped. This is problematic for many reasons. One is that some individuals are physically unable to fight back

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<sup>83</sup> Sarah Brown, "At Harvard Law, a Sex-Assault Case That Won't Go Away," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 8, 2016): A10.

<sup>84</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

<sup>85</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4 and 7.

<sup>86</sup> Mary Ellen McIntire, "Conversations About Sexual Violence Are New to Many Freshmen," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A18.

<sup>87</sup> Robin Wilson, "How 'Yes Means Yes' Already Works on One Campus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

due to disability; therefore the language of this law discriminates against those who are not fully able-bodied. Another issue is that many victims do not fight back because there is an eminent threat of physical violence such as the use of a gun or knife. Fighting back could end up getting a person significantly more hurt and could even cause that person to be murdered. A third issue with the legal language is that it does not incorporate the reality of the experience of being assaulted. Many times, a victim will completely shut down from shock and their body will enter a state of trauma in which they dissociate as a way to lessen the feelings of the violence being committed.<sup>88,89</sup> Meaning, this law is also lacking trauma informed language and understanding.<sup>90</sup>

The newest conversation and policy initiatives happening in the realm of sexual violence and the law is termed affirmative consent, though the idea has actually been around for many decades.<sup>91</sup> Basically the new legislation changes the narrative of ‘no means no’ to ‘yes means yes’.<sup>92</sup> Some scholars believe that affirmative consent legislation needs to be implemented across the country while others believe this would be unnecessary, given the potential ramifications for every day sexual interactions between couples or intimate partners.<sup>93,94,95,96</sup> Currently California,

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<sup>88</sup> Zoe Heller, “Rape on the Campus,” *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 12.

<sup>89</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>90</sup> Tom Bartlett, “Rape Researcher Persists Despite University’s Resistance,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 24, 2014): A6.

<sup>91</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 167.

<sup>92</sup> Eric Kelderman, “What California’s New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>93</sup> Gideon, “‘Yes Means Yes’ Bill Would Eliminate Due Process on Campuses,” *Connecticut Law Tribune* (February 22, 2016): 1-3.

New York, Connecticut and Illinois are the only states with affirmative consent legislation in the United States, however many other states are reviewing sexual assault legislation that is related to affirmative consent.<sup>97,98,99</sup> Some colleges in Connecticut had already implemented this practice in their school's sexual violence policies, but on May 4, 2016 it officially became state law.<sup>100</sup> Schools throughout the country have implemented affirmative consent policies on their campuses regardless of state law.<sup>101</sup> The purpose of this legislation is to remove some of the burden from victims during the legal process. Instead of a victim having to prove they said no the burden has shifted onto the assailant needing to prove the victim said yes.<sup>102,103</sup> Proving they said

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<sup>94</sup> Laurie Essig, "Bad Romance Between Feminism and the State," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): B2.

<sup>95</sup> Sarah Brown, "Law Institute Plans Guidelines on Dealing With Campus Rape," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>96</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21-A22.

<sup>97</sup> Carrie Baker, "Taking on Campus Rape and Winning," *Ms. Magazine*, Spring 2016, <http://msmagazine.com/spring2016/taking-on-campus-rape.asp>.

<sup>98</sup> Eric Kelderman, "What California's New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>99</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 10.

<sup>100</sup> "Got Affirmative Consent? Most Campuses in Connecticut Do!" handout, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, April 2016.

<sup>101</sup> "Support Affirmative Consent on All Campuses" handout, March 2016.; Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 10.

<sup>102</sup> Gideon, "'Yes Means Yes' Bill Would Eliminate Due Process on Campuses," *Connecticut Law Tribune* (February 22, 2016): 1-3.

<sup>103</sup> Eric Kelderman, "What California's New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

no is only one of the many things victims have been forced to prove in the court of law;<sup>104</sup> other issues have included a victim's sexual history being entered into evidence, victims being required to have friends corroborate their stories and testify on their behalf, and the necessity to prove a victim fought back with full physical force.<sup>105</sup>

Moving to 'yes means yes' as public policy has the potential to completely shift the way sexual violence is dealt with in the courts.<sup>106,107,108</sup> In these situations the blame is almost always focused on the individual bringing allegations, unless the assault they experienced fits into the perfect victim and violent stranger rape narrative.<sup>109,110,111,112</sup> Historically anyone who has come

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<sup>104</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, 6-7.

<sup>105</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000.

<sup>106</sup> "2016 Legislative Agenda" handout, Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, March 2016.

<sup>107</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21-A22.

<sup>108</sup> Caroline S. Turner, foreword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), vii.

<sup>109</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 8.

<sup>110</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>111</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21-A22.

<sup>112</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

forward with allegations of assault is automatically thought to be lying both in the legal realm, at academic institutions, and by society more generally.<sup>113,114</sup> They are therefore asked a series of interrogating questions about what they did to get themselves into the situation in the first place.<sup>115,116</sup> Some of these questions include: What were you wearing? Were you drinking or doing drugs, and if so how much? What did you expect to happen when you went out looking like that (addressing the clothing choices, as well as activities the individual was partaking in such as going to a party, bar, or club)? And, Are you sure it was rape?<sup>117</sup> Victims are seen as being vindictive and lying because they are jealous, change their mind after the fact, or are trying to ruin the lives of men who did not want to be in a serious relationship with them.

Additionally, the myth that is perpetuated over and over is that women falsely accuse, even though it is statistically proven that only 2-3% of reported assaults are false.<sup>118,119</sup> This is

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<sup>113</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, “Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape,” *Ms. Magazine* blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>114</sup> Paul H. Robinson, “The Legal Limits of ‘Yes Means Yes,’” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>115</sup> Eric Kelderman, “What California’s New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>116</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 9.

<sup>117</sup> Caroline Heldman and Danielle Dirks, “Blowing the whistle on Campus Rape,” *Ms. Magazine* blog, February 18, 2014, <http://msmagazine.com/blog/2014/02/18/blowing-the-whistle-on-campus-rape/>.

<sup>118</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, State-Certified Domestic and Sexual Violence training materials, August 2015.

<sup>119</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

the exact same amount of false reporting as any other crime; however this narrative is constantly focused on as if it was incontrovertible truth. In other words, the most popular and prominent stories we hear about on television or through other forms of media are the stories where a female alleges she was assaulted, ruining the life of an all-star athlete. Years later, the story goes, it is found that the woman lied. This narrative leads us to believe that rape is typically falsely reported and focuses on the lost potential and ruined lives of the men who were accused, even though those are actually extremely rare occurrences. This statistic is particularly concerning when you take into account that most sexual violence is never reported to the authorities.<sup>120</sup> Therefore, if every act of sexual violence that happened was actually reported, the false reporting statistic would be even lower. By changing to affirmative consent laws the justice system is finally acknowledging the undue burden of proof that has historically been placed on the victim and is shifting this measure of proof onto the perpetrator.<sup>121,122,123</sup>

Scholars such as David Archard and Gideon (which is a pseudonym the author used) are deeply worried about the implications affirmative consent legislation will have for any context involving sexual intimacy.<sup>124,125</sup> Some even go as far as to say that consent is static and cannot

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<sup>120</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 5.

<sup>121</sup> Gideon, “‘Yes Means Yes’ Bill Would Eliminate Due Process on Campuses,” *Connecticut Law Tribune* (February 22, 2016): 1-3.

<sup>122</sup> Paul H. Robinson, “The Legal Limits of ‘Yes Means Yes,’” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>123</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 62.

<sup>124</sup> Robin Wilson, “How ‘Yes Means Yes’ Already Works on One Campus,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

be changed or withdrawn once it is given. The scholars try to prove this point by giving the example that it is unfair to start being intimate with a man and then changing your mind because then you are leading the man on.<sup>126,127,128</sup> The example continues to posit that if a woman begins having intimate contact with a man, she is therefore consenting to everything that goes along with that, and she should understand that the ultimate consequence is having full heterosexual sex with penetration.<sup>129</sup> Critics argue that any man who engages in sexual activity will be at risk of being accused of rape.<sup>130,131,132,133</sup> This is a dangerous mindset that frankly has no footing.

### **Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence College, Spring 2016**

As we begin to delve into this topic let's start by addressing my experience with the Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence College (SLC). I was stunned to learn that SLC is

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<sup>125</sup> Robin Wilson, "Protecting the Party," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A29.

<sup>126</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 12.

<sup>127</sup> Laurie Essig, "Bad Romance Between Feminism and the State," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): B2.

<sup>128</sup> Robin Wilson, "How 'Yes Means Yes' Already Works on One Campus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A6.

<sup>129</sup> Archard, David. 1998. *Sexual Consent*. Oxford, England: Westview Press.

<sup>130</sup> Gideon, "'Yes Means Yes' Bill Would Eliminate Due Process on Campuses," *Connecticut Law Tribune* (February 22, 2016): 1-3.

<sup>131</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 12.

<sup>132</sup> Laurie Essig, "Bad Romance Between Feminism and the State," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): B2.

<sup>133</sup> Robin Wilson, "Protecting the Party," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A29.

on the federal watch list due to its egregious issues in handling sexual assault cases. Sarah Lawrence is a small, private college with mostly female students and an atmosphere of nontraditional learning. There are not rampant fraternities and the college certainly doesn't have a party atmosphere. For the most part the students here are smart and studious; this is definitely not the makeup of a college you would expect to have issues with sexual assault. While this assessment, that a school of this caliber and makeup would not have an issue with sexual violence on its campus, might feel like it perpetuates stereotypes, this is the reality we live in. Certain places are assumed and expected to have more assaults whether that is fair or not. SLC does not fit that mold. This is mostly due to portrayals in the media, where fraternities and schools with large, money producing athletic departments are shown over and over again as having some of the worst behaviors around the issue of sexual violence and student misconduct.<sup>134</sup> However, after a history of misconduct by the administration when dealing with student-to-student sexual assault cases, activism began on campus at Sarah Lawrence and the students ultimately made a solid case to have the college placed under federal investigation by the Office of Civil Rights for noncompliance and mishandling of sexual assault allegations.<sup>135</sup> That is where the taskforce comes in.

The Sexual Assault Taskforce was made up of students, administrators, and administrative faculty from departments such as Health and Wellness. It was headed by the Dean of Equity and Inclusion, who doubles as the Title IX Coordinator. The purpose of the taskforce

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<sup>134</sup> Zoe Heller, "Rape on the Campus," *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 10.

<sup>135</sup> U.S. Department of Education, "U.S. Department of Education Releases List of Higher Education Institutions with Open Title IX Sexual Violence Investigations," May 1, 2014, <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-list-higher-education-institutions-open-title-ix-sexual-violence-investigations>.

was to identify issues on campus, provide education, and implement policies to make sure the students feel safe and are having their experiences of sexual assault handled in the appropriate manner.<sup>136</sup> The taskforce had already been in place for two and a half years by the time I joined as a paid employee of the college. One of the biggest barriers with the taskforce was simply getting people to show up. In addition, there were countless times when the weekly meetings were cancelled at the very last minute, even if people knew in advance that they had a conflict. In not one single instance were all the taskforce members at a meeting at the same time. Clearly this was not a priority, given that the time selected for the spring term weekly meetings left a lot of members of the taskforce excluded.

Joining the taskforce did not ending up being what I expected at all. When I was first hired I was told I would be working 5-10 hours a week, working with data from the campus climate survey, and receiving a computer on loan from the school to do remote work. This did not end up being the reality of the position. I worked 2 hours a week at most and was simply used to take meeting minutes. The way things were being handled and the mentality that the taskforce members had about the issue of sexual violence left me heartbroken at the end of most of the meetings. In the end, however, I was still happy to gain insight into the inner workings of college administrations, particularly in tackling the issue of sexual violence.

At the very first meeting I attended we were asked to review an email of questions from a reporter for the school's paper. The reporter also requested to attend one of our meetings. The range of questions stemmed from data that was recently made available to the student body from the prior year's Campus Climate Survey such as, "What reasons do you think may exist for the

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<sup>136</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

11% reporting rate?, How has Sarah Lawrence policy regarding safety changed over time, beyond the establishment of an Affirmative Consent policy?, and Why do you think students may feel unsafe at Sarah Lawrence?”<sup>137</sup> I was horrified to hear from every single person on the taskforce that they did not feel the need to speak with the reporter at all, let alone allow them to attend a taskforce meeting. The explanation given was that these questions were about safety generally, and not relevant to the work of the taskforce. Because the student was in one of my classes I took it upon myself to speak with them about the taskforce and issues of sexual violence on campus. I asked that I not be quoted as speaking on behalf of the taskforce as I was honest with the student about the fact that the taskforce did not want to speak with them at all and some of the inner workings of the taskforce. I knew this was a risky move, but felt obligated to do this because if no one knows what goes on in these meetings then there is no opportunity for change or student activism. When the news article came out I was very worried that something I said would get me fired and kicked off the taskforce, but nothing was ever mentioned.<sup>138</sup> As I continued my research for this project I came across the article and was shocked to see what it said. Almost every person on the taskforce was interviewed and quoted, except for me, painting a rosy picture of a college doing everything in its power to prevent, educate, and change the culture of assault on campus.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

<sup>138</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 23-March 1), combined agenda.

<sup>139</sup> J.M. Stewart, “Questions Continue Post Sexual Assault Survey,” *The Phoenix*, April 23, 2016, <http://www.sarahlawrencephoenix.com/campus/2016/4/23/questions-continue-post-sexual-assault-survey>.

Another big problem with the taskforce was the mentality of the individuals involved. Every time I sat through a meeting it became more apparent how much the people involved did not care about the issue of how sexual assaults are handled, did not care about the students above all else, and were merely focused on protecting and preserving the legacy of Sarah Lawrence.<sup>140,141</sup> One example that illustrates this well is when the taskforce was deliberating about what to do with the data they received from a campus-wide survey.<sup>142</sup> A year ago a Campus Climate survey was sent out to the student body, under the instruction of the Office of Civil Rights in the Federal Department of Education, which asked students questions about their feelings of safety on campus.<sup>143,144,145,146</sup> The topics covered included: whether an individual was sexually assaulted during their time at SLC, if they trusted the administration, and if they generally felt safe. After about a year all the data was compiled and analyzed, showing how many students disclosed their assaults on the survey and what the general attitudes on campus

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<sup>140</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

<sup>141</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5.

<sup>142</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

<sup>143</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>144</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A13.

<sup>145</sup> Kelly Field, "How Much Can Campus-Crime Reports Tell Us About Sexual Assault?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>146</sup> Rebecca Koenig, "Amid Partying at UVa, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

were.<sup>147</sup> The results showed a distrust of the administration, a general feeling of being unsafe, and a number of sexual assaults, most of which were not reported to the college at the time of their occurrence.

According to the law, under Title IX colleges must make this data readily available to the public and easy to find. Even so, the taskforce spent a considerable amount of time deciding whether or not they would make this information public. They toyed with the idea of making the data password protected inside the school's internal server so that individuals who were not faculty, staff, or students at SLC would not be allowed to access it. They also considered burying the data so it would be extremely difficult to find and access. All throughout this process the Dean and individuals from Health Services talked about wanting to protect the college's image and therefore wanting to hide the data even though they were aware that action would be against the federal law.<sup>148</sup> Eventually the data was made public, but the taskforce members fought that tooth and nail. Additionally information about the sexual violence and prevention policies at Sarah Lawrence that is supposed to be available to anyone who can access the internal mySLC portal is not actually accessible. I worked with another Taskforce member to resolve this issue, but it was extremely surprising that no one was checking this and that no one else had encountered this issue before. Keeping this information private conceivably reduced the number of incident reported given that students would not be able to find the SLC policies or resources

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<sup>147</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 172.

<sup>148</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

regarding sexual violence they would need to report what they had experienced.<sup>149</sup> This feeds into the complacency and lack of effectiveness of the taskforce that I experienced.

The Office of Civil Rights reached out to SLC and asked the college to put the campus climate survey out again this past year. This is nothing exceptional; all colleges are asked to conduct this survey on a yearly basis to be in compliance with the federal law.<sup>150,151</sup> Without consulting anyone else on the taskforce, the Title IX Coordinator declined. This means that a whole group of students will not have a chance to provide input including transfer students and students in an accelerated program, like me. The Dean qualified this decision by telling us there was no point in taking another survey when they still had data from the first survey that wasn't being dealt with. Additionally, one of the women from Health Services kept saying that the survey results were actually good because even though students were not reporting to the college they did disclose their assault to someone.<sup>152,153</sup> That is a really strange position to take, and clearly one that is not student centered.

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<sup>149</sup> Kelly Field, "How Much Can Campus-Crime Reports Tell Us About Sexual Assault?," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>150</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>151</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A13.

<sup>152</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 9), agenda and meeting minutes.

<sup>153</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 173.

At the end of the semester the Dean decided to disband the taskforce, stating it was not needed anymore and that the college could not envision a time when they would be taken off the watch list, even though, in their opinion, they were doing everything in their power to comply with the requirements of the OCR.<sup>154,155</sup> On one hand this was sad to hear because the college is still having a lot of problems with sexual assault, apparent through the many instances of sexual assault that occurred over just the past school year.<sup>156</sup> Several campus wide notices went out to the college population via email explaining that assaults were reported. Unfortunately these emails were very vague and did not go into detail about the actual events that occurred or what follow-up was being done with the students making the allegations. Even as a member of the taskforce I was not privy to any of the specifics about the incidents or ensuing investigations for legal reasons, protecting both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator.

However, since the taskforce was not actually accomplishing anything and the people involved did not seem to care about the issue or be invested, disbanding the taskforce will most likely make no change in how sexual assaults are being handled at Sarah Lawrence. One positive thing is that the Dean realized there is currently no female that students can report to, or even have present when they do make a sexual violence incident report. This is something the Dean wants to change. The solution, however, is flawed as it relies on a female who already works in

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<sup>154</sup> U.S. Department of Education, “U.S. Department of Education Releases List of Higher Education Institutions with Open Title IX Sexual Violence Investigations,” May 1, 2014, <http://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/us-department-education-releases-list-higher-education-institutions-open-title-ix-sexual-violence-investigations>.

<sup>155</sup> Katherine Mangan, “7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A12.

<sup>156</sup> Sarah Lawrence College, *Annual Campus Security and Fire Safety Report*, December 2015, <http://www.sarahlawrence.edu/media/security/pdf/Security-Report>.

an administrative role at the college to take on extra responsibilities to fill this new position, rather than creating an entirely new role.<sup>157</sup> It definitely took too long for anyone in power to notice that there were no females to report to and how that could be problematic or causing more students not to report.

For one of the taskforce meetings we got to see a demo about a program called Callisto. Callisto is an online database type program which gets personalized for each client or school. This program was demoed to the Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence College on March 29, 2016 by Ashley Schwedt and has already been rolled out at a few colleges in California: the University of San Francisco and Pomona College.<sup>158</sup> One of the major advantages of this program to school administrators is that it helps with Title IX compliance so much so that the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights uses it as a justification to take colleges off their watch list.<sup>159,160</sup>

The purpose of the program is to create a portal where students can log on and write down the details of an incident of sexual violence that occurred. The program is survivor centered and trauma informed which means the questions are not asked in chronological order,

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<sup>157</sup> Sarah Brown, "Law Institute Plans Guidelines on Dealing With Campus Rape," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>158</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, March 29), Callisto Demo-Sexual Assault Reporting meeting minutes.

<sup>159</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A12.

<sup>160</sup> Sue Klein, Feminist Majority Foundation, e-mail message regarding Updates on Title IX, July 26, 2016.

but are set up in a way that will make sense for a person who is currently experiencing trauma.<sup>161</sup> During a traumatic period individuals store and recall memories differently, often in a fragmented way.<sup>162,163</sup> The program allows students to write down all the details of the event and create a record, which can be saved until a later time or can be submitted immediately as a report to the Title IX Coordinator. There is even an opt-in feature called ‘matching’ where if the same perpetrator is identified in multiple records a report will be generated and submitted to the Title IX Coordinator.<sup>164</sup>

After an assault occurs a student can go online or use the Callisto app to record the events that transpired. This includes when and where the assault happened, the details of the assault, any evidence that the individual has such as text messages or photos, details and contact information for the assailant, and anything else pertinent to the event. The student then has the ability to submit the information to the Title IX Coordinator of the college if they so choose. As mentioned above, they can also save the record and report it to the Title IX Coordinator at a later date. Aggregate data is provided to the college on an annual basis and useable data is provided semi-

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<sup>161</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Tom Bartlett, “Rape Researcher Persists Despite University’s Resistance,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 24, 2014): A6.

<sup>164</sup> Jessica Ladd, *The Reporting System that Sexual Assault Survivors Want*, TED talk, February 2016, [http://www.ted.com/talks/jessica\\_ladd\\_the\\_reporting\\_system\\_that\\_sexual\\_assault\\_survivors\\_want](http://www.ted.com/talks/jessica_ladd_the_reporting_system_that_sexual_assault_survivors_want).

annually. Typically the link to the website would be included anywhere within the school website that is relevant such as Health and Wellness, Safety, and Sexual Violence webpages.<sup>165</sup>

Prices vary depending on the size of the institution, but Sarah Lawrence was quoted at \$20,000 for the first year, which includes marketing materials, training, and full customization options, with a \$15,000 fee in all subsequent years.<sup>166</sup> While this technology is groundbreaking and seems to be the perfect next step for colleges across the country, the taskforce members were less than thrilled about the program. While I do not know the budget of the college, I know this program would be extremely worthwhile for the school to implement. Even if it was too expensive, the woman who demoed the program to us explained that scholarships and funding are available to help schools put this product in place. While myself and a few others were quite moved by the presentation and felt the program would be an important component in moving off the watch list and making students feel safer, the people with the authority to make the decision to implement the program were less than enthusiastic and focused on the fact that the program was unaffordable. Unfortunately Callisto will not be implemented at Sarah Lawrence College at this time. Even so, Callisto is definitely a step in the right direction and should be seriously considered in future policy discussions.

### **Where Do You Stand? Bystander Intervention Training**

As we delve deeper into the topic of sexual violence on college campuses let's shift to addressing Bystander Intervention training. One major component of Title IX legislation requires

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<sup>165</sup> Sexual Health Innovations, *Callisto: A College Sexual Assault Reporting System*, 2016, [www.projectcallisto.org](http://www.projectcallisto.org).

<sup>166</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, March 29), Callisto Demo-Sexual Assault Reporting meeting minutes.

colleges to provide bystander intervention trainings to the student body.<sup>167,168,169,170,171</sup> While this is a requirement, there is currently no standard training in place that all schools can use.<sup>172,173</sup> Several programs exist across the country such as Where Do You Stand?, Men Can Stop Rape, and Green Dot, as well as individualized programs at certain universities.<sup>174</sup> Sarah Lawrence offered a program that had very poor turnout. I was told by a fellow taskforce member that only four students attended, and while they were enthusiastic and engaged, the program obviously was not doing the job it was intended to do.<sup>175</sup> It did not widely educate the student body and did not reach anyone who would not normally be drawn to the education; meaning any individual

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<sup>167</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>168</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 170.

<sup>169</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 1 and 9.

<sup>170</sup> Sarah Brown, “How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16-A17.

<sup>171</sup> Katherine Mangan, “7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A12.

<sup>172</sup> Sarah Brown, “Law Institute Plans Guidelines on Dealing With Campus Rape,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

<sup>173</sup> Sarah Brown, “How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16-A17.

<sup>174</sup> Rebecca Koenig, “Amid Partying at UVa, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

<sup>175</sup> Sarah Lawrence College Sexual Assault Taskforce, (2016, February 23-March 1), combined agenda.

who is unaware of what bystander interventions are or individuals who believe sexual violence is always the victim's fault.<sup>176</sup> According to SLC's internal portal the school worked with a local agency, Westchester Victims Assistance, to provide the program. The school refers to the training as Bystander Empowerment and offers a course called Mentors in Violence Prevention through the physical education department for PE credit.<sup>177</sup> There are many similarities between the program at SLC and the program I was involved with including the schools partnering with a local sexual violence agency to implement the training, making the training available but not mandatory, and reaching a very narrow audience.<sup>178</sup>

Over the summer I became a state-certified Domestic and Sexual Violence volunteer through Susan B. Anthony Project in Torrington, Connecticut.<sup>179</sup> I have volunteered with the agency since 2004, but this was the first time I took the 40 hour training, as the rules about who needed to attend changed. After I was certified I began working with the Community Education department and was selected to co-facilitate a program called Where Do You Stand? (WDYS). My mom has worked for this agency for somewhere between 15 and 20 years. This is also the agency that my family went to for help when we were in a volatile domestic violence situation as I was growing up. We had to flee our home, move into a domestic violence shelter and then

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<sup>176</sup> Kathleen A. Bogle, "'Yes Means Yes' Isn't the Answer," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A36.

<sup>177</sup> Sarah Lawrence College, "Bystander Empowerment," Sexual Violence Prevention and Support webpage, [https://my.slc.edu/ICS/Campus\\_Life/Resources/Sexual\\_Violence\\_Prevention\\_\\_Support/Bystander\\_Empowerment.jnz](https://my.slc.edu/ICS/Campus_Life/Resources/Sexual_Violence_Prevention__Support/Bystander_Empowerment.jnz).

<sup>178</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>179</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, State-Certified Domestic and Sexual Violence training materials, August 2015.

continue in a transitional living program, also sponsored by the agency. Because this agency literally saved our lives, my mother instilled in me that we needed to give back and help others who are in need. This is how I began my volunteer work at SBA. Due to policies about favoritism and conflicts of interest, I am only allowed to volunteer in programs that my mother does not supervise. Because my mother oversees all of the direct service work, I am left with administrative tasks and working with the Community Education department. I did not start this internship or come into Sarah Lawrence knowing, or even thinking, that sexual violence on college campuses would be my capstone project and conference work focus. Therefore at the time of my training I was simply interested in being involved with this grant program and working with men to prevent sexual violence.

I took a day long workshop hosted by the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence (also known as The Alliance), the policy making organization for sexual violence in Connecticut. Individuals from the Men Can Stop Rape initiative in D.C. (a national rape prevention campaign aimed at men) came to teach us how to implement the WDYS program.<sup>180</sup> The workshop was mediocre at best; the employees from The Alliance put the wrong start time on their sign up and did not even introduce themselves to us. The Men Can Stop Rape presenters were equally unprepared; they thought they would be teaching a group of people who had already been facilitating the program and when they found out we were new to the process they literally had no idea what to do or how to fix the problem. By the time I left I felt completely unprepared to actually start facilitating the program and hoped that my co-facilitator had received more adequate training.

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<sup>180</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

My co-facilitator was required to attend similar workshops to be certified to facilitate the WDYS bystander training.<sup>181</sup> He experienced many of the same difficulties that I had with the certification workshops, but was required to attend many more hours than I did. As a Community Educator this falls under his purview for work assignments. As a man versed in these subjects he was undeniably useful. The WDYS and Men Can Stop Rape initiatives are geared toward men and the people in charge of these projects feel that the men coming to the presentations would be more open and comfortable having a male facilitator who they could identify with. According to the presenters from the Men Can Stop Rape campaign, if and when these programs are only led by women, the audience members are automatically on the defensive assuming they are just going to get preached at about feminism and blamed as if they are all rapists.<sup>182</sup>

The WDYS program provides a broad outline of content for facilitators to use, which can then be customized to the individual needs of each client.<sup>183</sup> One of the optional things to include is an exercise where you start by explaining why you are involved. I talked to my co-facilitator about this, thinking it might be a good way for us to break down the barriers we were facing, but he was not comfortable sharing with me or the individuals coming to our presentations why he was drawn to this work so I do not know his story. Typically individuals in this field have some sort of personal experience that draws them to the work and this can be extremely traumatic. He was more interested in including topics such as healthy masculinity into the program and explaining to the groups that you can be ‘manly’ or ‘masculine’ without being misogynistic and

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<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Men Can Stop Rape: Creating Cultures Free from Violence, “Where Do You Stand?- At The Start of Your College Semester,” 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>183</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

hateful or violent toward women. This is an approach that I whole-heartedly agree with, as most young men are not taught this content.<sup>184</sup> When men are not taught how to be masculine in a normal and healthy way, rape becomes a tool to prove masculinity and worth.<sup>185,186</sup> This lack of education is not only a part of rape culture, but also feeds into the idea that to be manly you need to be hyper-aggressive and violent.<sup>187,188</sup>

The WDYS Program was grant funded by the Department of Public Health (DPH), and Susan B. Anthony Project was one of two organizations within CT that was selected to receive the funding.<sup>189,190</sup> The other organization did their presentations at the University of Bridgeport; we did ours at Northwestern Connecticut Community College (NWCCC). The guidelines for the grant stated that a minimum of 150 male students be shown the program at each location during the fall semester from September to December 2015. Six presentations were scheduled during that timeframe and were set to occur during an open period from 11:50am-12:50pm. The first set of presentations did not go as well as we had hoped or anticipated. Most of the presentations fell

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<sup>184</sup> Mary Ellen McIntire, “Conversations About Sexual Violence Are New to Many Freshmen,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A18.

<sup>185</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, 12.

<sup>186</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A28.

<sup>187</sup> Mary Ellen McIntire, “Conversations About Sexual Violence Are New to Many Freshmen,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A18.

<sup>188</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A28.

<sup>189</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, “Where Do You Stand?,” 2015, <http://sbaproject.org/activities-and-events/where-do-you-stand/>.

<sup>190</sup> Gail Manna, email with Sexual Violence Prevention Planning Committee meeting minutes, February 25, 2016 and March 14, 2016.

into two categories: either there was only one person in the audience or no one showed up at all. The school did a poor job at advertising the event and did not make the program mandatory. Any time we interacted with the Title IX Coordinator at the college, she insisted she was doing everything she could to get people to attend. Over time it became clear that the school was not actually doing much of anything to get people to attend these trainings. The agency I was volunteering with put up advertisement posters putting forth effort to recruit male students, but this did not seem to have much impact either. The posters do not necessarily make clear what the presentations are, especially if you do not already know what bystander intervention is or how it might potentially affect you.

There were some external issues as well, such as having an interim President at the college at the time. College administrations are responsible for being compliant with the federal laws and are the driving force behind implementation of programs and policies.<sup>191</sup> Having an interim President left the school open to more complacency as the individual in the current position would not ultimately be held accountable to the Federal Department of Education. All of these factors together culminated in poor turnout for the presentations.

At the end of December the agencies were in big trouble. Because they did not get the required number of individuals to see the presentations they were at risk of losing their grant funding. At NWCCC we had about forty total attendees and at the University of Bridgeport there were zero. The organizations reached out to The Alliance to see if the timeline of the grant could

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<sup>191</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

be extended and an extension was approved through March 31, 2016.<sup>192</sup> During the spring semester we scheduled six more presentations and tried to get renewed commitment from the school to really make the program successful. We assumed that having the new President of the college involved and invested would make a huge difference. Unfortunately he did not seem to push the program any further, even after being in attendance at one of the presentations. The presentations continued to have extremely low attendance or none at all, even worse than the first semester. By the end of the term we only had about ten new attendees. Once again the program was not well advertised and the Title IX Coordinator did nothing to increase attendance. One thing that changed between the first and second semesters was that the college began to record attendance, which would be used to prove the college was maintaining Title IX compliance if they were ever audited. Thankfully they were more successful at the University of Bridgeport and ended with about seventy attendees. Even though neither organization met the minimum required attendance markers, the people in charge of the grant decided to combine the data from both organizations and accept the results.

The following is a breakdown of how three of the presentations from the first semester went; going in depth with the other presentations was nearly impossible as most of the remaining presentations were cancelled due to lack of attendance:

**10/20/15 Tuesday, Presentation 1:** The day before the scheduled presentation I was cc'd on an email to the Title IX Coordinator at NWCCC in Winsted, who had been involved in the process of setting up these presentations. In her reply she noted that only two people had signed up for the presentation, but the college would hold the room, rather than cancel, in case more people showed up. The day of the presentation I met with the head of the Community Outreach

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<sup>192</sup> Gail Manna, email about requesting grant extension, November 23, 2015.

department who was managing my internship and fieldwork for this project. During that meeting I received my official certificate for completing the state-certified training and my supervisor showed me some information about the WDYS program that is kept in a binder, such as a consent form that participants must fill out because a researcher at Clark University is planning to do follow-ups with anyone who saw the presentation. The purpose of the follow-up by the researcher is to gauge if the participants' opinions changed or stayed the same on the topic of sexual violence both six months and one year after participating in the training.<sup>193</sup>

When my co-facilitator and I arrived at the college there were already a few problems. First, the location where the presentation was taking place was in a conference room below the library. That sounds fine, but there is barely any signage to even find this room. It's down a staircase on the side of a building and is very easy to miss. The next issue was that the room was locked, and it was five minutes until we were supposed to be presenting. Many people had to be contacted and finally we got a key to open the room. Some small incentives for attending the presentation were included, such as: providing pizza and sodas and raffling off an Amazon gift card to participants. However, these incentives were not advertised anywhere, so it was not an effective tactic at incentivizing participation. Being that it is a commuter school, there could have been a lot of people on campus, if they were stuck with classes before and after the free period, and it is certainly nice to be able to get a free lunch if you are stuck there. We also did not even see any flyers or signage announcing that the presentation would be occurring, even though several of the people involved claimed to have handed the flyers out to classes and to have hung

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<sup>193</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 172.

flyers around campus. There was a different presentation happening at the same time in the room next to ours, which was another barrier. I'm not sure what it was for, but it was completely packed with people and definitely took away from our opportunity to gain attendees. This was particularly problematic because the presentations were supposed to be scheduled during non-competing times.

The Title IX Coordinator came to the presentation which gave us an opportunity to speak with her about what was being done as far as promotion of the event. She told us that emails were sent out to both school and personal email addresses of the 500 male students and all of the faculty, that the event was advertised on the college's Facebook page, and that there were flyers hung up and given to professors to distribute. One thing she thought might help to bring in more attendance was targeting the Communications and Public Speaking courses as those students are required to attend presentations at least once a semester as part of their final grade. The professors of those classes were even willing to give extra credit to students for attending the WDYS presentation. The Title IX Coordinator claimed she was also planning to reach out to the Dean of Students and to Student Advisors as a way to prioritize the presentations even more and to help bring in attendees. Other tactics that were discussed included: making the event open to the public instead of just the school (even though that did not meet the guidelines of the grant and research) and putting more time into one-on-one recruiting by going into classrooms and explaining what the WDYS program was and why it would be valuable to attend. The last suggestion definitely made a lot of sense because, as stated earlier, many people would not necessarily know what bystander intervention is. However, no one actually took the time and effort to go into the classrooms and recruit.

In the end only one person came. My co-facilitator still did the presentation and I sat in back and participated as an audience member because I had yet to see the actual presentation being done.<sup>194</sup> He did a great job, by treating the audience as if it were completely full. He was enthusiastic and passionate and did not skip over activities because there was only one person there. The curriculum covers a wide array of topics; the most important being delving into the way society creates and feeds into rape culture.<sup>195</sup> Another topic included in the curriculum was exploring gender roles and how we, as society, assign these gender roles even to babies and young children. This particular part of the curriculum was expressed through an interactive activity about the gendering of toys.<sup>196</sup> In this activity participants are asked to list off toys they would buy for a boy and girl aged 5-11. The responses are typically along the lines of trucks, blocks, Legos and action figures for boys and dolls, Barbies, easy bake ovens, and crafts for girls. At the end of the activity we look at the two lists and ask the participants if they notice any differences. Typically the attendees easily understand that boys are given toys that we think of as masculine and girls are given toys that are feminine. Boys are given something to be and girls are given something to do.<sup>197</sup> We end the activity by talking about how different colors are assigned to each gender and the history behind that color theory.

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<sup>194</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, “Where Do You Stand?” PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

<sup>195</sup> Paul H. Robinson, “The Legal Limits of ‘Yes Means Yes,’” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>196</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>197</sup> *Boy’s Things and Girls’ Things?: Practical Strategies for Challenging Gender Stereotypical Choices and Behaviours in Primary Schools*, The Strategy and Communications Department of The National Union of Teachers, 2016, <https://www.teachers.org.uk/equality/equality-matters/breaking-mould>.

Another part of the presentation concerns media representation.<sup>198</sup> This is a part of the curriculum that typically gets a lot of push back and we start to lose our audience as they become defensive. The slide of the PowerPoint shows an image of Hillary Duff posing for *Maxim* magazine. We ask the audience what sort of message this sends to girls and young women. The purpose is to show that the media exposes females to unrealistic beauty standards, which then impacts their self-esteem because they are unable to achieve this ideal body. We briefly touch on the sexualization of women, as well, and the way this can lead to women being viewed as objects.<sup>199</sup> Along those same lines, the next slide talks about some recent popular songs which feed into rape culture.<sup>200</sup> One of the examples is the song “Blurred Lines”, in which we analyze the lyrics and explain that the song encourages coercion and lack of consent. Another example I gave is the more recent song “Animals” by Adam Levine. This song threateningly offers lyrics like “baby I’m preying on you tonight.” The music video is even more disturbing; in it Adam Levine stalks a woman and bathes in animal blood. There was a huge backlash after this song came out by RAINN (the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) claiming that the song was sending a dangerous message and that it once again feeds into rape culture. Levine defended the song by saying it was his wife in the music video, suggesting that hunting metaphors are acceptable within marriage. The purpose of analyzing lyrics was to show the audience the insidious ways rape culture is perpetuated.

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<sup>198</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, “Where Do You Stand?” PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

<sup>199</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>200</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, “Where Do You Stand?” PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

After those activities have been completed, a pretty clear foundation has been laid by the presentation about what sexual violence is, what rape culture is, how the media feeds into perpetuating negative views toward women, and how gender roles are a part of that. At this point we are able to move forward with the curriculum.<sup>201</sup> The rest of the training focuses on bystander intervention. Several activities go with this portion of the presentation.<sup>202</sup> First we establish working definitions of sexual violence, rape culture, consent, and what a bystander is. Regarding consent we give Connecticut's specific definition and also establish state laws concerning sexual violence. Because I have information about New York's consent laws as well, from being involved in the taskforce, I add in some of the differences between definitions and laws even in adjoining states.<sup>203,204</sup> In Connecticut, for example, if you have been drinking or doing drugs you automatically lose your ability to consent under the law. In New York this is different; the use of drugs and alcohol can lead to the loss of consent, but only if the individual is drugged without their knowledge.

From there we discuss various scenarios and ask the viewers their opinions about them. The first example tells Chloe's Story.<sup>205</sup> In this story we hear about Chloe's experience at a party where she was drunk, went to lay down, and was sexually assaulted by a male friend at the party.

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<sup>201</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>202</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, "Where Do You Stand?" PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

<sup>203</sup> Eric Kelderman, "What California's New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>204</sup> Robin Wilson, "How 'Yes Means Yes' Already Works on One Campus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>205</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

After the participants have a chance to read the story we ask if they think the situation is rape and why or why not? Next, we hear Blake's side of the story which differs significantly. Blake acknowledges that Chloe said no, but claims that he knew she really wanted to participate and therefore he did nothing wrong. We ask the participants again if they think the scenario is rape and why or why not? We then explain some bystander techniques and ask, "What are some things you could have done to step in and prevent this?" and follow that up with, "What are the risks associated with that choice?" Then we watch a clip from a show called "What Would You Do?." This video is especially jarring. In it we see that a camera crew is getting ready to set up a fake scenario where women are at the bar, intoxicated, and men they do not know are trying to get them to come home with them, clearly without the best of intentions in mind. The purpose of the fake scenario is to see how bystanders would react and if anyone would step in. The most disturbing part of the video is seeing that before the male actor can even start his scene, actual men at the bar start trying to take advantage of the female actress. The show adapted to the situation to carry out their experiment. Almost every woman there did step in to intervene, while most of the men did not.<sup>206</sup>

Even though there was only one participant for this session the program proved to be extremely valuable. I was able to see this man grappling with questions of "Is this scenario

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<sup>206</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 174.

rape?” when the context was kind of fuzzy. I could see that the curriculum was helping to shape his beliefs in a positive way.<sup>207</sup> That is exactly the point.

**11/03/15 Tuesday, Presentation 3:** This presentation had about 14 people in attendance. One person was an adult female professor who attended because she brought a bunch of male students along with her. We were not able to include her pre- and post- tests with our data.<sup>208</sup> She mostly sat in the back quietly and any comments she had were directed to me privately. There was a mix of older gentleman and young men. There was also a transgender student, who made clear to us that he identified as a man. The young men were very respectful to him, especially in regards to what pronouns he wanted the group to use. This was not the case of the adult female who continued to refer to him as she or her. The transgender student, whose name I do not know, was very vocal throughout the presentation and was aware of bystander intervention techniques.<sup>209</sup> He also voiced that he would be willing to step in if he saw a situation occurring that could be potentially harmful for a woman.

This example is important to point out for a few reasons. The specific bystander intervention training I was co-facilitating was designed for males and male identifying people. Because the program was grant funded and data was being collected for a researcher, it was essential that the total number of participants and the data collection process met these specific

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<sup>207</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>208</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 180.

<sup>209</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A27.

preset guidelines; meaning that only individuals identifying as male be at the presentation filling out pre- and post- survey questionnaires. The fact that someone transgender came to the program and had very meaningful input was valuable to the presentation overall. This specific student had experiences and reactions to the content that differed significantly from the cis-male participants. Even though the experience was visibly different for this student, it was good to see that the people who created the curriculum were successful at making it relevant and inclusive to all male-identifying individuals. The experience of the transgender student was also valuable because transgender individuals have a very high risk of being assaulted.<sup>210</sup>

The young men in the group were very aware of the issues being discussed and voiced their willingness to step in to do what is right to protect an individual from being assaulted. They spoke about the social constructs of masculinity and the importance of not only helping women in these situations, but also calling out men, even their own friends, who were acting in a dangerous or disrespectful way. It was a unique group because the participants were so aware, which made the presentation truly amazing.<sup>211</sup> However one of the downsides of this is that these young men did not need this education. It was great that they came and were able to spread their positive views, but really the target group would be people who do not already think this way and live by this belief system in an effort to change their mindset and show them how important it is to stop sexual violence.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> Katherine Mangan, "One in 4 College Women Faces Sexual Assault or Misconduct," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 2, 2015): A4.

<sup>211</sup> Mary Ellen McIntire, "Conversations About Sexual Violence Are New to Many Freshmen," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A18.

<sup>212</sup> Sarah Brown, "How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A17.

The older men in the group were very problematic. A few were quiet, but it was apparent from their body language that they did not agree with what we were teaching. This made us wonder what had drawn them to this presentation. Were they mandated to come by the school for some reason? Were they staff members? Unfortunately we do not get to know that information, but it certainly did not seem that they attended of their own free will. A few of the other older gentlemen who did not agree with what we were teaching were very vocal. Thankfully their problematic comments did not affect the other, younger participants, as they were unusually enlightened, but it definitely could have been bad if we had a different group of individuals who might have been swayed by what the older men were saying. For instance one of the men talked about how he used to be a bouncer at a club and how he often saw women being assaulted right out on the dance floor. Yet when we went over scenarios and asked people if they would intervene he was quick to say “Absolutely not. It is none of my business. They can do whatever they want.” This idea of ‘it is none of my business’ is quite dangerous and stems from the belief system of an older generation.

One of the difficulties in being at the forefront of this education is being met with individuals who have very strong ideals in opposition to what is being taught. This is particularly hard as it can be triggering, re-traumatizing, or simply difficult to see the other person’s point of view. However, taking on this role requires challenging these opposing views as they occur; otherwise change will not occur. That would defeat the purpose of the entire program. There is a delicate balance to this because too much push back can be disruptive or lead to tangents. This takes away from the overall goal of the curriculum.<sup>213</sup> A standard follow-up question is, “Are

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<sup>213</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

there any risks involved with that choice?” referring to the chosen type of intervention or lack thereof.<sup>214</sup> He responded by saying “Yes. The risk is that the woman could and probably would get raped. But it doesn’t matter; it’s still none of my business.” Clearly these are exactly the type of people that the program is targeting, in hopes of changing their beliefs and possibly making them more likely to help in these situations instead of standing by and letting a woman get assaulted.

It is important to note where this man’s beliefs were coming from. There were probably multiple reasons, but the one thing he shared with us at the very beginning of the presentation was a situation which shaped his views. He said that a number of years ago he was involved with a college football team as an assistant coach and someone on the team was accused of rape. Due to this accusation the player got kicked off the team and apparently there were also additional repercussions from the school. He made the consequences sound dire, but I doubt the individual was expelled from the school as this is rarely the case. Some years later it came out that the girl who made the allegation had made the story up. In his view this woman ruined this man’s life with her false accusations.

There are many problems with this story. First of all this was a second hand story told from the accused man’s perspective. According to the man who was falsely accused the girl was being vindictive; she wanted a relationship with him and he did not. This may or may not be true; we have no way of knowing. Second, she took her story back years later. This also does not necessarily mean she was lying to begin with. There are many reasons that she may have taken the story back, such as trauma, psychological distress, or knowing that the legal system was not

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

going to do anything to rectify the situation and wanting to try to move on with her life.<sup>215,216</sup>

Even if the woman really did falsely accuse the man, which can happen, this is a classic and hyperbolic narrative. As the narrative gets repeated, it perpetuates false stereotypes and leads to the further victimization and marginalization of women. Clearly this story impacted the male participant in such a way that he believed that most, if not all, accusations of rape or sexual violence are fake.

**11/12/15 Thursday, Presentation 4:** The final scheduled presentation from the fall term had only three participants. This left the agency with a grand total of fewer than forty people who attended. I had spoken with the Executive Director of Susan B. Anthony Project the weekend before this presentation and we discussed that the previous presentation had gone very well. She told me she would be reaching out to the Dean of the College to “remind them of the commitment they made” to making this program successful. This did not appear to be an effective talk, as nothing changed and we still had very poor attendance. I contacted my supervisor to see if more presentations were being scheduled since the past presentations did not yield the desired number of participants. She informed me that the agency was working with the college to schedule more times. Technically the stipulations of the grant stated that the organizations doing the presentations had until January before the presenters had to reach the allotted amount of attendees. She noted that the responses she was getting from the Title IX Coordinator at the college were very troubling. I assumed this meant that she was continuing to

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<sup>215</sup> Tom Bartlett, “Rape Researcher Persists Despite University’s Resistance,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 24, 2014): A6.

<sup>216</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

claim she was working as hard as possible to make the program a success. While this was continuously asserted it was never something we actual saw happen.

The previous in depth examples of presentations at NWCCC illustrate how I once again found myself surrounded by complacent individuals who were not invested in making positive changes around sexual violence on college campuses. This was similar to what I experienced with the Sexual Assault Taskforce at SLC. This is the biggest barrier I have encountered while doing this work; the people in the roles that hold all the power simply do not seem to care enough to make a positive impact. During the whole fall semester I was under the impression that this bystander intervention training was happening in addition to other programs on campus and I believed it was in no way affiliated with Title IX compliance. I was absolutely amazed to learn that our Where Do You Stand? Program was the way the college was handling Title IX compliance at their school, meaning this was the only program happening.

Technically the Where Do You Stand? Program does meet compliance as the law states that bystander intervention training of some sort must be provided on all college campuses. The White House Taskforce even encourages colleges to partner with community agencies and be sure to include men in the trainings.<sup>217</sup> However, if we actually pick apart the details it is quite clear that our program did not meet the rules for compliance because of the way it was implemented.<sup>218</sup> First, the grant was created for a program that specifically targeted and educated male students. Female students were not even allowed to attend these trainings if they wanted to.

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<sup>217</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>218</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

Second, the program was made optional rather than mandatory, and as we saw this was not effective; of 500 male students only 40-50 came to see a presentation. Those are staggering realities that prove that even if the policies required under Title IX compliance could be effective, they are not working if schools are not being held to the proper standards for implementation.<sup>219,220</sup> What is most sad about this is that this is a small, commuter college that will probably never be caught doing a less than sufficient job. They are so small, and so off the radar, the federal government would never choose to audit this school and make sure it is truly compliant. Because of this a whole population of students is being wronged.

Through doing this work I was able to identify several problems. Even though we were working with the President of the College and the Title IX Coordinator there was a clear lack of enthusiasm in making the program a success. Students were provided no incentive to come to the program: it was not well advertised; it was at an inconvenient time and location for the student body; and worst of all, it was not mandated. One major issue is that the program was only for men; women were not allowed to attend. This means that there is absolutely no education or information about resources available for females provided at this college to students who arguably need the information a lot more urgently.

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 176.

Second, since the program was not mandated by the school only a handful of students actually saw the presentation and learned about the available resources.<sup>221</sup> I imagine the female student body already has a good case to bring Title IX allegations against the school. They requested to the administration that they be allowed to attend the WDYS trainings and were not only denied that right, but also denied any type of alternative educational program. However, it will probably take an actual reported assault before the institution opens their eyes to the culture of violence and lack of protection surrounding their student body.<sup>222,223</sup> Therefore, my experience in facilitating the WDYS bystander intervention training on a college campus illustrates that the current system is broken. There needs to be a standard training happening on all college and university campuses across the country that is proven to be effective.<sup>224</sup> That training needs to be enforced by people who are passionate about preventing sexual violence.

It may come as a surprise that this type of training was happening at a commuter school, where there are no dorms and no individuals live or stay on campus other than for classes. The reasoning this school was picked for the grant is simply because it is the school within the service area of Susan B. Anthony Project. However, it is just as important to do these trainings at a commuter school as it is to do them at large universities where most students live on campus and away from home. First, virtually every school will have commuters whether it is a

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<sup>221</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>223</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

<sup>224</sup> Sarah Brown, "Law Institute Plans Guidelines on Dealing With Campus Rape," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 11, 2015): A12.

predominantly commuter school or not. Second, schools may have similar commuter-like issues revolving around students taking classes at other schools (sister schools, consortiums, etc). This is actually a particularly prevalent issue for commuters and non-matriculated students who may not be aware of the host school's policies and procedures around sexual misconduct and violence. Here is a real life example: I commuted to Smith and never worried about being assaulted until one day a professor told my class that everyone should be worried about getting raped when they walked across the road from the campus to the parking lot when it was late at night. No particular reason was given other than the implication that of course some predator would be lying in wait. This is where I parked. I never initially feared this, but then became afraid after hearing this warning. Part of this is problematic though because it assumes the (false) narrative of stranger rape being the most common and perpetuates the idea that rapes occur when predatory men are lurk in the shadows waiting for their next victim. Additionally there are so many different ways sexual violence can occur at college that it's difficult to outline and address them all. Some of these particular instances include: assault during college but off campus grounds, assaults over the summer or winter breaks by a student from your same or a different school, student to student vs. student and non-student assaults, and the list goes on.

We had some very strong, volatile reactions from at least a few participants in every presentation. One of the major topics that set people off was a slide about *Maxim* magazine.<sup>225</sup> We eventually removed this slide because it caused such extreme negative reactions and was causing us to lose our audience. I think we could have replaced it with a young adult magazine like *Seventeen* and possibly gotten a better response. Another example is from the spring

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<sup>225</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, "Where Do You Stand?" PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

semester presentations when we had an extremely angry and agitated participant who was very vocal in accusing us of blaming the audience members for everything we were showing; or in other words accusing all men of committing sexual violence. This participant clearly felt we were against him rather than seeing us an ally or peer educator.

One point we attempted to make clear is that while most men do not rape, the majority of rapes are committed by men. It is also fairly new (the past 5 years or so) that education is focused toward men as a way to create change in this field. Historically women have carried the burden of changing their behaviors to make themselves safer and prevent themselves from getting raped. Including men in this conversation is a necessary change to this history.<sup>226</sup> After all, how can we as a society possibly make changes in this area when 50% of the population is left out of the conversation? If we are ever going to change the way we view victims of sexual violence, we need to address the people committing the majority of this violence. This is why programs now exist where education is specifically geared toward men as a prevention technique.<sup>227</sup> When I first learned of this I was surprised and felt I would be way too scared to ever do the work. But as time passed I warmed up to it and now really believe that these programs are an important tool in preventing assaults.<sup>228,229</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Martin D. Schwartz and Walter S. DeKeseredy, *Sexual Assault on the College Campus the Role of Male Peer Support*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1997.

<sup>227</sup> White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (U.S.), *Not Alone: the First Report of the White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault*, 2014.

<sup>228</sup> “Engaging CT Men to End Sexual Violence,” *Susan B. Anthony Project Newsletter*, Spring 2016, 6.

<sup>229</sup> Sarah Brown, “How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A17.

As far as changing the curriculum there are little tweaks here and there that can be done either on a large scale in the original curriculum or on a smaller scale like the way we took out the *Maxim* ad when we were met with a lot of resistance. One of the optional things to include in the program that was taught at my facilitator training was to get biases out in the open right away.<sup>230,231</sup> This is done by having the presenters and the audience members stating their preconceived notions about one another as a way to address these feelings in the beginning, clear them up, and then start everything with a fresh mind and clean slate. I suggested this to my co-facilitator but he didn't seem comfortable with it; he said I could lead the activity if we were to include it, but then he didn't mention it again, so we never tried it in the end. There is also flexibility in the way the presentations are framed. We discussed making the training more inclusive of material about healthy masculinity but didn't really end up doing that. The WDYS program offered a number of options for what to include and my co-facilitator ultimately made those decisions for our presentations. At one point he was planning to rework the entire presentation with a new PowerPoint, but due to lack of attendance we stuck to the original presentation.<sup>232</sup> Other programs around the country doing WDYS may be doing them differently by choosing to include different activities.

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<sup>230</sup> *Where Do You Stand? Training Curriculum*, Men Can Stop Rape, Inc., 2011, [www.mencanstoprape.org](http://www.mencanstoprape.org).

<sup>231</sup> Sarah Brown, "How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A17.

<sup>232</sup> Susan B. Anthony Project, "Where Do You Stand?" PowerPoint presentation, September 2015-March 2016.

A way to fix the problem of poor attendance would be to actually make the trainings mandatory, which could easily be done by holding them during orientation.<sup>233,234,235</sup> Then the curriculum would reach everyone no matter what level of knowledge they already had on the subject. Males who are enlightened and don't really need the training would be mixed with males who have strong opinions in opposition to this training. Maybe more could be accomplished if the push back was coming from peers rather than a presenter. It's also possible that people with strong beliefs in opposition of this training, and sexual violence more generally, could have their views changed if they saw this training and heard the actual facts about what is happening with sexual violence across the country.

### **State Policy Organizations and Title IX Coordinators**

Lastly, I would like to address my experiences with people in power, specifically the Title IX Coordinator at NWCCC and the person who hosted my bystander intervention training course at The Alliance. Even though I initially started this work as a volunteer it became clear to me that I would use the fieldwork for this paper in December 2015. Knowing that this would be my capstone topic, my internship supervisor at SBA Project decided to email both of the above individuals on my behalf, asking if I should contact them through email or phone and providing a little bit of background about why I was interested in speaking with them. Neither individual

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<sup>233</sup> Katherine Mangan, "7 Common Requirements in Resolving Federal Sex-Assault Inquiries," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 19, 2016): A12.

<sup>234</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, "Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the 'Right' Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?," in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 171.

<sup>235</sup> Sarah Brown, "How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16.

responded.<sup>236</sup> Because I was seeing the Title IX Coordinator at NWCCC on a regular basis I decided to ask her about the policies myself, and mentioned the original email. This is when I learned that the WDYS program was the Title IX compliance initiative and she told me to email her again and she would provide me with more information. I emailed several times and never received a response; this was unfortunate but not surprising based on my previous interactions with her.<sup>237</sup>

I also learned that female students on campus were in a bit of an uproar because they wanted to be allowed to see the WDYS Presentations. The Title IX Coordinator decided to allow one female student to attend the SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) meeting and make her case for why female students should have access to the presentation. I was given authorization to attend this meeting by the Executive Director of SBA, but missed it due to an unexpected illness. I first believed that I would be participating in the meeting, but later found out that I was only cleared for observation.<sup>238</sup> I followed up with a representative from Susan B. Anthony Project who did attend.<sup>239</sup> I also spoke informally about the meeting with the Title IX Coordinator at NWCCC on various occasions prior to the actual meeting. My co-facilitator and I were happy to present to the female students because we believed that they deserved access to this information about available resources just as much as the male students deserved access to the information. We made that very clear on multiple occasions. This was the reason I wanted to attend the SART

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<sup>236</sup> Gail Manna, email to NWCCC Title IX Coordinator about providing info for my thesis, February 9, 2016.

<sup>237</sup> Michelle Guile, email to Title IX Coordinator at NWCCC for information about Title IX compliance and programs, April 11, 2016.

<sup>238</sup> Michelle Guile, email to Susan B. Anthony Project about SART meeting, March 30, 2016.

<sup>239</sup> Bethaney Mastrocola, email with SART meeting minutes, March 30, 2016.

meeting in the first place; to side with the female students requesting access to resources. Even so, the school ultimately decided not to extend the program to the female students. Additionally we found out that many students were requesting night sessions because the midday time slot did not work for them. Again, we were happy to accommodate and spoke with the Title IX Coordinator about this extensively, making plans to set up evening sessions. Once again, nothing was scheduled in the end. This shows that there was clear interest in the program, but the school put obstacles in the way so that the people who did want to attend were unable to. This could easily be fixed if the training was being taught at orientation, where it would be mandatory and would include both male and female students.<sup>240,241</sup> It is mind blowing to me that a school could have trainings about sexual violence and what resources are available and not make those trainings available to every student. Especially, when female identifying students is the group suffering the most from sexual violence.

Then there was my contact at The Alliance. Even though she did not reply to the initial email I decided to try again and emailed her explaining my project and why I was invested in the situation.<sup>242</sup> She did reply to the second email, but the response was extremely disappointing. Again, based on previous interactions with her, I was not shocked. The reply I got basically said there was nothing she could tell me about what Connecticut schools are doing to be in

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<sup>240</sup> Sarah Brown, “How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16.

<sup>241</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 171.

<sup>242</sup> Michelle Guile, email to the Connecticut Alliance to End Sexual Violence, April 11, 2016.

compliance with the changes to Title IX, just that all the colleges were in fact compliant.<sup>243</sup> Then she wished me luck. That is a fairly shocking response to get from someone who heads the state's agency on sexual violence policy. This reinforced the fact that the wrong people are in these positions of power and influence. Step one in altering this dismal situation is filling these roles with individuals who actually care and who have the knowledge and experience to back up that passion and drive.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, I have found that even with changes to Title IX, colleges still do little to maintain compliance and even less to bridge the gap between student distrust of the administration. Sexual violence is rampant in our culture and will continue to be a serious issue on college and university campuses if things do not change.<sup>244,245</sup> Colleges are more concerned with their reputation and prestige than protecting their students and until this mentality changes sexual violence will continue to be a problem many young women face in their college years.<sup>246</sup> While attacks made by nonstudents against a student are often dealt with appropriately, a problem persists with student-on-student sexual assault.<sup>247</sup> The perpetrators fail to be

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<sup>243</sup> Beth Hamilton, email message about Connecticut's Title IX compliance, April 13, 2016.

<sup>244</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>245</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>247</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 166.

reprimanded, the victims fail to be protected, colleges continue to try to obscure data for both the public at large and the federal government, and complacency persists when dealing with Title IX policy implementation.<sup>248</sup>

During my time at Smith College as an undergraduate student, I had a professor who taught a class about women, gender, and the law. One day when discussing consent she asked "why can't talking about consent, talking about what is and is not ok with your sexual partner be erotic? Why is talking to your partner and including intelligence in a sexual encounter considered a turn off and a bad thing?" This idea has stuck with me over the years. Individuals in consensual relationships should know whether or not the actions they are taking are ok with their partner or not.<sup>249,250</sup> The idea the critics of affirmative consent legislation believe to be true is that a man and woman will have sex and then every man involved in that situation will have to worry that they are going to be accused of rape; which simply does not make sense. This scenario assumes individuals have no control over their actions, no understanding of the consequences of their actions, and that women are inherently vindictive, trying to hurt and falsely accuse any person they have a sexual encounter with.

We, as a society, need to move away from the dominant story of rape perpetuated by the myth about a perfect victim and the absolutely heinous violence committed by an evil

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<sup>248</sup> Andy Thomason, "U.S. Finds Basis for Sexually Hostile Environment at U. of Virginia," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 2, 2015): A4.

<sup>249</sup> Robin Wilson, "How 'Yes Means Yes' Already Works on One Campus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>250</sup> Kathleen A. Bogle, "'Yes Means Yes' Isn't the Answer," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A35.

perpetrator.<sup>251,252,253,254,255,256</sup> This story is two-fold. The narrative of the perfect victim is essentially about an innocent, youthful, virginal young woman who fights back with all her might and is of course not to blame. She does not wear revealing clothing; she does not engage in any risky activities; she simply falls victim to a predator.<sup>257,258</sup> The second part of this story asserts that the rape is committed by a stranger who is looking for beautiful young women as prey. While the above details could be triggering and traumatic, it is fairly easy to imagine the hypothetical laid out here. This includes things such as being attacked in a dark isolated place

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<sup>251</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A29.

<sup>252</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

<sup>253</sup> Robin Wilson, “Why Discussing Only the Most Violent Rape Cases Can Be Dangerous,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 12, 2014): A9.

<sup>254</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>255</sup> Rebecca Ropers-Huilman, Kaaren M. Williamsen, and Garrett Drew Hoffman, afterword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 186.

<sup>256</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 62 and 154.

<sup>257</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>258</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5.

where a stranger is watching and waiting, being threatened with weapons, and being forced to experience extreme physical violence.<sup>259</sup>

While even this brief hypothetical could be triggering, simply using the wording of violent stranger rape does not feel like enough. As the reader, it is crucial for you to be jolted and even feel uncomfortable at this point. This is a way of acknowledging if this narrative rings true to what you have heard, learned and believe about sexual violence. That being said I would never want to intentionally trigger or traumatize anyone. Being someone who has intimate experience with sexual violence and a person with many friends who have also experienced this maybe I am just desensitized. However, this is not just the narrative on college campuses; it is the mainstream narrative throughout society. Part of what I am trying to show is that the mainstream media focuses in on and perpetuates a false narrative about sexual violence, often displaying the most horrific and sensational assaults, treating them as the norm.<sup>260,261,262,263</sup>

When this is the story we have all been told it is easy to see why the tactics to prevent rape have focused on security measures: staying in groups, not walking alone in the dark, not wearing revealing clothing, and carefully watching your drink to make sure you do not get

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<sup>259</sup> Robin Wilson, “Why Discussing Only the Most Violent Rape Cases Can Be Dangerous,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 12, 2014): A9.

<sup>260</sup> Mary Ellen McIntire, “Conversations About Sexual Violence Are New to Many Freshmen,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A18.

<sup>261</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 1.

<sup>262</sup> Robin Wilson, “Why Discussing Only the Most Violent Rape Cases Can Be Dangerous,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 12, 2014): A9.

<sup>263</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 178.

drugged.<sup>264,265</sup> This is what we are taught to fear, the predatory man lurking around waiting to find a victim. In these instances all women are expected to take extreme precautions otherwise it is their fault that they experience this violence; sexual violence, in this narrative, is to be expected. These tactics, however, place the blame on the victim, typically a woman.<sup>266,267</sup> These safety measures assume that each individual woman must do everything in her power to stay safe and not be assaulted.<sup>268</sup> But what this actually teaches is that men are not and should not be held accountable for their actions and that men have uncontrollable natural sexual urges that once inspired must be fulfilled.<sup>269</sup> This puts the responsibility on women to prevent being raped. Placing the responsibility of preventing sexual violence on each individual woman is just another way of making sure a different woman is raped instead. While one woman is doing everything she can to protect herself from sexual violence, according to these safety measures, there is another woman with less friends, more revealing clothing, making riskier choices that will be assaulted in her place. These safety tactics and precautions do nothing to stop or prevent sexual

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<sup>264</sup> Rebecca Koenig, “Amid Partying at UVa, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

<sup>265</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A28.

<sup>266</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, 6-7.

<sup>267</sup> Kathleen A. Bogle, “‘Yes Means Yes’ Isn’t the Answer,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A35.

<sup>268</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>269</sup> Jami Lynn Brown, *Sexual Assault on University Campuses*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Riverside, 2003, 114.

violence altogether, but rather focus on making changes on an individual level.<sup>270,271</sup> This is why the change in legislation to ‘yes means yes’ and the implementation of bystander intervention trainings geared toward men are particularly important.<sup>272,273,274,275</sup>

We now know that this violent, predatory, stranger rape is not the way most assaults occur. Rather, most sexual violence occurs between acquaintances or intimate partners.<sup>276,277</sup> In reality rape happens a lot more like this: you are with your boyfriend and he wants to have sex and you don’t but he won’t take no for an answer because you are in a relationship and he

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<sup>270</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>271</sup> Caitlin B. Henriksen, Kelsey L. Mattick, and Bonnie S. Fisher, “Chapter 10 Mandatory Bystander Intervention Training: Is the SaVE Act Requirement the ‘Right’ Program to Reduce Violence Among College Students?,” in *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 179.

<sup>272</sup> Zoe Heller, “Rape on the Campus,” *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 8.

<sup>273</sup> Kathleen A. Bogle, “‘Yes Means Yes’ Isn’t the Answer,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): 36.

<sup>274</sup> Sarah Brown, “How One College Uses Student Orientation to Discuss Sexual Assault,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (September 4, 2015): A16-A17.

<sup>275</sup> Paul H. Robinson, “The Legal Limits of ‘Yes Means Yes,’” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21-A22.

<sup>276</sup> Robin Wilson, “Protecting the Party,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A29.

<sup>277</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 154.

believes he is entitled to your body;<sup>278</sup> it happens when you are married and your husband, along with much of society, thinks rape cannot happen during marriage so he forces himself onto you whether you are interested in having sex or not; it happens when you are young and excited and exploring your sexuality, but you go past your limits and you say you want to stop and that ‘no’ doesn’t get respected. Instead of perpetuating the idea that once you consent you are stuck with the consequences, we need to teach people that it is ok to change your mind. We need to teach that consent is not static and changing your mind is entirely valid and needs to be respected.<sup>279,280,281,282</sup> The fact that there are full books, written by scholars like David Archard, saying you are not allowed to withdraw consent is very, very scary.<sup>283</sup> You might think that it is only men who hold this point of view, but you would be wrong. There are countless women who have this exact same point of view, and that is even more dangerous.<sup>284</sup>

It is clear that even as far as student activists and the federal government have come with making schools accountable for the sexual assaults happening there, we have not come far

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<sup>278</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>279</sup> Zoe Heller, “Rape on the Campus,” *The New York Review* Volume LXII, Number 2 (February 5, 2015): 12.

<sup>280</sup> Kathleen A. Bogle, “‘Yes Means Yes’ Isn’t the Answer,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 31, 2014): A35.

<sup>281</sup> Robin Wilson, “How ‘Yes Means Yes’ Already Works on One Campus,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>282</sup> Eric Kelderman, “What California’s New Sexual-Consent Law Means for Its Colleges,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): A4.

<sup>283</sup> David Archard, *Sexual Consent*, Oxford: Westview Press, 1998.

<sup>284</sup> Laurie Essig, “Bad Romance Between Feminism and the State,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 10, 2014): B2.

enough.<sup>285,286</sup> More work needs to be done around the way sexual assaults are treated and reported. More can be done to end this culture of violence against women.<sup>287,288,289,290</sup> The purpose of this paper is to address this history and use it as a foundation for policy and implementation changes. Suggestions for altering how colleges implement and enforce the federal mandates will ultimately help to make the Title IX legislation more effective.<sup>291</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to describe, at least generally, the issues surrounding the implementation and inaction occurring: at NWCCC with the WDYS? Program, at Sarah Lawrence College with the Sexual Assault Taskforce, and with state policy making organizations. These programs, bystander intervention trainings, and sexual assault response teams or taskforces have the potential to be successful, but seemingly aren't. A huge barrier to this success is the complacency occurring in multiple organizations and at multiple levels. The behaviors of the various Title IX Coordinators I interacted with, the history of responses from

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<sup>285</sup> Robin Wilson, "As Federal Investigations of Sex Assault Get Tougher, Some Ask if That's Progress," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 16, 2015): A8.

<sup>286</sup> Rebecca Koenig, "Amid Partying at UVa, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

<sup>287</sup> Paul H. Robinson, "The Legal Limits of 'Yes Means Yes,'" *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (January 15, 2016): A21.

<sup>288</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 3.

<sup>289</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, acknowledgments to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), ix.

<sup>290</sup> Eric Kelderman and Rebecca Koenig, "Tradition in the Cross Hairs as Rape Allegations Rock UVa," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (December 5, 2014): A4.

<sup>291</sup> Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell, introduction to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), 4.

administrations and faculty members at U.S. colleges after sexual violence occurs,<sup>292</sup> and the outright complacency seen with state level policy making organizations are key examples of how individuals are inadequately functioning in their powerful positions.

As this paper has outlined, my work with the Sexual Assault Taskforce at Sarah Lawrence College, facilitating the Where Do You Stand? Bystander Intervention training at NWCCC, and interacting with individuals in policy positions at the college and state levels in two states have illustrated how and why students are not being protected. Solutions to this problem include: better enforcement of policies mandated under Title IX, the use of specific nationally implemented programs to teach consent, respect, and sexual violence prevention instead of broad program suggestions, continued grassroots student activism, and teaching concepts such as healthy masculinity, the definitions of consent, bystander intervention techniques, and the social construction of gender roles throughout life, instead of just in college.<sup>293,294</sup> Most notably a paradigm shift in how the issue of sexual violence is viewed and dealt with must be prioritized.<sup>295</sup>

As Maria Bevaqua so eloquently said, “changes in policy without simultaneous, sweeping changes in attitudes would have, overall, only a modest effect on the incidence,

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<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>294</sup> Caroline S. Turner, foreword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), viii.

<sup>295</sup> Rebecca Koenig, “Amid Partying at UVa, a Painful Note of Caution Intrudes,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (October 17, 2014): A7.

prevalence, and impact of rape.”<sup>296</sup> I truly hope that within my lifetime the stigma and shame and victim blaming associated with this type of violence will dissipate and we will come to a place where survivors are believed and perpetrators are brought to justice.<sup>297</sup> Until then we must harness a productive anger to produce a pressing sense of the need for change. These issues have historically been dealt with inadequately, but a sense of urgent passion coupled with continued student activism can ultimately change the way colleges are held accountable for their erroneous actions regarding sexual violence against women.

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<sup>296</sup> Maria Bevacqua, *Rape on the Public Agenda: Feminism and the Politics of Sexual Assault*, Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000, 151.

<sup>297</sup> Caroline S. Turner, foreword to *The Crisis of Campus Sexual Violence: Critical Perspectives on Prevention and Response*, eds. Sara Carrigan Wooten and Roland Mitchell (New York: Routledge, 2016), vii.

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