MAPPING THE "COMPLEX OF DIALOGUES": INSTITUTIONAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF MID-LEVEL ADMINISTRATORS' EXPERIENCE WITH SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

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ABSTRACT

Scholarship on sexual violence rarely originates from scholars in the field of writing studies and/or addresses the issue in intersectionally Feminist ways. To address this gap, this study seeks to account for the complexities and interconnections between mid-level university administrators, their practices, guiding texts, and their institutions. Mid-level administrators are defined in this study to be administrators that are in charge of units and personnel but housed under larger organizational structures and colleges. Examples of such mid-level administrators would be Department Chairs, Resource Center Directors, Writing Program or Center Administrators, Title IX Coordinators, etc., but this study does not include individuals such as individual teachers, students, provosts, deans. To specifically center on the experiences of mid-level administrators and their embodied nature, this study uses institutional ethnography as the methodology. This project draws on various methods of textual analysis, storying, site observations, and interviews within this methodology. The dissertation maps how texts, social relationships, and policy all interact with one another to create everyday practices, such as how these mid-level administrators support survivors and train staff within their organization to report instances of violence. The findings illustrate that (1) universities' values and missions do not always align with their actions and (2) administrators want to enact care-based practices to care for students, yet they feel they are not provided with the necessary tools to do that work. This dissertation concludes by offering tangible suggestions and changes—such as recommendations for intersectional praxis, development of care-plans and climate assessments, and creation of spaces and avenues of support for mid-level administrators—that can serve as a starting place for universities to enact a care-based, intersectional approach to sexual violence prevention and response.

This dissertation is dedicated to a better, different world— one that is possible.

journey.

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INTERLUDE I

Years later, the confines of my memory aren't linear. They jump between what was, what is, what can be. Sometimes all I have are the stories that the memories still must tell. The ones that illuminate gaping wounds in our society. The ones that exist beyond a singular place and institution because these wounds *are* ubiquitous. My memories of what "was" seek to inform what is and what can be.

Years later, I am not healed, nor do I think I ever will be. But healing and being "cured" isn't the point. I don't have a time machine to stop what happened to me or the millions of other people like me. But, I do have the memory and the power of dreaming for a better future. Those that have experienced violence are the keepers of these stories in a world never meant for us and trying to make new worlds anyway.

CHAPTER 1: WHERE WE'VE BEEN

Sexual violence is a symptom of the larger systemic exertions of oppressive power and control—an act of exerting power and control over another person(s). It includes many types of actions, including sexual assault, rape, sexual harassment, forced genital mutilation, and more (National Sexual Violence Resource Center 5). Because, at its core, sexual violence is about power, one should not ignore how it overlaps with other systems of oppression, including racism, genderism, heteronormativity, classism, ableism, etc. These are interlocking systems that need to be examined simultaneously, not separately. Unfortunately, it is also very widespread to deal with the issue of sexual violence in surface-level, institutional, carceral, and 'white feminist' ways of actions and thought. White feminism's ways of doing and being have also pervaded higher education and our field, which is non-intersectional and exclusive.

Specifically in the context of higher education, a shocking and gut-wrenching number of college students are sexually assaulted each year ("Get Statistics"; Cantor et al.; Marine). I am not quoting the specific statistics here because (1) they will never be accurate because of disparate research methodologies, (2) a very high percentage of survivors don't report, and (3) numbers erase the human behind them. Institutions, society, and people continue to fail survivors time and time again. Following with the overlapping systems of oppression, sexual violence occurs at even higher rates for those that have systemically disempowered identities.

When looking at higher education as an employer, it has the second highest rates of sexual harassment compared to other employment sectors (Dykstra-DeVette and Tarin). Karen Kelsky collected anonymous responses to sexual harassment in the academy, and the stories are ubiquitous and harrowing. At least 11 individuals discussed their experiences with sexual violence at Michigan State University, and there were also reports from Ashland University and Ball State

University. One respondent declared, "Nearly every graduate student I know has experienced some form of harassment and nothing ever happens. We all live in fear [...]" (qtd. in Kelsky). This same sentiment is echoed in the whisper networks and discussions I have and see. It's everywhere, including the field of writing studies[1], and the field needs to examine this pervasive issue.

Where We've Been

In this section of "Where We've Been," I overview how the fields of writing studies and higher education have arrived at this moment. I offer these arguments from my own positionalities as a white, disabled, middle-class, educated, queer femme person who has a lifetime of (un)learning left to do. I have committed harm; I am imperfect and uncomfortable; I am highly caffeinated and full of emotions; I am not an expert, nor can I ever be. But, I do care deeply about working toward new worlds where oppression and harm, such as sexual violence, don't exist. First, I discuss the federal law and policy that influences sexual violence response and prevention on college campuses. Then, I complicate those federal policies by critiquing them and discussing how these policies harm people, including survivors, by not being Feminist. Similarly, I discuss how the field of writing studies has attempted to respond and prevent sexual violence and analyze where the field has also harmed people by perpetuating carceral, white feminist logics.

To contextualize those analyses, I specifically discuss how sexual violence policy and rhetoric has generally had a white feminism framework. An alternative to white feminism is queer, disabled, and/or Black and intersectional Feminisms, which challenges white feminism's

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[1] I know this term is contested in the field (similar to "rhetoric"). So, here, by "writing studies," I mean the field that tends to house communication, rhetoric, composition, technical communication, writing that's not creative writing, writing centers, writing programs, FYW, WAC/WID, etc.

uncritical and non-inclusive frames. From this point in this dissertation and on, I will capitalize

the "F" of these more critical and inclusive Feminisms (i.e., queer, disabled, and/or Black and

intersectional) and lowercase "f" reflects white "feminism." Feminism considers how all

identities are also social and cultural constructs, and historically, arise out of and work in tandem

with racism and white supremacy. For the macro-level, an intersectional Feminist approach

considers the ways that society has interlocking and overlapping systems of oppression. While

each system of oppression will be slightly different based on contextual time, place, and

moment, generally these systems include (but are not limited to) white supremacy,

heteronormativity, patriarchy, capitalism, elitism, ableism, et cetera.

Each of these systems cannot be untangled from one another, as the Combahee River

Collective declared, "If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to

be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression."

The Combahee River Collective's statement highlights the ways that society runs on the power

of webs of oppression. These webs and their work call us to acknowledge how identities,

systems, and power are co- and multiply- constructed to restrain and oppress, which is an

essential idea to Feminisms.

These systems create our institutions, which include education, banking, criminal justice

and law, state welfare, media, housing, et cetera (Kendall). As Kendall declares, "We don't have

bigotry by accident; it's built and sustained by the same cultural institutions we're taught to

revere. We cannot keep sustaining a system of gatekeeping that privileges a very few at the

expense of the majority" (94). These institutions are reflections and intentional creations by the

overlapping oppressive systems. These intentional, institutional systems work to erase, harm, and

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silence, but intersectional Feminisms allow Feminists to "step up, reach back, and keep pushing forward" (Kendall 14) toward accountability and liberation.

Then, at the micro-level, each of these systems not only interlock and overlap, but they create obstacles, harm, and oppression for anyone who does not fit the "mythical norm" (Lorde, *Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference*). In other words, everyone has various positionalities (e.g., race, nationality, language use, gender, sexuality, religion, class) that are contextual place and time specific. These positionalities and identities cannot be separated at that individual level. For instance, Crenshaw discusses how intersectionality helps to "account for multiple grounds of identity when considering how the social world is constructed" (1245). This illustrates how the positionalities and identities of an individual also overlap and interlock with the world as well. I use the concept of interlocking positionalities to analyze the issue of sexual violence within this section to specifically showcase how the government, colleges, and writing studies look at sexual violence in non-intersectional ways.

This literature review and Feminist analyses look at where higher education and writing studies have been with sexual violence policy and discussions in order to understand better ways forward. These policies fail people. These failures create a launching point for the rest of this research where I reframe previous discussions using institutional ethnography (IE) to instead look at individuals at the intersections of doing the work of interacting with policy. For example, IE as a framework seeks to understand how individual people "enact the policies, systems, and structures that perpetuate the social order" (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 14) and believes "individuals are the institution and can thus resist and change these norms" (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 18). Thus, looking back to where we have been illuminates why we need to move forward in different, and hopefully better, ways.

American Federal Law and Policy

Higher education in the United States is heavily influenced by American federal law and

policies, particularly relating to the issue of sexual violence[2]. In 1972, Title IX—which outlaws

discrimination based on sex for certain educational institutions, including sexual violence—was

passed and directly influenced future laws and policy (U.S. Department of Education, *Title IX*).

One of these future laws and policies is the *Clery Act* from 1986; it now requires most colleges

and universities to share campus crime statistics and provide timely warnings to the student body

("Clery Act"). In 1994, the *Violence Against Women Act[3]* (*VAWA*) tried to provide additional

protections for survivors, particularly increased funding to crisis centers and increased training

and programming in law enforcement realms.

As Karjane et al. found in 2002, most schools did not even follow these federal laws and

rarely tried to prevent sexual violence. It was not until the Obama administration that most

colleges and universities were even required to respond to and try to prevent sexual violence

under the purview of Title IX. Since that 2011 "Dear Colleague" letter, various changes have

occurred to college and universities' scope and processes (Ali). To explain, while many

government officials can craft what's known as a "Dear Colleague" letter, the specific infamous

letter I'm referring to is where the U.S. Department of Education emphasized that Title IX

should include and pertain to sexual harassment and sexual violence. This correspondence

announced requirements for most universities and colleges to have procedures and protocols for

sexual violence allegations and reports. Additionally, it also wasn't until 2012 that the federal

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[2] A global perspective is integral to thinking about sexual violence; however, for the scope of this dissertation, I will
focus just on the context of the United States.
[3] While the name of the law remains problematic and reinforces the rape myth that only women are survivors, the
law was written with gender neutral terms; however, its enactment and funding of programming and response of that
"neutrality" has been debated (J. Brown).

legal definition of rape was updated to include other genders as well as different permutations for what constitutes rape (U.S. Department of Justice). Moreover, in 2013, the VAWA added amendments and additional provisions, such as modifying the Clery Act's scope of and confidentiality to reporting (called the campus SaVE act), increasing prevention programing, and updating the definition of "rape" to match the new federal definition (U.S. Department of Education, Violence Against Women Act).

Complications to Federal Policy

It is not surprising that if it takes until the last decade to even make basic and common-sense changes to federal law and policy to protect survivors, then that work is still incomplete and problematic. Below, I'll complicate various elements to federal policy and higher education, such as mandatory reporting, prevention and response education, and surface-level policy expansions.

First, the original Title IX conforms to white feminism exclusions. For instance, to be required to follow Title IX, the institution must receive Federal financial assistance, which would exclude many for-profit and/or private institutions. Inherently, this already would exclude many survivors and those yet to be survivors from protection. These exclusions reinforce white feminism by relying solely on the systems within these institutions to protect survivors rather than Feminism's belief in moving away from carceral and private systems. Then, if one dives down further, those exclusions are reinforced by white feminism where systemic wealth, elitism, and Christianity (in some contexts) at these institutions are unchecked and unregulated for sexual violence. Furthermore, Title IX excludes military educational institutions, same-gender institutions, and social fraternities/sororities. Sexual violence still occurs in these institutions and even though the acts of sexual violence are still illegal, it means that Title IX protections and

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processes would not be in place for people within these institutions. Moreover, the idea of equal protections, the law "rarely account[s] for women of color's unique histories and identities" (Harris 47). These exclusions also assume that gender discrimination and sexual violence doesn't occur in those educational contexts, which reinforces a lack of intersectionality.

Additionally, the amended guidelines to Title IX also aren't Feminist in practice. For example, mandatory reporting is inherently a form of carceral white feminism, where it assumes that "justice" (either through the institution's equivalent to the prison system or the criminal "justice" system itself) will occur for survivors if they're forced to report. By carceral ideology, I'm referring to "the variety of ways our bodies, minds, and actions have been shaped by the idea and practices of imprisonment—even for people who do not see themselves connected explicitly to prisons" (Rochester Decarceration Research Initiative). Moreover, this ideology equates justice to our criminal justice system (and thus imprisonment). As Hayes discusses, "The criminal punishment system promises accountability for violence, but we know in actuality it is a form of targeted violence against poor people, people with disabilities, and people of color, and doesn't reduce violence in our societies." (qtd. in Kaba et al. 60).

Mandatory reporting also usually requires untrained education faculty and staff to report any knowledge of sexual violence even if the survivor is an adult[4]. It was created to try to protect survivors, yet it further removes survivor's autonomy and violates their rights as well as faculty and staff agency with their own forced reporting (Freyd). These assumptions are rooted in the idea that reporting and the campus "justice" system will prevent sexual violence–a white feminist view of sexual violence. By a white feminist view on sexual violence, I mean the ways that this feminism not only reinforces policing and imprisonment, but also the ways it centers

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[4] Since I am focusing on higher education, I'm only going to discuss mandatory reporting for survivors that are adults. Minors are a different discussion and not within the purview of this argument.

rape culture and the mythical image of a survivor (e.g., white, virginal, cisgender, straight

woman). It does not account for the fact that mandatory reporting…

- relies on the assumption that survivors need to come forward in order to prevent sexual violence whereas most survivors never come forward because they already have multiply marginalized identities, distrust others/institutions, are being coerced, do not believe their violence is "serious enough," and/or believe they were to blame for the violence inflicted on them (Sable et al.; Cantor et al.). This is further complicated when the 2017 Title IX amended guidelines itself would only allow sexual harassment that is so ""so severe, persistent, or pervasive" (U.S. Department of Education, *Q&A* 1) to be considered sexual violence, so it would be no wonder that some survivors would never come forward if they didn't think their victimization was 'serious enough,'
- assumes that institutions are the place where "justice" and "help" can occur instead of being sites that reproduce and perpetuate oppression. For instance, despite later the Biden administration vacating it in 2020, the 2017 DeVos changes gave perpetrators the ability to cross-examine their survivors (U.S. Department of Education, *Q&A* 5), which is purposeful harm toward survivors. Then, the 2022 changes require a "fair and reliable process" with "unbiased decisionmakers" (U.S. Department of Education, *Fact Sheet* 3). However, no one is unbiased and sexual violence is not a linear, logical occurrence, so to impart a carceral ideology of "fair" onto that is not Feminist. makes the institution responsible for "justice," yet most institutions enact "institutional betrayal" (Freyd) and school administrators typically "underestimate the seriousness of the sexual assault problem on campus" (Richards et al. 112), and
- forces survivors to rely on the Title IX office that faces unmanageable levels of turnover and stress without institutional support (S. Brown).

Unfortunately, mandatory reporting is just the tip of the iceberg for feminism within the

academy when dealing with sexual violence. Instead of addressing sexual violence at the root of

the problem, mandatory reporting puts the burden of change on survivors and generally poorly-

or un-trained staff and faculty who may also be survivors themselves (S. Brown; Holland et al.).

This adds an additional layer of problematics considering that many people hold rape myth

ideologies. For instance, a study of college students and faculty in 1999, delineated seven rape

myth acceptances in American higher education culture (Payne et al. 59):

- "She asked for it;"
- "It wasn't really rape;"
- "He didn't mean to;"

- "She wanted it;"
- "She lied;"
- "Rape is a trivial event;" and
- "Rape is a deviant event."

To American society, these myths were not myths, but ideologies that bolstered people's acceptance of rape culture. Payne et al.'s study, however, also reflects that even in rape myth acceptance, faculty and students believed it is only women who are survivors and only men who are perpetrators. The dominant cultural narrative of survivor (i.e. white, virginal, straight ciswomen) still pervades today (Harris and Linder), so it's not a stretch to expect that faculty— such as those who are also poorly- or under-trained to be mandatory reporters—would also further risk harming survivors by not embodying Feminisms, especially because they are entrenched and likely subscribe to rape culture ideologies.

For example, the prevention and response education that university students and educators generally get is that bystander intervention is the best way to prevent sexual violence and that everyone shares equal responsibility to end sexual violence. However, these views shift responsibility away from perpetrators and ignore that most perpetrators are those with privileged identities, particularly cisgendered, straight white men (Hong). To be clear, this is not to say that cisgendered, straight white men are not survivors because they absolutely are. But it is to say that when looking at the issue of sexual violence intersectionally, those with more overlapping privileges are more likely to be perpetrators and those with more overlapping marginalized identities are more likely to be survivors. This is ultimately because sexual violence is about power and control and reinforcing larger systems of oppression. Thus, a Feminist approach to sexual violence prevention and training would be to have educators, students, and administrators take an approach that is "grounded in a social justice framework" that understands "sexual violence is ultimately rooted in power, privilege, and socially determined injustices" (Hong 31).

Some examples and reflective questions of what this could begin to look like are presented in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

To continue, the 2014 and 2022 policy expansions to Title IX seek to provide further protections for various identities, such as for citizenship, disability, and gender. However, in practice, these inclusions do not match practice and school-level policies. For instance, the 2014 Title IX Q&A declared, "Title IX protects all students at recipient institutions in the United States regardless of national origin, immigration status, or citizenship status" (Lhamon 14). As I already discussed, "recipient institutions" means that not all are actually protected. Additionally, in my master's thesis study, I did content analysis on 15 university student handbooks and found many that were not accommodating for non-English speakers and/or non-citizens (Meadows, *Critical Discourse Analysis*). For instance, many proceedings required survivors to write their story in English (and many times without counsel allowed). Crenshaw also notes how the English centricity to policy and intermediate protections are non-intersectional, structural barriers for immigrants who are survivors (Crenshaw).

Additionally, under the Trump administration and after, anti-immigration, xenophobic rhetoric still permeates the nation, so no policy in practice will be inclusive until the larger society's non-inclusivity is dealt with. More specifically, legal scholars also argued that the 2017 changes leave immigrant and undocumented students particularly at risk (Davidson), and when that is combined with the larger xenophobia of the nation, it is a situation ripe for violence, harm, and oppression.

Moreover, the same protections for disability on paper do not match the practice, and thus, is feminism, not Feminisms. For instance, in the handbook policies of universities, many institutions assume that disabled students are incapable of consent. As Iverson states about those

ableist policies, it "marks students with disabilities as functionally limited, incapable of giving consent" (222) and presents disabled students as "asexual" and a people to be "ostracized" (222). Additionally, many schools condense and homogenize all disabilities into one category where various disabilities have different barriers and needs, thus making them non-intersectional. To exemplify, intersectional Feminist scholars examine the multi-faceted dimensions for Deaf and hard-of-hearing survivors and how schools do not effectively prevent, educate, and respond to sexual violence for those populations (McQuiller Williams).

This response continues into gender and sexuality protections. With the proposed 2022 changes, they explicitly want to expand protections for sex-based discrimination to include sexuality and gender. This, along with other protections above (disability, citizenship), are excellent steps; however, the practice does not match. For instance, because all sexual violence laws originate within second-wave white feminism, it is trying to be retrofitted now. This retrofitting is particularly harmful because it's trying to make changes to systems and institutions that shouldn't even exist in the first place.

As Garvey et al. declare about queer survivors on campus, "Even when policymakers develop, establish, and implement official policies, their policy processes ignore queer-spectrum communities" (164). To elaborate, even if this federal policy amended guidelines is accepted and even if it is inclusive appearing, it does nothing to change the fact that the Title IX processes, many sexual violence programs/shelters, and campus ideologies are not inclusive, particularly for LGBTQIA+ survivors.

Additionally, as many contributors in *Queering Sexual Violence* discuss, sexual violence against those that are queer is not something institutions or policy can prevent—in fact,

institutions are some of the root causes to this violence in the first place. Hammer and Gossett state (emphasis theirs):

> Rather [sexual violence against trans women] happens because there are institutions that allow for and create the death of trans women. This violence is systematic *and* social. [...] People are trying to widen the margin of their work so that trans women are included but inclusion is problematic because what you really need is to restructure your analysis and work. [...] The justice system won't change violence against trans women because cissexism and racism are parts of the justice system, they are institutional. [...] the government creates those barriers, so how can we expect the government to remediate the violence? So it's hard for me to see how you can put your trust into the state to protect you when the state is the one that made you vulnerable. (Patterson 225–29)

In this, even if sexuality and gender are going to be covered in the most recent Title IX amended guidelines, there is still a gap between the language inclusion and inclusive Feminist praxis. As these contributors astutely note, the institutions themselves are responsible and continue to cause harm, violence, and oppression. If policy and higher education also does not transform itself, then sexual violence won't be eradicated. As noted earlier, all systems overlap and intertwine so institutions and federal policy also must practice Feminisms and address housing, education, sex work, healthcare, etc. to work toward actually helping solve the issue of sexual violence. Thus, when seemingly inclusive policy doesn't match Feminist practice, then the disconnect is going to further harm survivors.

Within Writing Studies

Federal policy for sexual violence within American higher education practices carceral, white feminism. Similarly, so does writing studies within the United States, as it has been further harmful in general, particularly because of white, carceral feminism. In terms of work related to sexual violence, there are some articles that analyze movements related to sexual violence, like the #NotOkay or #MeToo movements (e.g., Stenberg; Holland and Hewett). I'm not including those here because I want this section to focus on how writing studies itself deals with sexual violence, rather than how it analyzes the issue of sexual violence.

Two of the field's most prominent texts that relate to sexual violence in the field are the

Conference on College Composition and Communication's (CCCC) "Position Statement" and

Ericsson et al.'s *Sexual Harassment and Cultural Change in Writing Studies*. These texts are the

only two, longer texts that are specifically and solely addressing sexual violence within just our

field (rather than extending to higher education studies, English literature, etc.).

The CCCC's "Position Statement" was first published in November 2016—known as

"Position Statement on CCCC Standards for Ethical Conduct Regarding Sexual Violence, Sexual

Harassment, and Hostile Environments" (Conference on College Composition and

Communication). This was co-authored by Jennifer Clary-Lemon, Holly Hassel, Stephanie

Kerschbaum, and Eric Pritchard. In March 2020, Cristyn Elder, Beth Davila, Andrea Dardello,

and Suzanne Labadie (Ritchie) published a revision. The statement was retitled to change

"Hostile Environments" to "Workplace Bullying," which makes sense considering many of the

revision authors collaborated on workplace bullying collections and scholarship. In addition, not

including the statements' references or further resources, the 2016 version was 1,348 words, and

the 2020 version had 2,445, thus making it almost double the length. Most of the additions to the

2020 statement were mostly related to the following:

- Sections and information related to workplace bullying.
- Subsections of workplace bullying related to "Intent and Impact," "Structural Risk Factors and Power Differentials," and "Professional Ethical Obligations".
- Expansion of audience to include administrators and researchers (not just the "teachers" mentioned in the 2016 version); and
- Additional clarification on definitions of consent and Title IX recommendations.

As a whole, this document is extremely important in terms of codifying values for our field.

Most importantly, they clearly make their overall standpoint clear[5]: "CCCC condemns sexual

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[5] When I discuss and quote the position statement in the subsequent subsections, I am referencing the updated 2020 version unless otherwise stated.

violence, sexual harassment, and workplace bullying in any form and seeks to foster a sense of responsibility among members as they combat these forms of ethical misconduct."

While it took until 2016, this standpoint is important to finally take a view on it, as "administered genres" (Miller 23), such as organization's position statements, have the ability to "regulate the social and symbolic interactions of others" (Miller 24). Thus, the stated values of an organization not only take a firm stand, but also can influence its members' actions—in this specific case, one could extend to say that this has the potential to curtail sexual violence and/or affect complicit views toward it if done with care and ethics (which it wasn't).

In addition to the firm stance, the aforementioned additions to the 2020 version also improved the document, particularly in terms of clarifying their audience and attempting to add more nuance. For instance, they widened their audience from the original of "post secondary teachers and researchers" to include "postsecondary teachers, researchers, and administrators." It is especially important that administrators' roles are recognized in how sexual violence and abuses of power happen. In addition, the changes included more mentions of "identity politics, institutional norms, etc." as well as changed "contingent and untenured faculty" to add "faculty of color or from underrepresented groups." These mentions, as I will discuss below, though, are superficial rather than pervasive and structural critiques of oppression.

Coinciding with that revision, *Sexual Violence and Cultural Change in Writing Studies* was published, first as open access, on April 17, 2020 (Ericsson, *Sexual Harassment and Cultural Change in Writing Studies*). One can assume that while the CCCC's revision was made public in March, the book's publication process was nearing its end thus meaning they probably could not make reference to the revision, which is reflected in the book's discussion of the

statement (Macklin et al. 11). Ericsson et al. strive to provide foundations for understanding and preventing sexual harassment.

Complications to Writing Studies

Overall, even the 2020 revisions to the NCTE/CCCC statement on sexual harassment are primarily a white feminism perspective to sexual violence. First, the statement prioritizes the values of "professional competence, honesty and fairness, professional and scholarly responsibility and contributing to the public good." These values, however, center institutions and people that reinforce the status quo. Specifically, the ideologies around professionalism are classist, sexist, and racist (Perez et al.); "fairness" is rooted in identity-neutral, carceral values (Walsh; *13th*); and the "public good" is a way of trying to decentralize institutions and systems without recognizing the harm and impact of the institution itself (Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha and Dixon).

Second, the statement superficially tries to be intersectional without actually being Feminist, as it makes brief mentions of some identities without working at the systemic level, and it renders those with marginalized identities as "vulnerable and subordinate populations," and these passing references don't attend to the problematic and superficial nature of the work needed to be done. These rhetorical moves necessitate a Feminist approach, which "reveal[s] that policy is never neutral, and policy authors must 'uncover power dynamics' embedded in policy" (Iverson 227). In addition, the suggestions for prevention and response in the statement are links to resources rather than concrete, Feminist action. The statement makes passing references to reporting to Title IX (which is already problematic as discussed earlier) and is more reactive than proactive. Instead, for a Feminist approach, NCTE/CCCC should work to account for

intersectionality at a deep level and work to "acquire and integrate an understanding of the intersecting roots of oppression in their work" (Harris and Linder 247) to uproot these systems.

Additionally, the one book that's been written for our specific field of writing studies (not including English or Education fields), *Sexual Harassment and Cultural Change*, is white feminism embodied. In a moment, I will specifically address that claim, but first, I want to acknowledge that in my core exam, I received feedback about the disconnect between me saying I didn't want to tear down the authors, but my tone and words doing such in other places in the essay. Upon reflection, I realized (1) my anger is justified and that it's okay to be angry, (2) that disconnect was out of fear of being too "mean" or "ungracious" to my colleagues, but I've realized my job isn't to make those that did harmful work, comfortable and (3) researchers stifle ourselves as scholars, as a field, and as people if we worry more about protecting non-intersectional views than we do about working to address and implement Feminisms.

In the book, the authors perpetuate countless rape myths and oppressive ideologies. In addition to the critiques I already raised, the book also fully conforms to three of the four most concerning narratives of sexual violence legislation and work that Hong synthesizes (27–31):

- *"Increased reporting leads to reduced perpetration"*: In the book's three main recommendations, they say that writing studies administrators must "create a culture of reporting" (Ericsson, "Chapter 3" 37). Not only is reporting problematic and harmful (as already discussed), but the research indicates that sexual violence is more due to rape culture, oppressive beliefs about gender roles, and oppression more broadly (Hong 28). The book does nothing to work at the systemic level or base itself in the actual research.
- *"Bystander intervention is a form of primary prevention"*: To continue, another one of the book's three main recommendations is "instituting effective sexual harassment training through active bystander training and interactive scenario training" (Ericsson, "Chapter 3" 37). Thus, the authors recommend yet another main problematic narrative of sexual violence. In this, bystander intervention is "shortsighted and inadequate" as well as "are insufficient and do not adequately address the root causes of sexual violence" (Hong 30).
- *"Everyone in society shares equal responsibility to end sexual violence"*: In the book, they say that hiring more women is the answer, perpetuate rape myths, and do not ever address systems. This work and the narrative being reinforced, is meant to "make the

revised message more palatable for those who benefit from the patriarchy, whiteness, and other systems of oppression upheld by sexual violence" (Hong 31).

The fact that this is the **one** book in the field specifically addressing sexual violence is rage-inducing, particularly because this book is so incredibly harmful to the issue and furthers oppression at large. Yet, there is some work in the field that is doing the work.

Some notable contributions are various works by Julie Prebel, Elise Dixon, and Stephanie Larson. In Prebel's 2015 work, she notes and complicates the tensions of mandatory reporting with the 2014 Title IX guidelines. She notes the trauma of secondary and re-victimization and asks writing center practitioners to consider the tension of our values compared to what our institutions require of us (Prebel). This text is one of very few to even discuss mandatory reporting and sexual violence in the field and in writing centers. Even though it still takes a more ahistorical approach to the issue of sexual violence, it is critiquing policy in productive ways. In addition to Prebel's article, Elise Dixon's 2017 article also adds to the issue of sexual violence within the field and within writing centers. Dixon not only problematizes the dominant narratives of who survivors and perpetrators can be, but also uses a queer Feminist approach. In this approach, she examines her and others' positionalities intersectionally, works within the messy liminal spaces, and also urges for transformation of the writing center (Dixon). Furthermore, Larson's 2021 book, *What It Feels Like*, critiques the whitewashed history and conceptions of the "archetypal victim" and how those public discourses are part of the larger discourses of rape culture. She argues that how rape itself is "central component of this country's foundation" through its misogyny and white supremacy tenets (Larson 11).

The field needs more work like Prebel, Dixon, and Larson's, and yet, the field has done so much harm to the issue with other work discussed, but as Dixon questions, "what [might it] mean for us if writing center professionals were willing to come to terms with their queer failures

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and indeed embrace them as a critical part of their (and their writing center's) identities?". I, too, wonder what we could move toward if the field acknowledged and accepted the failures so far with sexual violence, and we used Feminisms' messiness to move toward new futures.

Where We Will Go

I exist (and sometimes thrive) in messiness and failure. I, and all the research participants, are complex person(s) with a myriad of experiences. I have lots of stories and complicated emotions about higher education, the academy, and the institutions I've attended. I have strong feelings (usually anger) and emotions about the ways that higher education, society, and the field have currently engaged with sexual violence. Institutional ethnography (IE) as method/ology allows me to be a complex person and researcher by not having to leave behind who I am or my viewpoints; instead, it allows me to be a knowledgeable person that is situated among others in the IE research process (Smith and Griffith). IE also originates from feminist standpoint theory and rejects positivism (Smith, *Institutional Ethnography*; Smith and Griffith). Additionally, as Campbell and Gregor discuss, "institutional ethnographers believe that people and events are *actually* tied together in ways that make sense of such abstractions as power, knowledge, capitalism, patriarchy, race, the economy, the state, policy, culture, and so on" (Campbell and Gregor 17). This overlap of the "abstractions" centers a Feminist approach and can further illuminate where administrators can do better. Additionally, IE is more useful to the field than textual analysis or institutional critique done alone because IE seeks to understand how individual people "enact the policies, systems, and structures that perpetuate the social order" (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 14) and believes that "individuals are the institution and can thus resist and change these norms" (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 18). Thus, in doing IE, researchers can center a Feminist worldview and continue in the messiness by

contributing to writing studies as another example of IE and how sexual violence rhetoric and administrative practices can improve.

This dissertation uses IE across three sites of study: Ashland University, a rural, religious, private, liberal arts university; Ball State University, a teaching-focused, R2 institution; and Michigan State University, a research-intensive R1 university. I collect both public and private texts, policies, and laws for these sites. Across these sites, I also look at the work of mid-level administrators through four individual interviews of these individuals from Michigan State and Ball State (note: there are no Ashland University interviews in order to protect participants from a small campus; more in Chapter 2). By mid-level administrators, I mean administrators that oversee units and personnel but housed under larger organizational structures and colleges. Examples of such mid-level administrators would be Department Chairs, Resource Center Directors, Writing Program or Center Administrators, Title IX Coordinators, etc., but it would not include individuals such as individual teachers, students, provosts, deans. By "University" (and its plural), I mean the collective institution that stands for the multiplicity of people, ideas, positions, and histories. I understand that different people and positions are part of this, but when used as a collective noun, I'm speaking about the Institution as a whole. With all the people encapsulated within a university, the term "university" does not mean that everyone within the university is monolithic and agrees with overall decisions, actions, and policy, but it does mean the approved and sanctioned actions by those with power in an institution. Ultimately, this project (1) uncovers administrators' everyday practices, stories, and experiences with sexual violence policy and (2) articulates and maps the interconnections between texts, practices, and social relationships.

Overview of Chapters

In this chapter, I have provided overviews on the issue of sexual violence, particularly in higher education. I have addressed why what policymakers and administrators have done legislatively and within the writing studies field has fallen short and was not intersectional.

From these opportunities to do better, Chapter 2: Method/ology frames my method/ology of Institutional Ethnography where I discuss the definitions and tenets of this method/ology. Then, I discuss my methods for the study on obtaining IRB approval, collecting texts, conducting site visits, and interviewing participants. This chapter closes with an overview of my sites of study and my research participants.

In Chapter 3: Saying vs Doing, I unearth my first result: that there are clashes between texts, people, and practices at the three institutions. Part of this tension is due to a disconnect between stated values and everyday actions. I overview these tensions on the macro-level before looking at two specific realms: policy and training.

In Chapter 4: Tensions with Doing, I overview how mid-level administrators deeply want to enact care-based practices for sexual violence response and prevention, yet they do not have the university resources and support to do so. Then, I discuss where the research participants push against and resist barriers and boundaries within their positions to care for survivors. Finally, I'll reveal some of the tensions in perspectives for how participants feel response and prevention could improve at institutions.

Finally, Chapter 5: Where to Go concludes the dissertation with some possibilities by turning to transformative justice and intersectionality principles. These possibilities include various audiences of myself, mid-level administrators, and higher education institutions. I offer some tangible changes and resources for people in their everyday work.

INTERLUDE II

I carefully stepped from rock to rock to make it down the hill from my apartment in the muddy summer grass. Once down, I started to cut across various parking lots on campus and weave between buildings. I listened to the *Believed* podcast about Larry Nassar's abuses, as I walked to save time on my research. I was required to listen to it as part of my research assistantship that summer. The professor I was working with would be teaching an immersive learning class in fall on the topic of college campuses and sexual violence. She was also an MFA faculty member at Ashland while I was there and the summer intern for the creative writing MFA. It felt like a connection to Ball State between where I was and where I am that made me feel less alone. Someone else cared about this issue too and cared enough to let me research with her.

I was passing by the university gymnasium when I got to the part of the podcast where it was survivor after survivor giving their testimony to the court about Nassar. I could feel hot tears starting to form, but I pushed them back and held them in—I was on my way to work after all, and crying would be "unprofessional." I vividly remember one survivor's, Rachael Denhollander, quotation to this day. She declared:

> Look around the courtroom. Remember what you have witnessed these past seven days. This is what it looks like when someone chooses to put their selfish desires above the safety and love for those around them. This is what it looks like when the adults in authority do not respond properly to disclosures of sexual assault. This is what it looks like when institutions create a culture where a predator can flourish, unafraid and unabated. And this is what it looks like when people in authority refuse to listen, put friendships in front of the truth, fail to create or enforce proper policy and fail to hold enablers accountable. (Wells and Smith)

I sat down on the stone by the gymnasium and could no longer hold back tears. It was an 85-degree, muggy summer day, yet all I could feel was cold: the cold of my own memories of violence, the cold of the stone wall I sat on, the cold of feeling so alone amongst institutions. I

didn't know it at the time, but I now recognize I was sitting between all three institutions

simultaneously. I was working with my own memories from Ashland as well as a professor who

worked at both AU and Ball State. I was listening to the abuses and harm committed not only by

Nassar but also by Michigan State—a school I did not yet attend. I don't know how long it took

me to compose myself again after hearing her words, but I do know that was the only time I was

late to work while at Ball State.

CHAPTER 2: METHOD/OLOGY

"Institutional ethnography is more like cartography than explanation: though the ethnography connects with people with an orientation and interest shaped by IE discourse, [it does] not impose an interpretation drawn from theory, but builds what has been learned from watching, from interviews, and from taking up the textual mediations of the ruling relations as organized activities in people's local lives. It is a complex of dialogues" (Smith and Griffith 20).

The previous chapter discussed the need for an intersectional Feminist approach to sexual violence policy, response, and prevention. In this chapter, I continue those arguments in application to my dissertation's method/ology. I use a Feminist approach through the method/ology of Institutional Ethnography (IE). First, I will overview the methodology of IE, including the frame's history, tenets, and key definitions. Then, I detail the methods of this dissertation (e.g., IRB negotiations, textual analysis, site visits, and interviews). Next, I overview the three institutions of study through narrative: Ashland University, Ball State University, and Michigan State University. Finally, I close this chapter providing participant overviews.

Methodology of Institutional Ethnography

The method/ology[6] I'm using in this dissertation is Institutional Ethnography (IE). This method/ology formalized in the field of sociology during the 1970s. It arose out of the need for a "feminist research strategy" (Smith and Griffith 3) that rejects positivism, objectivity, and making people objects (Smith, *Institutional Ethnography*; Smith and Griffith). Instead, this method/ology works to "focus the researcher's eye on the unique personal experiences and coordinated practices of individuals" (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 2). To be clear, IE is not just an ethnography at the site of an institution (Tummons 150), but its own methodology with specific vocabulary, frameworks, and methods.

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[6] To note, by methods, I'm referring to the tools and specifics of how I conduct research whereas methodology is my worldviews and frameworks that guide those tools.

IE is both a method and methodology (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography*), which means it is both the tools for uncovering relationships as well as the theoretical framework. IE uses qualitative methods such as interviews, surveys, textual analysis, observations, personal stories, and more to do the work. The next subsection of this chapter will focus more specifically on the methods of this dissertation. In the methodology of IE, this worldview fundamentally rejects making people "objects" of study. Similarly, unlike quantitative approaches to sampling and replicability, IE as a methodology recognizes the personal, embodied nature of research. As stated in the epigraph of this chapter, IE research is not an "explanation," but instead a cartography and mapping of "complex dialogues" where the researcher is willing to change in the process.

Even though IE originated in sociology, it has been taken up in writing studies vigorously (e.g., LaFrance, Institutional Ethnography; Grouling Snider; LaFrance and Nicolas). As LaFrance discusses in their seminal text, Institutional Ethnography: A Theory of Practice for Writing Studies Researchers, IE in writing studies helps researchers unpack complexities within institutional experiences and practices "as a means to understand the actualities of [individuals'] work that live below the layers" (Institutional Ethnography 23). In writing studies, the work folks do behind the scenes deeply impacts everyone from community members to students to faculty to administrators. As LaFrance argues in Institutional Ethnography as Writing Studies Practice, IE is "a methodology keenly attuned to uncovering the often elided, erased, and invisibilized experiences central to the work we carry out in the hierarchical contexts of our home programs, departments, and initiatives" (LaFrance, "Practice, Work, and Further Possibilities for IE" 4). These hierarchical contexts apply to the work of looking where sexual violence policy, prevention, and response is "often elided, erased, and invisibilized." Moreover, the work of those

policies, preventions, and responses has tended to be disembodied and anonymous—a policy written by someone posted by someone else to a university site with no traces of who authored it, particularly because turnover in this realm is so high. At its core, IE as a framework promotes core values of "liberatory ends" and a "framework for keeping our institutions engaged and ethically grounded within shared communities of practice" (Nugent et al. 48). In this, writing studies and our institutions need liberatory frames that center ethical institutional response for our communities because survivors are being harmed every day that we don't move toward liberation.

With these core tenets of IE in mind, it's helpful to recognize that IE differs from more "traditional" method/ologies within writing studies in a few ways. Because of these method/ological divergences, there is particular vocabulary used in IE. This vocabulary, like IE, as a whole is "flexible" and contextual (LaFrance, Institutional Ethnography 44). Below, I will define each term/phrase by synthesizing IE research sources as well as offer how the term applies to this dissertation's research design, which bridges into the next section of the particulars of my dissertation design.

Problematic

IE does not ask a specific research question, but instead uses a "problematic," which acts as a starting place and frame that helps to guide the researcher (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography*; Smith and Griffith). In IE, a problematic may stem from a "problem," but it differs in that it accounts for complexities and interconnections between people, practices, texts, and institutions (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography* 39). In this, a problematic is described as the core of what "translates actualities of people's doing from forms of organization implicit in the everyday world into the forms of discursive representation in which they can be subjected to

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inquiry" (Smith, *Institutional Ethnography* 40). Throughout research, the problematic also "changes and expands" (Grouling Snider 40). I view the problematic as analogous to bumpers on a bowling alley; it provides some guidance and frames to stay in the lane of inquiry, but the bowling ball is going to roll along in whatever way the research participants throw it. In this study, the problematic arises out of the problem that sexual violence is a rampant issue, especially on college campuses, yet this study seeks to account for the complexities and interconnections between mid-level university administrators, their practices, guiding texts, and their institutions.

Standpoint

Moreover, the problematic centers and recognizes that all people have different standpoints and orientations to those interconnections (Elder 120). In sociology and IE's method/ology, Smith centers the "standpoint" as the "actualities of people's everyday lives and experience" (Smith and Griffith 10) where they are the experts of their own lives (LaFrance, "Practice, Work, and Further Possibilities for IE" 21). In this viewpoint, standpoint theory acknowledges that the individual knowledge, experience, positions, and identities of people are also shaped by external forces of history and society (LaFrance, *Institutional Ethnography*). In addition, a standpoint can be the "starting place of inquiry" (Smith and Griffith 22). The "starting place of inquiry" in this dissertation are mid-level administrators who share a common positional experience within their roles of supporting student success. However, each person's standpoint differs based on their individual identities, including their unique positionalities, their specific departments/organizations, etc.

However, Smith's 2005 book, Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People, cites Sandra Harding's work in coining "standpoint," but does not reference Patricia Hill Collins'

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contributions in Black Feminism to standpoint theory and the matrices of oppression in the 1990s (well before 2005, and still hasn't by Smith and Griffith's 2022 book on IE). LaFrance, in their most recent work, acknowledges that Black Feminisms is in conflict with IE up until this point. LaFrance imagines and speculates that Black feminist writing studies scholar, Carmen Kynard, would probably critique LaFrance and Nicolas' collection on IE for centering whiteness (LaFrance, "Practice, Work, and Further Possibilities for IE" 29). This centering of whiteness aligns with some of Smith's work where it seems to disregard intersectionality and Hill Collins' work when discussing standpoint. Therefore, I depart slightly from Smith's conceptions of standpoint theory in relation to IE to instead center Black and intersectional Feminism, not only in my critique of policy and practices in Chapter 1, but also in how I conduct research. I am always a white person who despite my other marginalized identities will benefit from this privilege. As Inoue declares, "White people can perpetuate White supremacy by being present [and through] the presence of your bodies in places like [institutions]" (Inoue, How Do We... 8). Therefore, to me in this study, centering (un)learning, critical reflections on my own whiteness, and Feminisms (as discussed in Chapter 1) are the bare minimum of research ethics.

Ruling Relations

Ruling relations are the mappable relations between people, texts, and contexts that structure their work (LaFrance; Smith and Griffith). These ruling relations overlap with rhetorical situations and kairos where it is time and context-dependent. Specifically, ruling relations "[c]oordinate what people know about what is happening" even if those relations are invisible to the person and thus, influences decision making in their work (Rankin 3). In this study, I'm particularly concerned with how mid-level administrators make decisions (invisible or visible) around sexual violence policy and practices.

Work

Work is anything that takes "time, effort, and intent" (Smith, *Institutional Ethnography* 229). This work can be accounted for and may have organizational strategies and processes for how it is done (LaFrance; Smith). The concept of "work" in an IE framework applied to writing studies becomes complicated, as so many scholars have focused on the concepts of work (e.g., Trimbur; Kynard; Inoue, "Grading Contracts"). As LaFrance discusses, "What we do simply cannot be separated from who we are and the systems of value that grant that work legitimacy" (LaFrance, "Practice, Work, and Further Possibilities for IE" 29). In this, the systems are those of oppression that have granted certain types of practices, policies, and work "legitimacy." This provides me with a critical eye toward systems and institutions and the influence that systems and institutions have had on work. In this study, I focus on how mid-level administrators do work related to sexual violence and center the belief that "I don't think that anyone is a bad person. I'm saying that what we have are bad systems" (Inoue, "Antiracist Writing Assessment Ecologies," sc. 11:04-11:07). As a transformative justice practitioner, I believe all people are messy and complicated and deserve forgiveness and accountability. Simultaneously, I believe everyone is implicated in harmful, imperfect, bad systems. Therefore, while I will remain critical of institutions and places within this dissertation, I believe that all the participants are doing the best they can within these imperfect systems.

Texts & Discourse

Both these terms, text and discourse, are used in IE to mean mostly the same thing across various scholarship on IE. Texts/discourse include talking, writing, learning, reading (Smith & Griffith; LaFrance). In addition, discourse and texts influence practices and norms of individuals (LaFrance 130) as well as influence people across various ruling relations (Smith qtd. in

LaFrance 7). This study relies on many different types of texts, such as public texts, boss texts, and "hidden" texts. Public texts for this study are larger moments of discourse that are publicly available. These include general website pages, news releases, informational pages, reports, and more. Boss texts "carry authority" and necessitate action by regulating "practice, mediating idiosyncrasies and variability in local settings" (LaFrance 43). Boss texts for this study include federal, state, and local laws for sexual violence as well as institutional mandates, trainings, and policy on sexual violence. Finally, hidden texts, as coined by Grouling Snider, are "texts [that] may be official local documents or may be less official texts used by individual interviewees" (49). In this, these are internal documents and texts that I would not have had access to unless participants or other people shared them with me, such as internal emails.

Methods of this Study

This section describes the methods of my study to address my problematic of accounting for the everyday complexities in mid-level administrators' work around sexual violence on campuses. These interconnections and complexities connect both the personal and "work" because people, with their own complex lives, experiences, and interpretations, are doing the work at an institution. To do this study, I blend several methods under the institutional ethnography method/ology, including storying, observations, interviews, and textual collection and analysis.

Drawing on Grouling Snider's institutional ethnography study, I used a similar approach from her methods to the methods in this dissertation. Institutional ethnography is recursive, and my steps are not always linear or discrete, as I'm a cartographer and mapper of the "complex of dialogues" (Smith and Griffith 20). Even though I will be presenting the steps in an organized way, there were many points where I had to return and circle back to be able to make sense of all

the moving parts rather than just move in a linear fashion. The major moving parts of this study

for my institutional sites of Michigan State, Ball State, and Ashland were:

- Getting IRB approval
- Collecting Public Texts and Boss Texts
- Conducting Site Visits
- Interviewing Participants via Zoom
- Collecting Hidden Texts

In the subsections that follow, I will overview my methods and then I will detail my processes

for each step.

Getting IRB Approval

The work that I initially set out to do with interviews was not the work it became due to

various roadblocks and constraints. I first applied for IRB approval on February 1, 2023, but I

was not approved until June 5, 2023. I was a few weeks away from pulling my study all together

to just do a textual study. I recognize that with Michigan State's history that this was a relatively

fast approval in the realm of IRB at Michigan State; however, it was not the speed at which I was

needing in order to do the project on a timeline that allowed me to graduate, which may be

recognizable to various researchers who are constrained by time in their work. In those months,

there was a great deal of back and forth between me, IRB Coordinators, Ancillary Review

Boards, and Legal Counsel. I will overview these constraints and details because I believe they

are not only important to have on record for transparency, but also the delays to doing this work

are important to note—I had previously believed the research on sexual violence in higher

education was scarce because no one cared about it, but I now believe that many people may find

themselves to be stuck in the bureaucracy of IRB unable to do this work, which is echoed by

other sexual violence scholars where they describe how the "layers of bureaucratic complexity

and opaqueness" create barriers for research (Dartnell et al.).

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Initially, I crafted draft interview questions and consent forms alongside my application (more on my interview questions in the "Interviewing Participants" subsection). My first iteration of my study was that I would be conducting interviews across all three sites (Michigan State, Ball State, and Ashland) but I would be keeping those sites and the participants anonymized. Note that I'm using "participants" rather than "subjects," as suggested by Agboka, due to the colonizing and racist history of treating people as "subjects," including in research. However, I realized with the sheer number of publicly available texts I would need to refer to, it would be impossible to keep the sites anonymous, as I wouldn't be able to directly cite anything without someone being able to search and find the specific institution. Moreover, I believe in protecting research participants, not institutions. Therefore, in order to protect participants, I no longer could ethically conduct interviews at Ashland because even though they'd still be anonymous, the very small institution type could lead to that person being discovered. I re-filed IRB approval for still up to six participants across 2 different job realms to give myself wiggle room in the study if I needed.

As these changes occurred, I also ran into mandatory reporting roadblocks where Michigan State (presumably because of the institutional changes from Nassar) wanted me to report to Michigan State any disclosure from any participant about "suspected child abuse, child neglect, relationship violence, sexual misconduct, stalking, retaliation, discrimination or harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, color, religion, age, height, weight, marital status, or disability that is related to the University community, or an immediate threat to yourself or others." I'm doing a study on sexual violence policy—sexual violence disclosures can arise. Furthermore, it would have also required me to report any instance of someone knowingly or unknowingly not following federal, state, or institutional policy. Not only is

mandatory reporting harmful (as discussed in my introduction), but it also would have placed my

participants at risk from the federal Office of Civil Rights' sanctions and disciplinary action.

Thus, a non-negotiable for me was that I could **not** be a mandatory reporter for my

participants, so I filed for an exemption to Michigan State's mandatory reporting requirement,

which took legal counsel 3 months to determine if that would be allowed with us going back and

forth for those months. Another complication to that exemption was that MSU required specific

language in the consent form to reflect this:

> Because information you share will remain confidential, it will not constitute a report of discrimination or harassment to the University and will not be reviewed by MSU for potential responsive action or investigation. However, if you would like to report an incident to the University, you are able to do so by contacting the MSU Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) via the Public Incident Reporting Form or by calling OIE at (517) 353-3922. The University will respond promptly, including by offering supportive measures, informing parties about the available complaint and investigation processes, and taking reasonable care to prevent and promptly correct discrimination or harassment. For additional information, please review MSU's Notice of Non-discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation.

> If you would like to discuss options for sharing information in a confidential manner or need other support, please review community, state, and national resources compiled by the Prevention, Outreach, and Education office: https://poe.msu.edu/resources/survivor-resources.html.

However, I was also required to send this language to Ball State's IRB to make sure that was in

line with their legal requirements. After a month of working with Ball State's IRB, they were

worried that this language (1) would make their employees think that Michigan State would

address any sexual violence or discrimination concerns and (2) was not in line with the state of

Indiana's requirements. Through those exchanges, they requested the following language be

added:

> In the state of Indiana, I am a mandatory reporter to the state if I learn about known or suspected abuse or neglect of a minor. For other reports, please do not report anything to me but follow your own university's/state's reporting process. Because the information you share will remain confidential (unless it involves minors), it will not constitute a

report of discrimination or harassment to Michigan State University and will not be reviewed by MSU for potential responsive action or investigation. [...]

This language was accepted by MSU's IRB, thankfully, and that hurdle of the study was over. Other changes to the study were more minor and generally about specific IRB forms, recording interviews procedures, and how data storage would be handled. Those changes included how the recording of audio and video was paramount to data integrity and that I must store all of these items in password-protected storage, which I had no issues with.

Collecting Public Texts and Boss Texts

While I was waiting for IRB approval, I was collecting publicly available texts to use in my study. For all of these collections, I used Zotero (Corporation for Digital Scholarship and Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media) to capture a snapshot of the website as it was that day and all its metadata into one organized citation. For anything that couldn't be captured in Zotero, I had a secondary backup plan. For instance, if it was a video, I took a screen recording of the video using Open Broadcaster Software (OBS, Bailey). If it was an accordion list on the website, I copied and pasted all of the text into the "notes" section of that citation to have a plain text record. For each citation, I cleaned and manually checked the metadata so that the information was as accurate as possible. I tagged each entry with what type of information was available on that webpage, report, document, etc.

I took a systematic approach to working through website data at each institution. I first started with webpages on the institution's site that generally related to sexual violence at universities (worth noting is that not all institutions call these the same thing or even have these as distinct offices):

- Title IX & Civil Rights
- University Police
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
- Health & Women's Centers

- Counseling and Psychology Centers
- Center for Survivors
- Victim Advocate Center
- Student Conduct & Handbook
- Human Resources & Faculty/Staff Handbooks
- Clery Reports and Annual Safety Reports
- Resident Life

At Michigan State, there were also many pages specifically dedicated to sexual violence since the Nassar violences, such as Prevention, Outreach, and Education as well as the "Our Commitment" webpages. For each of these webpages, I captured anything related to sexual violence. I used website maps to click every subpage of these sites and capture it. I would also capture any hyperlinks, visuals, documents, etc. that were linked and listed on any of these pages and subpages. In other words, I would keep collecting until my pathway ran out and then I would return to the main page and repeat. I tried to limit the collection to documents from the 2022-2023 school year when there were many listed. After I captured initial texts, in order to make sure I didn't miss any big moving parts, I also searched terms related to sexual violence on both that institution's site but also using Google with limiters to that institution's site. Overall, I collected 60 entries from Ashland, 42 from Ball State, and 440 from Michigan State (more analysis on this in Chapter 3). The sheer difference in number between Ashland and Ball State to Michigan State is most likely due to the fact that Michigan State is an R1 institution, but also that Michigan State has very public and harmful histories related to sexual violence. In fact, as I continued to write this dissertation, more harm occurred, such as in the events of activist Brenda Tracy and Coach Mel Tucker. In future continuations of this study, I would like to include additional R1 institutions to see if it's a size difference as well as R1 institutions with public sexual violence harms, such as Penn State and Ohio State to see if that correlates instead.

Conducting Site Visits

Also, while I was waiting for IRB approval, I conducted site visits. All of my site visits were conducted in April 2023. I picked April not only because it aligned with my dissertation completion timeline, but also because April is one of the "It's On Us" months (It's On Us). It's On Us is a national nonprofit program that began under the Obama-Biden administration. Every year, this national organization has a designated week in the fall and in April for sexual violence prevention and awareness campaigns that are taken up by many universities around the nation (including all three in this study). I had hypothesized that if there were to be visual texts related to sexual violence, it would most likely occur in the national campaign month dedicated to the issue. At each site, I went to the library and student center/unions at Ball State and Ashland because they tend to be the most populous on a campus with student traffic and would thus more likely have visual texts to observe. At Michigan State, I did not go to the student union based on the tragedies of February 13, 2023, and instead went to the student services building in its place. At each place, I walked every floor, open offices and rooms, and women and all-gender restrooms[7]. I looked at every wall and bulletin boards at each place to take stock of what was (or wasn't) there. I took pictures of anything relating to the issue of sexual violence and had a dry erase board with me where I would write the place I was capturing if it wasn't able to be discerned from the photo. In addition to the student center/union and the library, I also tried to walk around at least two academic buildings and find the writing center. I also wanted to determine what was present where people learn as well as a student-success related organization that I care about (i.e., the writing center).

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[7] I want it to be noted that I learned a very important lesson after my first site visit to Ball State where I learned not to wear flip flops on a site visit because I was very loud trying to walk around their library and that wasn't very ethical of me as a researcher trying to be in reciprocity with the campus community.

Interviewing Participants

In order to receive IRB approval, I had to craft potential interview questions for participants. I took inspiration from Grouling Snider's questions in her institutional ethnography study as well as Stephanie Larson's study on sexual violence relating to the roles of teachers in higher education. While adapting and crafting my own questions, I wanted to make sure that I focused on the ruling relations, work, and texts that guide practices. I wanted to find out and listen to each person's perspective.

Once I received IRB approval, I sent out my call to individuals and groups to participate in my study. These groups included various student-success related organizations, such as disability services, gender and sexuality centers, diversity centers, advising centers, career centers, etc. I kept track of the email addresses I sent information to and the dates of contact in a protected spreadsheet. At Ball State, I also reached out to trusted contacts for information about potential listservs at that institution where I could solicit participants. While Ball State did not have specific listservs, my contacts provided me with many different campus organizations that potentially qualified for the study. I used Ball State's website to find email addresses for administrators in those organizations as well as the overall email for the organization itself while also supplementing their list with my own findings based on my text collection. At Michigan State, my chair sent out my call to the Directors and Chairs listserv to try to find student-success related administrators. To find sexual violence related administrators, I used the same process I did at Ball State to find organizations and individual email addresses to solicit. For both institutions, I sent out an initial call and then one follow-up email, as I did not want to overwhelm administrators, who generally occupy a very overworked and undercompensated job role.

Ultimately, no one across either university who was in a sexual violence related administrative role responded to participate in my study; however, at least 2 folks in a student-success related administrative role at each institution were interested in participating, so I once again shifted my study to include 2 student-success related administrators and for now due to time constraints was unable to interview any administrators in sexual violence related roles. After a participant was interested, I sent them the timeline for the study's interview and the consent form to sign. We arranged a 2-hour time to meet over Zoom in July 2023. Ahead of their interview, I sent each participant a list of semi-structured interview questions in case they wanted to know or prepare ahead of time.

Once the interview began, I went through the same logistics with each participant:

- Thanking them for their time and participation
- Explaining who I am and what my research is
- Reassuring that I am alone in my house and asking if they felt comfortable to talk in the space they are in
- Explaining that the interview will be anonymized (i.e., "meaning I'll never use your name or specific job title. Because this is audio/video recorded, that also means that I'm going to ask you to change your Zoom name to "participant X"")
- Reminding them "not to state anything that is identifiable about yourself or others, including names. This includes experiences with trauma and/or sexual violence, what happened, and who it involved" and if they were at Ball State, "Remember that I am a mandatory reporter for child and elder abuse for the state of Indiana."
- Forecasting that I know this is a heavy topic and I'll be checking in throughout and providing breaks as well as reminding them they are welcome to skip any question at any time and/or withdraw from the study.

There were certain demographic and background questions where I only took notes, but they were not recorded. Then, once the other questions began, I hit record on both my computer and my phone to have a backup. All recordings and notes are stored in password protected storage, as per my IRB approval.

As Mould discusses, "The best interviews are conversational in style, but they are never conversations. An interview is, by definition, a more formal event than a conversation [...]" and there's a "trialogue" with the later audience (DeBlasio et al. 90–91). In this, while I tried to keep the interview conversational, it was also formal, and I did not pretend otherwise as that would be inauthentic. Similarly, Glesne discusses how all interviews are different in style, similar to how all teachers and artists are different. At the core, an interviewer must "listen, look, and remember" (Glesne 82). To do these acts, during the interview, I employed my expertise as a trauma-informed scholar and someone trained in active listening crisis response even though most discussions were not around sexual violence disclosures, the principles of listening to understand rather than just listening to respond were centered. Moreover, even though I sometimes had personal disagreements with certain viewpoints, it was integral that I continued to listen to understand rather than to intellectualize. I feel deep affinity and respect for all my participants even if we disagreed on the minutia—we are all the experts of our own lived experiences.

After the interview, I anonymized the interviews, transcribed them and redacted/anonymized quotations as I went to ensure as much participant protection as possible. When I was done, I sent the transcript back to the participants offering the opportunity for them to member check it as a form of triangulation. Member checking means to "[present] a recording or draft copy of an observation or interview to the persons providing the information and asking for correction and comment" (Stake 126). My email requesting a member check stated:

> I wanted to thank you again for your time and energy in the interview on [date]. As we discussed, I am following up with the transcript of the interview for you, which is attached. In this, I want participants to be able to have the option to review it and make sure it aligns with your memory and what you're wanting to say (i.e.., do you have additions you want to make? Redactions? Revisions?). If so, you're welcome to track changes or comment in the attached document. Please note that this transcript has also

been anonymized, so I've referred to your role as a [anonymized name] to broaden the specific role you hold for anonymity. If there are revisions to the anonymizing you'd also like, I'd be more than happy to make those changes. Moreover, you'll see your name as "[pseudonym]" throughout as we discussed, but that can still be changed.

Once I received their member checks back, I read through them and began to annotate. Those annotations began to help me see themes and connections throughout the responses that connected to the textual documents that were also collected. For instance, following IE's guides in my annotating and connecting, my "aim is to assemble the many different knowledges and understanding of experience and practice that filter throughout a site, bringing to light the stories that might otherwise be skipped over, elided, or erased" (LaFrance 45). From all these annotations, I outlined main themes and assembled those knowledge overlaps and divergences, such as those discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Collecting Hidden Texts

Unlike the publicly available texts, hidden texts were those that came from internal sources for texts that were not publicly available. These included internal emails, messaging, trainings, and documents from the institution that were provided to me by research participants based on what they wanted to reveal and share, by my own email account at MSU and what I receive as student/employee, and by people unrelated to my study who, without prompting, forwarded me internal texts knowing the research I do. I backed up the plain texts of these hidden texts and anonymized their source in password-protected storage.

Overview of Sites of Study

This dissertation uses IE across three sites of study: Ashland University, a rural, religious, private, liberal arts university; Ball State University, a teaching-focused, R2 institution; and Michigan State University, a research-intensive R1 university. To overview the sites, I blend

storytelling with more "traditional" research site overviews. In Grouling Snider's institutional ethnography research, she states:

> As a researcher, I cannot separate myself from my embodied experiences visiting these campuses. In turn, this research has had a profound effect on how I approach my own relationship to my own institution and my assessment work. I cannot, ultimately, separate myself from these stories. (4)

Following Grouling Snider's format and conventions in her book, I, too, will be storying in my overview of these sites. However, unlike Grouling Snider, I have attended and lived in my sites of study, so my storying will take a different standpoint where my lived experiences cannot be untangled. In this, I cannot separate myself from the stories and happenings at each of these institutions. A decade of my life, more than a third of my entire time on Earth, has been spent living, breathing in, and belonging inside these universities. To take an "objective" look at them is not only impossible, but it also would be inauthentic.

Ashland University

I first visited the university as a naive, wandering 17-year-old. I was daunted by the prospect of going to a large campus, as my previous visits to Kent State and Bowling Green State Universities terrified me that I would be really lost and never make friends. I was excited by the fact that the walk from the two furthest points was only 7 minutes, there were only two dining halls, and I would have a graduating class of about 1,250**.** I drove in a snowstorm to visit Ashland University on President's Day because if I missed a day of school, my perfect attendance would be ruined, and I wouldn't get a final exam waiver (that I planned to use on physics). The campus was cozy in the snow and the fact there were minimal roads cutting through campus made it feel safe and idyllic. I eventually decided to go to Ashland because they were a small, liberal arts school that offered me the most money to offset costs compared to anyone else. Even though I was/am an agnostic atheist and leftist, I ignored the fact it was a

deeply religious, Brethren school with conservative ideologies in my decision making—mostly out of naivety that it would have such a large impact on my experiences. Some of these experiences included multiple presidential scandals, the board of trustees blocking a PRIDE group on campus, the student body and surrounding community having overwhelming support for Trump during the 2016 election, etc. As I navigated the next four years here, I needed to find a place to breathe while surrounded by all the religious conservative ideologies. That place became the English building that housed my classes and the writing center. I started working at the writing center in my second semester of college until the time I graduated as the Student Director. I watched the center change from a cramped, separated room full of wood cabinets and crammed with chairs into an open concept with many computer stations and room for consulting. As I graduated and sat among my classmates, I felt so ready to move on from the place where so much happened, so I drove away and never really returned until my site visit.

When I returned for my site visit in April 2023, it had been about 5 years since I had been on campus. There were new constructions and elements to campus that weren't there before such as new hammocks and hang out spots in what-was the empty outdoor corridor between dorms. There were new signs in vibrant Ashland gold and purple throughout the student center that made navigation easier. The library was sealed off on the main floor with plastic sheets and only the elevators were accessible; once taking them up, the academic support floor was completely renovated and felt more inviting with the previous musty smell and bland furniture gone. The staff and faculty that were on campus smiled and waved at me as I walked around, and I saw dozens of visual texts related to sexual violence that weren't there in my four years there. I felt like I was in a Star Trekian temporal loop, as I saw versions of a campus that I knew but also one that felt lighter and changed simultaneously.

Ball State University

Of the 120 graduate schools that started on my spreadsheet to the 8 I applied to, I visited

three of my accepted schools in the week before the deadline. Ball State was my last one to visit,

and as I drove into campus, it looked gorgeous. There was a cohesive architecture to many of the

buildings—brick designs among lots of greenery with space between the buildings so it didn't

feel cramped. I drove down the main road and saw the student center and the bell tower. What

felt like thousands of students walked around campus, some in shorts and some still bundled up

as spring in the Midwest began. Ball State felt so big compared to Ashland as it was an R2

institution with around 15,000 undergraduate students, which is over ten times bigger than

Ashland. On my visit, I met with a graduate faculty member who came to meet with me on a

Sunday, wearing jeans and a sweatshirt. He listened and answered all of my questions, even

those I didn't know I had. This campus felt like my best option compared to the other two and I

decided on doing my master's here, meaning that I wouldn't apply for more high school teaching

jobs after all. I was also very excited at the prospect of not attending a deeply religious and

conservative institution even though Muncie, Indiana was a purple city. My apartment for most

of the time I was there was ten feet from the campus border, and I walked to school and work

every day. The cozy feeling of campus was contrasted by the gunshots near my apartment at

least once a week and the feeling that gun violence seemed unescapable.

My first day in graduate school began in the writing center for orientation. It was so big

compared to Ashland's center that I didn't know what to do. I sat on the wobble, buoy chairs that

entertained my ADHD brain, and I fidgeted with all the toys and whiteboards throughout

orientation. I felt like I was in the lap of luxury at this center. In my time at Ball State, I found

community with others as we all navigated difficult financial stress and how to do graduate

school. Most of my time was divided between my 90 square foot office that housed five of us with moldy, flooded ceiling tiles and the writing center. Every Friday, all the grad students would cram themselves into my apartment for board games and community. The last time we were all gathered together was for my birthday celebration after I visited Michigan State where my birthday happened during recruitment. The following week, the pandemic closed everything down and we never said goodbye in person. I packed up my apartment alone—a vestige of the community I had found and lost.

As I drove again up the main street of campus as I returned for the first time in 3 years, I once again saw the beauty of campus and why I loved it so much when I first visited. Campus was quiet, but this time felt so much smaller after being at Michigan State for 3 years. The student center was dark on all the floors but the main floor, and the library had 3 people total in all of its floors. I scoured multiple buildings trying to find visual texts related to sexual violence and found very little (more in Chapters 3 and 4). The university felt like a ghost town and almost the exact same as when I left the week we shut down for the pandemic, both happening on unusually warm spring days.

Michigan State University

I first visited Michigan State around my birthday in February 2020. I would return again in May with my mom to try to find a place to live. I found the best apartment directly off campus that I loved. We walked across the road in our face masks and walked around the sprawling, beautiful campus. I took pictures of the blossoming trees all around and we sat in the shadows in the Beaumont Tower. There was no one in sight, which I wouldn't expect from an R1 institution that had 3 times the number of students that Ball State did. But, it was quiet and peaceful. As I moved to Michigan State on my own in July, I felt alone and missing home. Because I started in

Fall 2020, all of my PhD coursework was online. My job in the Writing Center was the only place where I felt connected to anyone. I didn't really experience the writing center in-person until my second year, but for the first year, the virtual Zoom space was the center to me where I realized that centers weren't defined by walls, but instead people.

As we returned to campus, I experienced a sprawling and vibrant campus, full of students and events and multiple writing center locations. I worked in my second year mostly out of a satellite writing center location that was full of big windows and natural light, which drastically contrasted the small, artificial lights of previous centers I worked. In my second year, I had bought a house in Lansing, and Michigan had become my hopefully forever home. There was a hope and vibrance here that wasn't in Ohio or Indiana. Unlike Ashland and Ball State, I don't get to experience a returning perspective on Michigan State. Instead, I have the here and now—a campus where I walked many buildings but didn't include the student center because of the horrific violence that took place in February 2023. It's a campus that's had many violent happenings and tragedies, and I walk to work every day looking at the community rock that became a memorial graveyard for so long that's now painted over for other causes. The campus is changing and reflective, and so am I. I don't have a time and a distance, but a here and now.

Overview of Participants

This study had four interview participants across two institutions. To better protect the identities of the participants, this dissertation will…

- Use pseudonyms and general terms to describe their positions and relationships to the institution.
- Not tie any participant to their pseudonym to a specific institution (i.e., I'll either use the pseudonym or say "one [university name] participant," and
- Use the chosen pronouns of the participant unless I'm using "one [university name] participant" because then I'll use the more gender-inclusive "they/them" pronoun.

Even though 75% of participants provided demographic and background information to me on their identities and positionalities, I will not be discussing those in the dissertation. This is not trying to take an identity-neutral approach that would be antithetical to Feminisms; instead, it is placing my participants' anonymity at the center. Worth noting is that two of the four participants, while listing other self-identified identities and demographics described themselves as devout "feminists." When I asked more about what that meant to them, they said that it was equity and intersectional based. Below, I'll give some general descriptions and information about participants, sorted alphabetically by their pseudonyms. I will also not specifically describe the types of students that interact with participants, as that would also place their anonymity at risk.

Jennifer

Jennifer is a mid-level administrator in a student success-related organization. This organization serves thousands of students on campus. In her role, she interfaces with other mid-level administrators in her office and many other student success-related organizations on campus. About half of her role works to interface and coordinate support and the other half works toward changes toward institutional barriers for students.

Robert

Robert is a mid-level administrator of several campus programs. In his role, he interfaces with internal staff and several other campus organizations. Much of his time is split between administering for the programs, teaching, and mentoring.

Rosie

Rosie had chosen her pseudonym and wanted it to be known that it was inspired by Rosie the Riveter. She is a mid-level administrator of a student success-related organization on her campus. The organization serves thousands of students, and she commonly interfaces with many

other student success-related organizations on campus as well as other mid-level administrators in the organization, describing the organization as the "middle of the wheel." A small part of her role also includes teaching.

William

William is a mid-level administrator of a campus program. In his role, he frequently interfaces with internal staff and students as well as broader institutional administrators and committees. Much of his time is split between administering for the program, teaching, and mentoring.

Connecting the Pieces

This chapter has discussed key methodological definitions—problematic, standpoint, ruling relations, work, texts—and values that underpin this study—Feminisms' overlap with institutional ethnography. I use a combination of storying, interviews, and textual analysis as my methods throughout the dissertation. The use of institutional ethnography in this study allows for me to map the complex dialogues between each of my four participants and the three institutions. Jennifer, Robert, Rosie, and William all occupy mid-level administrative positions where they are related to student success at Ball State and Michigan State. Across the three sites of study, they are all in the Midwest, but each is a unique institution site related to its histories, size, research-level status, and religious affiliation.

INTERLUDE III

Two young women stay after my first-year writing class, and they do not talk for a while. I pack up my items during the silence. They look at each other before looking back at me, "So, we are probably making a bigger deal out of this than it is, but…," the first student trails off.

Those words stay in my head as they then proceed to disclose how a man in my class is stalking and harassing them. They detail how he bombards them with texts, does not take "no" for an answer for going on dates, and then is always on their dorm floor and hall waiting for them even though that is not where he lived.

I tell them that I'm thankful they came to me and that his behavior is unacceptable. I explained that I was a mandatory reporter and that I would need to report this. We talk through what that would mean and that it is their choice whether they wanted to proceed. After which, I ask, "Is there anything I can do within the classroom in the meantime to help it feel safer?"

"You can't," one of them says.

A few weeks later, a paper was due at 11:59pm for my class. It's around 11:30pm, and I'm responding to dozens of students' final questions and requests for extensions on my phone's email app. The same man from my students' report replies back to my answer to his question and sexually harasses me.

I immediately have a panic attack where I'm sobbing and shaking in my room. I start to have flashbacks to undergraduate and the violences there. I call my friend and read the message and ask through my sob-screams, "I'm not crazy, right? This is sexual harassment?" She reassures me I'm not crazy and helps me calm down.

I end up forwarding the message to the Writing Program Director with the subject line, "Help. What do I do?". I wait up all night—alternating between sobbing and silently hugging my

pillow. The Director replies to me around 5am and gives me options. I chose to report this time. I didn't do it in undergrad and don't regret that, but now I feel an extra urgency and responsibility too, knowing he's already harmed my students. I want justice for them and for me.

Around 10am that day, I have a call with the Director of Student Conduct who also handles Title IX at Ball State. I remember recounting what happened and how this is part of a larger pattern of this student's behavior now.

"We can't do anything about the other incident because those women didn't report," he says.

"But we should still take their word for it. And we have this instance in writing, right?," I say.

"We can't just believe everyone." I immediately start shaking as I keep notes about this conversation.

"Okay, well can he be removed from my class? I do not feel safe teaching after he's harassed me."

"No, we cannot. This is a tough case because you are in a grey zone of policy as a graduate student who is both a student and an instructor. He has rights too. Speaking of, I wanted to know how you plan to evaluate his writing and how you plan to be impartial in light of this?"

I don't recall what I replied, but I do remember sprawling across my notebook as I was defending my teaching despite being the victim, in all caps and blue ink: I HATE YOU.

CHAPTER 3: SAYING VS. DOING

At each of the institutions, they have many everyday texts and boss texts that guide

everyday practices. As LaFrance discusses:

> As texts carry ideas, language, and rhetorical frameworks between individuals (even those with little personal interaction) to impose notions of ideal practice and affiliation, the texts are not just sources of information but shapers of thinking and practice. 'Boss texts' act particularly as forms of 'institutional circuits,' which create ideals of accountability, professionalism, and disciplinarity, as they regulate—and often standardized—practice, mediating idiosyncrasies and variability in local settings. (43)

In this, each institution is guided by the larger federal and state laws and policies—the

overarching boss texts— that they must all conform to. These boss texts regulate practices

around sexual violence policy and response. Then, these boss texts influence the institution's

boss texts where they have adapted laws and policies for their "idiosyncrasies and variability in local settings." These boss texts have many texts that come from them, ranging from resource guides, institutional reports, training, handbooks, educational resources, and so on. All texts and boss texts work to shape "thinking and practice" [see Figure 1].
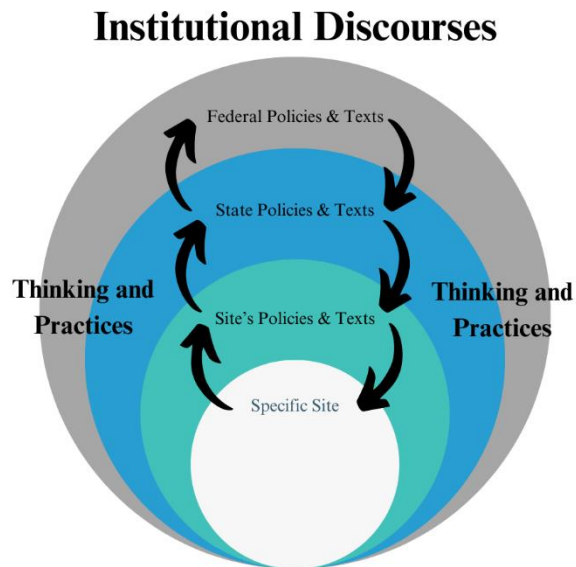
Figure 1: Institutional Discourses

All of these texts operating together create "institutional discourse" (Smith, "Texts and

the Ontology of Organizations and Institutions" 160) that work in concert to create a "sense of

continuity across individuals, practices, and sites" (LaFrance 41). However, as my findings

revealed, that "continuity" is at odds between what institutions' texts are saying they value

versus what they are doing. This chapter will unearth some of the tensions between texts, people,

and practices within the three institutions. First, I will discuss the clash broadly with some overarching examples. Then, I will turn to two specific realms of texts: policy and training.

Values and Action Clash Broadly

At the macro-level, there are tensions between overarching institutional texts of their mission and values and the other texts and actions produced from the institution and the people within. Just like how the CCCCs' "Position Statement" discussed in Chapter 1 is considered an "administered genre" (Miller 23), mission and value statements are also administered genres. Mission statements as a genre that "act as carriers of culture, ethos and ideology" (Swales and Rogers 226). In institutional and corporate settings, mission statements also act as "a management tool for projecting corporate integrity and instilling loyalty and normed behavior" (Swales and Rogers 228). This "normed behavior" alongside being an administered genre should be guiding university action and response, as a mission statement "pulls those individual acts into the orbit of the overall intended ethos of the institution" (DelliCarpini qtd. in Schoen 41). These "individual acts" are leveled and should all be within the "orbit" of the institution.

However, in this section, the ways in which the universities are clashing with their stated values are not in a radical way toward dismantling the status quo (radical, as thought of by scholars such as Lorde, *Sister Outsider*; Kendall; Combahee River Collective; Hill Collins). Instead, the tension and clashing are happening in a way that conforms to rape culture but not to the stated values, as rape culture and sexual violence have "been ingrained into the very institutions that define this country" (Larson 13). This section will look at these clashes and tensions on the broad level at each institution: Michigan State, Ball State, and Ashland Universities.

Michigan State

At Michigan State, they not only have larger university values and missions, but they also have stated values and goals related just to sexual violence prevention and response. This is unique to Michigan State compared to the other two institutions and it directly arises from the abuse and harm from Nassar and MSU. Larry Nassar committed infinite harm and violence by his sexual abuse of children and young women. He was a graduate of MSU, was a team doctor for both MSU and USA Gymnastics, and assistant professor at MSU for decades. Despite the countless violence, many survivors came forward and were never believed, including by other MSU officials and police (*Believed*). This will forever haunt survivors and MSU as an institution that harmed survivors by protecting perpetrators and officials who ignore instead.

In MSU's values related to sexual violence prevention and response in response to these horrors, they say, "Collaboration, equity, excellence, integrity and respect are foundational to our work creating a safe and inclusive campus" (RVSM Strategic Planning Committee 24). They go on to define each term with Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM) in mind. In those definitions, MSU's stated values include collaboration, equity, and integrity. In this context, they define collaboration to mean that they will "develop partnerships," equity to mean challenging "past and present inequalities," and integrity to mean they will act with "honesty, trustworthiness and dependability." Furthermore, research participants in this study had similar values of care for students. One MSU participant underscored how important it was to "support students more holistically" through "trauma-informed approaches to everything." This underscores an alignment between MSU's textual values and individual action where MSU is trying to work toward a "safe and inclusive campus." Similarly, another MSU participant stated, "I don't think I have a colleague, chair, anybody who would not bend backwards to protect

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[survivors]." This participant signals the importance of collaboration and equity for protecting survivors. At the core, both of these participants discuss how much they care about students and don't want sexual violence to continue.

Yet, there are places where the institution has deviated away not only from that care and prevention, but also their stated textual values. This brings the texts and institutional practices themselves into tension. There are many of these examples and places where I could critique texts at a very deep level (e.g., in my previous scholarship, Meadows, *Critical Discourse Analysis*; Meadows, "Removing Agency and Perpetuating Violence"); however, I want this section to focus on the broader strokes and some more noteworthy examples to "trace broad social patterns" (LaFrance 34) of institutional ethnography. Some examples of the tensions include that they have a dedicated page to "News and Updates" related to their enactment of their commitment for RVSM prevention and response post-Nassar, yet many of the documents that have been created to look like external news articles—that would foster the value of "collaboration"—were written by their internal PR spokespersons. Additionally, none of the "News and Updates" pages focus on the stories of survivors or a more student-focused discussion, such as articles in *State News*, MSU's student-run publication. This does not focus on "collaboration" between parties if the only official texts and discourse center on institutionally-sponsored discussions under the guise of external authorship. Moreover, for survivors who do want support from the Center for Survivors, they find themselves having to walk by everyone who is overflowing at the financial aid office to enter the Center (Dunlap), and even though the Center for Survivors employees "know it's a problem" (Dunlap), the university has not provided different venues and places for the Center at this time. Inherently, the "continuity" of text's stated values versus practices are in tension.

In addition to the tensions with the value of collaboration, other tensions are found within equity and integrity at MSU too. For instance, Michigan State has still not released over 6,000 documents relating to the Board of Trustees' meetings regarding Nassar (LeBlanc), which conflicts with the stated ideologies of equity, for its lack of addressing "past and present inequalities" and integrity, for its lack of holding "ourselves accountable to the highest levels of honesty." Then, in August 2022, former Dean Gupta resigned for mishandling Title IX reporting procedures, which eventually lead to the resignation of President Stanley when the Board of Trustees tried to punish Stanley for his reporting of Title IX cases; the faculty senate have since voted "no-confidence" in the Board, meaning there is dissent and overall no faith in administration (Fawcett). This series of events demonstrates that the Board of Trustees are still doing more to protect abuse than to protect survivors. Moreover, in December 2022, the current MSU interim president and much of the board recognized Lou Anna Simon, MSU's President from 2005-2018, with the unveiling of her portrait in the Breslin Center. There are conflicting feelings and facts about how much Dr. Simon knew about Nassar's abuses; however, many survivors, allies of survivors, and personnel from the Center for Survivors protested the ceremony regardless, as they felt the ceremony was "really sending a message that [MSU] doesn't stand with survivors" (Medina and George).

To be clear, I am not saying that Simon did know about Nassar, but I am saying that having a very public ceremony at a basketball game on campus after survivors begged university administration to not hold an event that would re-traumatize them is not equitable or having integrity. It ignores the harm and feelings of specific stakeholders, which also does not align with the stated values of collaboration. There is explicit tension between university texts, university officials' actions, and the values and actions of mid-level administrators. For instance, there is a

tension between values relating to care and support for RVSM issues, as one participant values

"trauma-informed approaches to everything" and another states how they believe faculty and

administrators will "bend backwards to protect [survivors]." Yet, this event signals that even

though this study's participants care deeply about survivors and holistically looking across

dialogues, the larger university texts and officials' actions cause tensions and misalignments with

university stated textual values. These misalignments are occurring on a broad scale, not only at

MSU, but also at Ball State and Ashland.

Ball State

While Ball State University does not have specific goals and strategic plans related to

sexual violence like Michigan State does, they do have many stated values. Their values include

excellence, innovation, courage, integrity, inclusiveness, social responsibility, and gratitude (Ball

State University, *Destination 2040: Our Flight Path* 3). In particular, they define each of these

values to mean:

- "Excellence. We commit to excel in all that we do.
- Innovation. We commit to be creative, responsive, and progressive.
- Courage. We commit to set ambitious goals and to take the risks necessary to achieve those goals.
- Integrity. We commit to be honest, ethical, authentic, and accessible.
- Inclusiveness. We commit to respect and embrace equity, inclusion, and diversity in people, ideas, and opinions.
- Social responsibility. We commit to act for the benefit of society at large.
- Gratitude. We commit to express appreciation to others and to demonstrate our gratitude through our actions." (Ball State University, *Destination 2040: Our Flight Path* 3)

These have an ethos of care for students and trying to advance toward larger societal

good. Participants expressed similar values of care for society and students. One participant

stated, "But we [student affairs folks] do this work because we, we care about people, and we

want people to be successful and get education and go on to be those change agents that we want

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them to be." In this, the participant not only aligns with values of gratitude, excellence, and care,

but also toward social responsibility.

This Ball State participant aligns similarly with participants from MSU aligning to those

participants' stated values of care; however, Ball State—like Michigan State—also deviates on a

broad level from their stated values. In particular, Ball State, as a whole, has a stated value of

innovation and excellence, and their "Step In. Speak Up." campaign directly contradicts

intersectional Feminist research on how to respond to and prevent sexual violence (as discussed

in Chapter 1). To be clear, my ideologies of this topic are not always aligned with institutional

and carceral logics. While I can critique each institution for these logics and enactments, Ball

State has a clearly stated value of innovation and excellence unlike the other institutions, and

because that is a stated value, they should align with what Feminist research on the topic

implores of organizations.

This contradiction is evident in this "Step In. Speak Up." campaign, which is Ball State's

main response strategy for sexual violence response. This slogan expands and claims, "Step in

when you see someone in trouble. Speak up when you learn about assault." In the speak up

category, the university implores students and faculty to promise:

> I will speak up. Should I learn of a sexual assault, I will encourage the victim/survivor to
> seek immediate medical care and to contact the Office of Victim Services. Preserving
> evidence requires timely reporting. (Ball State University, *Step In. Speak Up.*)

In this, they are in tension with several stated values. This directive encourages the campus

community to disrespect and ignore the agency of survivors who may not want to report or

preserve evidence. They also ignore that not everyone, outsiders or the survivor, may recognize

what occurred as an act of violence until later, as trauma can impact the processing of harm.

They state within this campaign that they want to create a community "where everyone is treated

with respect and dignity" (Ball State University, *Step In. Speak Up.*), and this campaign directly contradicts itself by no longer respecting the people they seemingly want to protect. Moreover, they are not being innovative nor excellent in this response by having outdated and ineffective practices.

This "Step In. Speak Up." messaging is continued within the campus. During my site visit to Ball State, I visited during the annual 2023 "It's On Us" national campaign week. It's On Us week is a national nonprofit program that began under the Obama-Biden administration. Every year, this national organization has designated weeks in the fall and in April for sexual violence prevention and awareness campaigns that are taken up by many universities around the nation (including all three in this study). My site visit examined the student union, campus library, health center, two larger academic buildings, and one of their two writing center locations. The student union included all of the student support services. Across all of campus and many floors and places during the campus and national "It's On Us" campaign, there were four total texts related to sexual violence prevention. Two, which spotlighted the "Step In. Speak Up." campaign, were hidden in the dark basement of the student union. The other two were tattered posters in the corner of the library [see Figures 2 and 3]. Figure 2 provides "tips" to prevent being raped on the same page as prevention tips for bicycle theft, which are not the same type of crimes nor should be compared on the same page. These "tips" are
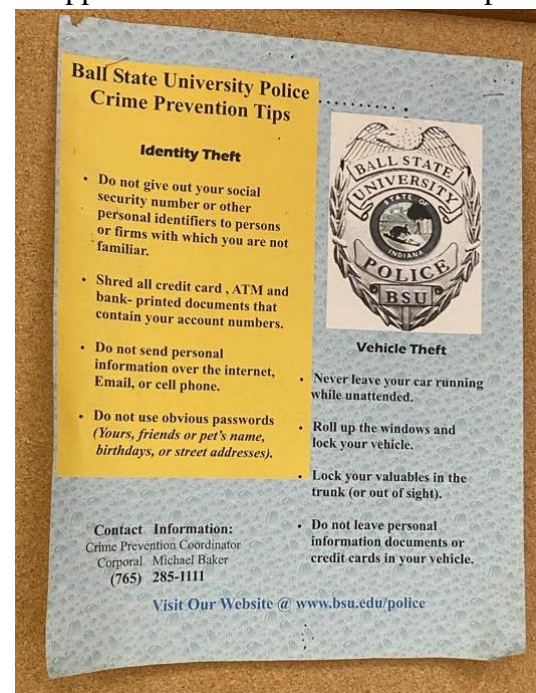

Figure 2: Ball State University Police Crime Prevention Tips

victim-blaming, such as how it includes absolutes about staying away from strangers and alcohol. Moreover, in Figure 3, the Rape Aggression Defense System places the burden for prevention on those that are marginalized, and it only offers services to "women only." In comparison, both Michigan State and Ashland University had many texts related to sexual violence in abundance and in every building I visited. Both literally and metaphorically, Ball State has pushed these issues to the darkness and out-of-sight, out-of-mind. They are contradicting their stated values.

Figure 3: R.A.D.

Ashland University

Like Ball State University, Ashland University also does not have specific goals or strategic plans related to sexual violence. Ashland University has several core values: accent on the individual, spirituality and faith, character development, academic freedom, and excellence in teaching. They define each of these values to mean:

- "Accent on the Individual - Pledges the best individual and collective efforts to challenge and encourage each member of the university within a supportive community.
- Spirituality and Faith - Affirms Christian values as a core element of the university's institutional identity, emphasizing faith in God, moral integrity and respect for the diversity of values and faith of each person in a community of learning.
- Character Development - Promotes integrity, self-discipline, responsibility, compassion, leadership, service and good citizenship.
- Academic Freedom - Supports free, open and critical inquiry for both students and faculty necessary for intellectual and professional development.
- Excellence in Teaching - Emphasizes teaching supported by research and scholarship as the university's central responsibility." (Ashland University, *About*)

Ashland's ethos of care centers individuality and their individual development through faith, academics and extracurriculars. Even though, due to the need to protect research participants, I did not have any official interview participants, I still have experienced an ethos of care from various faculty and administrators while I was a student there. Additionally, when I did my site visit to Ashland University, I went to the academic advising floor of the library searching for texts related to sexual violence and Title IX, and the academic advisors there talked with me about how they were also all Title IX Coordinators at Ashland and all eagerly showed me the texts around their individual desks [see Figure 4]. The water bottle pictured included many social justice and sexual violence stickers on the water bottle. The coordinators talked about how tough of a job that role can be and how they wanted to help students, so

Figure 4: Water bottle

informally, these folks I encountered during the research's site visit also showed a similar value of care for students that mid-level administrators at Ball State and Michigan State did.

Ashland University, however, also deviates on a broad level from their stated values just like Ball State and Michigan State do. For example, while I was a student at Ashland, there was a viral article that discussed students' experience with the Title IX process there and how Ashland continues to protect student-athletes from facing repercussions (Wise). Moreover, these stories have continued both informally and formally from survivors at Ashland, including through lawsuits against the university's lack of action (Chandra Law Firm LLC). The university tried to have better response and prevention in subsequent efforts since I graduated, but even in the 2021 "It's On Us" campaign where survivors began the "Clothesline Project," the university removed

the display because they said, "The University has an obligation to ensure the statements made against these individuals are factually accurate" (qtd. in Nelson)). In this case, not only is the university prioritizing "objective," carceral logics of sexual violence, which does not align with how sexual violence response should occur (Wanjuki) but also they are going against many of their stated values. For example, they are putting the accent on some individuals rather than others; they are prioritizing the comfort of those who have harmed rather than those that were harmed. The individual only matters if they have power and need to be protected from losing that power. In addition, they are not helping to hold those perpetrators to the value of "responsibility," nor are they allowing for "free, open and critical inquiry" for survivors.

Moreover, when an alumna and faculty wrote an Op-Ed to demand change of the university in this instance (Gallion; Faculty and Administration), the university did not make change, which also neglects how faculty and alumna are trying to express their academic freedom, "responsibility, compassion, leadership, service and good citizenship." If a university doesn't make changes once harm has occurred—beyond President Campo stating, "[...] It's hard because there's a legal side—you want to protect students, but there's only so much you can say, and so our response could have been better in general. We want to continue to seek improvement" (qtd. in Fitzgerald)—then, it is lip service, and the saying does not match the doing. This is particularly lip service considering the report compiled by the Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence that was published and given to the university administration had the data about campus sexual violence in July of 2020 where the report's specific recommendations included "Increase messaging that encourages shared respect and mutual responsibility" and "strengthen partnerships to better support students who have experienced [sexual violence]" (Ashland University, Changing Campus Culture 5). These recommendations came because for

multiple years, assessment of university practices showed that survivors didn't feel "valued" (5), and thus by further silencing survivors after being told that they did not feel valued reflects lip service and a disconnect between stated values and actions. Additionally, in a 2020 assessment of campus climate, nine different employees responded in the "Comments from Employees on Benchmark" section that they all felt that higher administration covers up allegations of sexual violence and/or wouldn't take allegations seriously. This is significant if even one person feels that way, but for it to be generally ubiquitous in this comment section has deep implications for the university. Furthermore, if many of the employees believe that higher administration would not take allegations seriously and/or cover it up, then that is part of a disconnect between what the university states (i.e., they want to change) versus people actually believing that they will take accountability for harm to survivors.

In addition to this harm to survivors, Ashland University on the broad level also has policies and practices that go against their stated values. On their website under the Title IX area, many of their provided resources for survivors are organizations with the potential to (re)harm survivors. For instance, half of their university provided confidential resources are through the institution's ministry and theological center. To add, the other resources they provide include many carceral options (e.g., Ashland Police Department, Ashland County Court of Common Pleas) as well as many harmful, faith-based anti-choice organizations (e.g., Ashland Pregnancy Care Center, Catholic Charities Ashland County). On the surface, these resources may not seem contradictory to Ashland University's stated value of "Spirituality and Faith;" however, some of these university-suggested resources don't "respect for the diversity of values and faith" that they state to clarify that value. Not only are other faiths beyond a specific version of Christianity included, but anti-choice and pro-birth ideology pushes a specific type of harmful Christianity

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rather than respect for all religions and other values that those religions may have (Ross and Solinger; Luna). Moreover, it does not provide survivors with "compassion" for what they may have experienced, particularly if a survivor became pregnant and then was met with only one message: carry the child to term. Finally, it is not part of "free, open and critical inquiry" to provide survivors with "resources" that primarily center on exclusionary and harmful values and ideologies. Overall, across all three institutions, they did not align between their stated values and their actions.

Tensions with Policy and Procedures

To look deeper at this misalignment, I will look at two types of practices and texts: policy and training. In this policy section, I will discuss not only where policy is unclear within the institutional discourse but also how research participants had differing views about policy and procedures in their work as administrators. Policy does not have a clear definition in writing studies or in institutional ethnography. Rizvi and Lingard offer an overview of policy in education and synthesize how policy can be viewed as a process of both text and practice and "designed to steer understanding and action" (5). In this study, policy includes boss texts, such federal and state laws, as well as other university texts, such as handbooks, specific implementation of Title IX policies at that university, etc. In this section, I will blend participant interviews with textual analysis of those policies to uncover the misalignments between values and action.

Ashland University

Within the student handbook itself, there are many points of contradictions within the same textual document. For instance, the handbook categorizes various offenses into three levels, with "Level I as the most serious category to Level III as the least serious" (Ashland University,

Student Handbook 2022-2023 41). In this, Level I has fines and suspension or expulsion attached. Sexual violence (listed as "sexual harassment/violence") only appears listed in Level I thus making the claim that sexual violence would always have the highest penalty attached. Yet, later in the same handbook in the Title IX section, there is a chart with possible ramifications for offenders. They preface the chart, acknowledging, "[t]hese are general guidelines and not prescriptive nor exhaustive" (79). However, within the chart, they include many different subsets to sexual violence and harassment, and many of them include just sanctions of "warning" or "probation" rather than the addition of "suspension" or "expulsion" (79-80). This directly contradicts the claim earlier in the same handbook where it stated that sexual violence would always constitute suspension or expulsion. Even with the nuances given before the chart, it seems as though the default for *some* types of sexual violence are not given the same weight as previously depicted.

     Moreover, this chart also has additional prefaces that lead to contradictions in arguments. For instance, while the handbook claims there are factors that "[support] more severe sanctions," they include listings such as "use of intimidation, retaliation or threats of violence" and "use of physical violence" (79). All forms of sexual violence are inherently violent. Thus, these clauses would then imply one of the following: 1) that they do not view sexual violence as inherently a form of violence or 2) they do view sexual violence as violence and the clauses are pointless to include. If it's the first, then this is inherently contradictory to where they define every subset of sexual violence (e.g., dating violence, sexual assault, domestic violence) by its relation to the term "violence" (71-72). Therefore, this view would imply that, to the institution, some types of sexual violence are more "worthy" of "justice" than other instances, which reinforces not only a lack of policy clarity, but also does not conform to an ethos of care for survivors. Overall, these

instances demonstrate what a university is saying does not even match what they say at other times, but also that their executions of what they may do will differ because there are policies that do not match themself.

Ball State University

There were some variations and disagreements between participants' views on Ball State's policy and its clarity, particularly around mandatory reporting. For instance, one participant stated:

> I have always found our Title IX policy to be fairly straightforward. And like with super clear definitions, so like, if I'm talking to somebody about it, or even if I had a student, and because I'm a mandatory reporter, as well, and so, like, if someone would share something with me, I would have to be like, "Okay, thank you for considering me to be a safe person to talk with about this. And, and I appreciate that. But I am not a therapist, and I am not a Title IX person. So like, let me get you to these resources, that that can be beneficial for you, along with the things that I can help you with."

To this person, the university's policy did not have discrepancies or clarity issues on the macro-level across policies, such as the mandatory reporting requirement. Potentially, this could be because they clearly saw themself in the role of a university "mandatory reporter." However, this same participant later saw unclear procedures and policies if the survivor wasn't a student. They said, "I was really thinking of it from like, a student service lens, because that's what I do. But like, I would have to probably go to I don't know, I'd probably start with employee relations, or some someone in human resources, if like, I were being stalked, or if someone were sending me like threatening that." In this, there is a breakdown in knowledge and understanding of university policy once the person was out of their clearly identified role as a mandatory reporter. These situational specifics where participants then felt confused were also present in the other Ball State participant's interview.

They, however, also deviated from the first participant as they felt there was ambiguity in both policy at the macro-level and at the nuanced level in regard to policy and reporting. The participant was reading and citing policy during their interview, where the university policy reads, "In addition to reporting to the Title IX Coordinator, any person may report sexual harassment to any of the Reporting Officials designated by the University. These Reporting Officials include the President and designated senior management, deans, department heads, supervisors, and other designated employees" (Ball State University, *Interim Policy* 6–7). Here, the university begins to provide a list about who is included as "Reporting Officials," but they are not exhaustive. In reading and discussing this policy, this participant furthered:

> [quotes policy]. But the policy doesn't actually say that it doesn't actually specify who those reporting officials are. And so I think there's some ambiguity there that I need clarification on. But I have assumed that that's my responsibility if it's reported, if I learn of it, I have to report to the Title IX office. And, you know, our policy, I guess, it depends on if our instructors are, you know, "other designated employees" or not? And the answer is, I don't know right now. But I have to basically, I have to inform. And, of course, [if an] instructor learns of it, then they informed me, now I do have to report it? Right? But that says, as much as I know, at the moment [...] Especially because the populations that I'm working with are different. Right. And that, you know, that can get confusing. Like, how do I handle this situation? What if it's one of my TAs harassing an undergraduate student? What if it's, you know, who knows? Right? It gets complicated. And, yeah, I could use some clarity on those things. And I think other people in my administrative team could use some clarity in that too.

In this excerpt, this participant not only expresses confusion at the university's mandatory reporting policy on the macro-level, but also at the micro-level, the university has no clear procedures for what circumstances in the hierarchies of administration that would also constitute the need to report. This participant sent additional, internal textual documents about this issue, and in those internal emails, other faculty and administrators on campus were discussing how confusing this was. One faculty member advised others that if they aren't sure if they're a mandatory reporter after they received a blanket notification from the university, then they

should reach out to an upper administrator. This illuminates that not only does Ball State not include who is a reporting official in their official policy, but also in specific email communications to faculty and administrators, they did not include this information or make it clear to folks. The differences between the two participants' viewpoints are probably due to how they see themselves identified in the university's designations of mandatory reporters—the first participant clearly saw themself as a mandatory reporter and thus no ambiguity existed for them whereas the second participant was unsure about policy and designations and thus ambiguity ensued. Overall, the university is stating policy, but because that policy is not clear to all mid-level administrators, they are not themselves sure how to proceed in the process.

Michigan State University

This issue was not only felt at Ball State, but also at Michigan State. Both participants discussed how the policies and how to enact those policies are confusing and unclear at times. For instance, one participant stated:

> You know, so I feel like I don't even know. I don't know that the specific policy. Like, I'm always looking for it. So like the extent to which like, I know, the policy at MSU is like don't like, you know, "don't engage in relationship violence and sexual misconduct. And if it gets, somebody discloses it to you, you have to report it right." But I don't think I know, like this specific, like the nuanced details, and I'm pulling it up right now. And it is very, very, very lengthy. And so I mean, that's going to be hard for anybody to make sense of it. [...] Which, you know, it's, it's great, but it comes off, I think, and covering their asses, rather than, like, supporting victims. [...]. So yeah, it just, you know, I think sometimes the language is, is a little bit too legal, and sometimes purposely vague. So it's hard to know for sure whether or not you fall into that very clearly. And it's hard difficult where you find that like, I'm looking at this right here. Like, I don't know that I would know which link to click on. [...] But like, yeah, I don't like, again, reading the section called Sexual Assault. [redacted]. But it doesn't really even define consent. Yeah. Which is concerned. But that's a different link that doesn't come before talking about what consent? I think consent should be first, [...] so I do think [redacted] because I do think that MSU, in general, is doing a really good job dealing with RVSM issues, right? It is really complicated, especially at a university this large, with the student body that we have, the large number of faculty. It's incredibly difficult, and I don't I don't want to be like, "it's so simple," because it's not right. But I think that some things can be much more straightforward and less obfuscated, if that makes sense.

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Here, this participant notes that they understand the overarching policy of Michigan State where sexual violence isn't allowed and mandatory reporters must report; however, the nuance at the micro-level of these policies starts to become unclear for them. In this excerpt, they talk about how the policy is too "lengthy," "purposefully vague," and full of legalese. They also discuss how many of the definitions that are used hinge on the premise of consent, yet that term isn't defined until much later. They express how they value "supporting victims," but feel that the policies do not enact those values of care and instead protect the institution. Moreover, they express how it is difficult to find what they are trying to find in terms of both policy and reporting where they believe it can be "more straightforward and less obfuscated."

This view was also held by the other Michigan State participant who also expressed how it was difficult to report. They said:

> When I went through this to do this kind of stuff, about two years ago, I was, even though I've had my training and stuff, I was mildly confused, where to actually start. Does that make sense? Who is the first person I'm supposed to contact to figure out what I'm supposed to do? And, maybe that was my fault in terms of not giving my 100% attention to the training. Or, to be honest with you, I probably heard it just completely forgot it. Right, kind of stuff. So. And so I spent, it wasn't a huge amount of time, figuring out how to do this. So I think that's the only part that I think would be better if I if I knew who to go to right away. But I, to be honest with you, I was probably just one Google search. And I knew where to start graphing. So it wasn't that big of a deal. But I think that's one thing that anytime you can remove a barrier to the inertia to start the process. It's always a good thing.**[...]** A lot of the reporting stuff is, I think, can be confusing for people who are the first time hearing it. So we had a lot of questions about reporting that kind of stuff.

This participant expresses how even finding where to start and how to report was a "barrier to the inertia to start the process." While they do downplay this barrier's importance as it "wasn't that big of a deal," they still discuss at length how they were confused and had difficulty finding how to report, just like the first participant. Both participants express points of confusion about Michigan State's policies and reporting procedures, and this makes sense, especially considering how de-centralized Michigan State's sexual violence response is.

As I talked about previously in Chapter 2, Michigan State had about ten times more texts related to sexual violence than Ball State and 7 times more than Ashland University. Additionally, they have many sites and suborganizations dedicated to sexual violence response, including the Office for Civil Rights and Title IX Education and Compliance, Prevention, Outreach, and Education Office, Office of Institutional Equity, Office of Culture of Support, and Police and Public Safety. In attempting to respond to the institutional betrayal post-Nassar, Michigan State may have created more confusion for mid-level administrators in terms of policy and processes that can be seen as "covering their asses rather than, like, supporting victims."

Tensions with Training

Similar to policy and procedures, there are tensions on the micro-level with training related to sexual violence at these universities. By training, I mean the formalized ways people are instructed to understand and enact policy. This could include slideshows for employees (e.g., Title IX coordinators, Resident Assistants), interactive educational materials required annually, etc. This subsection will continue to discuss the everyday practices and perspectives on training across the three institutions by blending institutional discourse and texts with interviews.

Ashland University

Even though I did not have participants from Ashland University due to risk for them of being identified, there are publicly available insights on Ashland's website into administrators' and employees' perspectives via the "Changing Campus Culture Climate Survey Results" data. I acknowledge that the sample size of written comments is low and that I don't know the exact positions of the catch-all employees category, but it is some of the closest data I can gather from their perspectives without putting individuals at risk. In this report's written comments, there were many comments under the "Comments from Employees on Additional Training Topics"

(33-34). Many of these comments were left blank and/or unrelated, but many comments discussed the need for more resources and trainings tangentially related to sexual violence (e.g., diversity training, cultural bias training, active shooting training). One respondent said, "Facilities employees are pretty much left out of training in most areas. We watch some small video and that's it. Safety training is done the same way" (34). In this, there is a glimpse that at least some employees do not feel like training has adequately prepared them to learn about and respond to sexual violence. Another response in a different section also stated, "The reporting environment here is not completely open yet. But, much progress is being made, especially in new employee (and all employee) training" (37). In this, the training, to this person, may have been less than ideal in the past, yet they see the university making progress on this front.

In these trainings, all of the training for Title IX coordinators are publicly available, as required by federal law; however, Ashland also made their Resident Assistants (RA) training available. One of the student comments on this same survey declared, "I only know what I do about the policies because of RA training" (36). In this RA Title IX training, they provide resources at the end that very directly point RAs and survivors to safety services, the Christian ministry, and student conduct, which overlaps with the previous stated values versus action conflict discussed earlier. However, this training also furthers problematic and harmful behavior. While it does start with supportive and compassionate advice to actively listen and to believe the survivor (Pool 9), it immediately then advises RAs to pressure the survivor. The slides instruct them to tell the person to go to the hospital and "encourage them to get a SANE exam" (11). The educational resources on Title IX's webpage also offer similar advice of telling survivors not to clean up and to seek medical advice (Ashland University, *Education and Outreach*). Both the webpage and the training ignore how most survivors respond post-trauma, removes agency of

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survivors, and offers no information that even if they do bathe, they can still receive a SANE exam if they want up to five days later. These almost-mandates harm survivors.

The almost-mandates continues where the RA training also instructs RAs to tell the survivor, "The earlier the police are involved the quicker the investigation can begin and conclude" (11). Both of these pieces of advice are not offered as resources or options, but implied to be what the survivor should do and ignores the trauma and harm of police and medical institutions. Later in the slides, it says, "Affirm them and show confidence that reporting is the right thing to do," which furthers the immense pressure and removal of options for someone who just experienced a powerlessness and removal of agency. It leverages RAs to act as a peer and as an arm of the institution to pressure and control survivors.

While Ashland pressures survivors, their work to train students and campus community members to not be offenders is equally abysmal. Most damning is on Ashland's Title IX webpage where under Education and Outreach subpage, they have an area called, "Tips to Reduce Risk of Sexual Violence." They have no training or information here about intersectionality, power, or oppression, which are core to effective sexual violence prevention; however, they have two subsections called "If you are at risk of sexual assault," and "If you are at risk of committing sexual assault, Stop!." In this, the university acknowledges this may be "perceived as victim-blaming" ("Education and Outreach"), which I'd argue is a good spot because it is; just because you acknowledge a naysayer argument doesn't mean it's not the thing that the naysayer said it is. Additionally, the only prevention they're doing to prevent sexual violence is telling the ambiguous person who is "at risk of committing sexual assault" to "Stop!" (with an exclamation mark!). This act, like Sara Ahmed would say is a nonperformative gesture by the institution. Ahmed explains, "If the statement of commitment does not necessarily commit

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the university to doing anything, then practitioners have to keep up the pressure; it is this pressure that can mean that documents do not work" (Ahmed 104). Through this nonperformativity, Ashland has "told" the offenders to stop, on a website they probably won't read, and only after they recognize themselves as an offender. Moreover, they said that offenders should stop, so they've done their due diligence to prevent sexual violence, and now it is the responsibility of practitioners and offenders thus resulting in meaningless and nonperformative work. Not only does Ashland not ethically or efficiently train university personnel about sexual violence response, but they also make little efforts to publicly prevent sexual violence, and when they do, it involves silencing awareness efforts (e.g., the Clothesline Project) and to do little to address power, control, and oppression with the campus community (e.g., "Stop!").

Ball State University

Participants at Ball State expressed similar feelings about training as those in the comments of the study on Ashland's procedures. Ball State's training that they made publicly available all focus on content for Title IX Coordinators, and they make none of the training for other mid-level administrators or faculty on campus public. Therefore, there aren't many textual documents to work from for Ball State, so the majority of this section will rely on participants' stories. I asked both participants if they had received training on sexual violence response and prevention. One participant stated:

> We get an email from like risk management, which pretty much goes to everyone on this campus [...] So we get this message and it has you log in [... and] we have to go through a training on that. But like it's these like, five minute long things. Like I almost want to say it's like Microsoft, you know, which is not correct, but it's just like, not as well done. And that feels mean to whoever put them together. As I do quite a bit of professional development, I feel sort of qualified to say that, but it's also the people who do—like the reason I said Microsoft is like the IT-like phishing things you know, like, "if this looks like it's from the University but you don't recognize it, maybe don't put your credit card information in." —[...]So that, that's it. Like there's, there's a piece that IT and risk management have, at like the we, I can go on the Ball State website and like, but the

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email sends me a link, and I log in. And it'll be like, "You have until this date to complete this thing." And it's like, there's, there's just information about like, and it's general, it's not even specific to us, it's like, you should, if this happens, you should know who to tell, or what to do in that situation. It's just not. I don't know why we sort of don't do it in house, you know, like, have a Conduct person or Risk Management person, like, just make a quick YouTube video to say, if someone would share any of these things with you generally, this is what you need to do.

Here, there's an impersonal, non-specific training that comes to satisfy federal laws, but that it does not prepare administrators to engage with sexual violence response or prevention. Similarly, another Ball State participant declared:

[I get a] notification that I am that [mandatory reporting] person. [...] I mean, I think it says, you know, "as a reporting official, like, you're required to report this to the Title IX office." And that's the extent of it. Now, and I've always sort of felt like, not that, I felt like, I'm happy to report it to the Title IX and let them take care of it. Because they're the experts.

In this participant's response, they echo the same comments about how all they receive is an email notification yet are provided with very little training. Someone outside this study forwarded me Ball State's Fall 2022 email about responding to emergencies, and that email had only one paragraph telling faculty and administrators about their duties to report sexual violence and directs them to the same ambiguous policy I discussed earlier. Moreover, this email I was forwarded has only one training video in it, and it is less than 2 minutes and only covers safety information related to tornadoes, active shooters, and police response. There is nothing in the rest of the email that relates or trains for any type of sexual violence response or prevention. Similarly, to Ashland University's training, this is a moment of nonperformativity (Ahmed).

Michigan State University

Similar to Ball State, participants mentioned that they received similar training as each other: Michigan State's Relationship Violence and Sexual Misconduct (RVSM) Training.

However, each participant had different perspectives (which is to be expected among a variety of standpoints) on how effective and useful those trainings are. One participant declared:

> To be honest with you, the training is actually what made me realize that I should have reported this, right. So I was going through the training, and I went through all the training and the situation was I was already in the situation with my staff, staff member. So I was already in the situation, and I listened to the training everything in detail.

For this participant, they found that the training helped them to identify a situation in which they needed to report to Title IX and that it was beneficial for them to learn about. However, the other participant felt as though the RVSM training was not helpful and that they already knew the definitions that the training discussed. They also critiqued the training for not being trauma-informed or helpful for what they needed as an administrator. They stated:

> I remember taking some kind of training, right. We have to as every employee of MSU, we have to take an RVSM training, yes? But it's not very good, right? [...] So we'll do lots of trainings that are like tangentially related, but no direct training other than that online course for RVSM. And certainly no training on like, what is the process like for students, once they go once they submit that report? Right, like, they, kind of you just kind of have like a black box, they just, you put their name in and the information in. Then it's like, we'll see if anything happens. Which it would be nice to kind of know what the steps are, in general, to tell the student that, and I, you know, I don't want to say that I fib but I kind of like, "what will likely happen is, you know, somebody will reach out to you, they, my understanding is they don't ask you for any details. You know, you don't have to go." But I don't know for sure that that actually occurs, though.

In this, they felt as though the training told them that they needed to report to Title IX, but did not give them any information about what happens after they report, which would make being able to respond to survivors more trauma-informed. To further, they added, "And just saying you're, "I'm so sorry. And thank you." And like how simple that is. But it's never one of the options. Right? Like, it's always, because you have to report, right?". They express how they don't get the options even within the training to practice compassion and care-based responses to survivors, and that not only do they not get the logistics training they want, but they also don't receive embodied and emotional awareness training for these disclosures.

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What now? Say and/or Do

It's unfortunately not abnormal that care-based practices aren't centered in boss texts or institutional discourse. As Larson discusses in her book, the public and society benefits from denying the "embodied experiences of [sexual violence] victims" (3) because it works to continue systemic oppression's power and control. This denying of care-based practices creates a "social and legal mismatch" (118) where laws, such as Title IX, remove the person and constrict them into carceral, oppressive notions of justice. This mismatch is continued at these universities where what they say they value—ideologies around excellence, honesty, and equity—are in direct contrast to their actions that fail survivors. These mismatches are not only evident at the macro-level of broad actions from the universities, but also within their policies and training. Policies are seen to be contradictory, conforming to rape culture, and lacking clarity across all three institutions. In addition, training on the policies removes survivor agency, minimally meets the federal requirements for training, and neglects trauma-informed care. Participants clearly ask for more transparency, clarity, and care-based practices within these policies and training. As discussed in Chapter 1, Title IX nor other national policies are Feminist in practice, so it will be impossible to fully enact a care-based praxis until our texts, actions, and stated values align.

INTERLUDE IV

After the phone call and later in the day, I have a different meeting scheduled with the Assistant Director of the Writing Program and the Assistant Chair of the Department. At this point, I haven't slept in over 30 hours and my body and soul are beyond help. I recount what happened with the Student Conduct Director that morning and how nothing is going to happen to this student. I feel betrayed and like I am trying to report to protect my other students and myself and that he and the university decide it doesn't matter. We don't matter.

As we are in the meeting, the student started emailing me further harassment, and they are there to console me as it happened. They called Student Conduct back and are told similar messages to what I was told and that Student Conduct would reach out to the student to be told to stop emailing me (he would later email again with pleads to forgive him because he needs college for him and his family—the office still let him get away with a warning and I had 4 weeks left to teach).

The Assistant Chair says, "This is awful and I'm sorry. Seems like nothing will happen to him. What can we still do?"

"I do not want him in my class."

He says, "I get that. I wouldn't either, and I'm sorry that they won't let us remove him."

The Assistant Writing Program Director, an older woman in her 60s jumps in and says, "What time is your class? I'll be there in each class for as long as you want."

I told her the time and day, and she was there every day for the next 4 weeks to just sit there as support when the student couldn't be removed. The institution left me to fend for myself, but these administrators worked to make sure I wasn't alone.

CHAPTER 4: TENSIONS WITH DOING

Rosie: "So it's not unique to me, it's just horrible, horrible and unique, change the title of your dissertation now. Everything is horrible and unique."

Robert: "Because, when it comes right down to it, it's a horrible situation. In most of the people that I know, I would argue all of them, hopefully, want to fix the situation. That's what we [mid-level administrators] do."

As I discussed in Chapter 3, the mid-level administrators of this study expressed deep care for students and the campus community. In this care, they all acknowledged and wanted to prevent additional sexual violence from occurring. As the two highlighted quotations that begin this chapter demonstrate, both Rosie and Robert view sexual violence as horrible, and they and all the research participants expressed a desire to help and support those survivors. This care aligns with their universities' stated values and mission (even if the universities don't align in their own practices). This chapter will overview various tensions with the "doing" that exist within different experiences within the university. These variations in viewpoint are due to the fact that they have different "standpoints": differing "places of shared identity, professional alignment, and investment" (LaFrance 4).

Specifically, in this chapter, I will overview how mid-level administrators deeply want to enact care-based practices for sexual violence response and prevention, yet they do not have the university resources and support to do so. Then, I will discuss where the research participants push against and resist barriers and boundaries within their positions to care for survivors. Finally, I'll reveal some of the tensions in perspectives for how participants feel response and prevention could improve. I'll underscore how each person has different ideas and thoughts about how to do that work, and how they do not always align with one another, which demonstrates how vastly different the working lives of different administrators can be.

Wanting Care-Based Practices

Every single participant expressed a deep sense of busyness in their role. Some even

directly mentioned how they felt that they were overworked. Throughout all of these

conversations, it was clear that these participants wanted to be able to do more for survivors but

found themselves and others at their institutions to be too busy. For example, one Michigan State

participant expressed how they tend to do the Title IX training at 11pm at night because the rest

of their workload keeps them "too busy to do that" at any other time. They acknowledge that

there's a "limited amount of time. And they [colleagues and students] have a limited amount of

bandwidth." They expressed a desire to do more to learn and train, but that there's no time and

bandwidth to do otherwise. Two different participants also mentioned how all of the Title IX

trainings are always done during orientation and the beginning of the academic year, which leads

to the information being a part of lots of other amounts of information thus making faculty and

students forget what they reviewed as well as forcing students to choose between what to place

more emphasis on in their minds (e.g., course scheduling, learning their jobs, moving places).

It begs the question if administrative labor did not consume people's workload and they

were able to carve out time for even the required trainings during their daily workload, how

much better could administrators be at responding to sexual violence? I don't think that question

will ever be able to be answered until universities begin to match their stated values with their

everyday practices. In other words, until universities actually prioritize equity and care-based

practices rather than making them nonperformative practices, then we will never see that world.

The lack of time and bandwidth was present in all the other interviews as well. When I

asked another participant about their everyday workload in the semester, they described:

> [The] start of the semester is very busy, end of the semester is really busy. And then the
> middle of the semester, when that drop period, those are kind of like the busiest times for

me, where I'm doing, like more intaking and like case management. And then on top of all that, yeah, it's like meetings with different units in terms of like, you know, thinking about the systematic issues and structural issues at MSU that are creating barriers and how we can change them so that it's part of, maybe not every day, but a few days a week, I'm in a meeting kind of related to that. [...] And I unfortunately, and my job description is a lot of that. But unfortunately, because student need is so high and so unique, and it takes a really kind of unique person to be able to take in that information, and then support them in that.

It is very interesting to me that this participant described every single part (i.e., beginning, middle, and end) of the semester as some form of "really busy." Then, to add on top of that, they are also trying to lessen systemic harm and barriers at the institution for students; yet, even though that's part of their job description, the individual student support realm of their job is taking up the majority of their workload, even though on paper that's not supposed to be even close to the majority of their time.

This is mirrored in larger patterns across academia where the expectations for university employees have gone up without the support to match (McClure and Taylor; American Council on Education; Field). This idea of being overworked and busy continued when one Ball State participant stated:

I think the professional development and training stuff is really, really, really important. So I try and do as much of it as I have time for, which is not enough, but making a good chunk, trying to. [...] Who's got time to work on the Title IX policy or the conduct policy or whatever? Because our Title IX person is one person, our Conduct Office is two people like, and I'm sure at other institutions like, show me a place that's fully staffed and resourced appropriately. That's like a unicorn, like do those places exist? Because that is not this institution, like, you know, theoretically, I'd have two other staff folks in here [in my office], doing the [student support] piece so that I could work on administrative things and build these trainings and be out all over campus even more than I am now. And also just keep it to a 40 hour work week.

Here, this participant expresses how their own position is understaffed and overworked. They mentioned at other points in the interview how their specific student support realm is responsible for over 4,000 students and how they are constantly trying to keep up with their workload. They

take extra time to try to educate themself on the issue of sexual violence since their university

provides little training on interacting and responding to survivors. Furthermore, they also observe

and express how the Title IX and Conduct offices on their campus are deeply understaffed.

Unfortunately, this participant is correct that a fully staffed Title IX office would be like a

"unicorn." The world of Title IX coordination is one that is woefully understaffed and resourced

position that functions as a "pressure cooker" of unsustainable and traumatizing working

conditions (Brown). If this campus has three people that are doing all the heavy emotional and

intellectual labor of working with survivors and offenders, then no wonder the other mid-level

administrators here felt like there is room for improvement.

Resisting Authority

In social coordination in IE, there are expected norms and social rules and relations that

people follow. For sexual violence response and prevention, across all three institutions, people

are expected to be mandatory reporters, complete some amount of training, and adhere to

university policy. However, in the nuance between this, there are many forms of resistance to the

federal mandates and institutional authority by people at these institutions. These moments of

resistance work to change the institution, no matter how small.

As LaFrance describes, "Even if people do not know each other well, they negotiate these

interactions in a number of ways, responding to social cues, deferring to (or resisting) authority,

engaging with texts, mimicking and learning from the actions of others, and following patterns of

behaviors" (38). Thus, even though administrators at various levels may read the same training

and policy, interact with others (or not) across the university, and have similar macro-level

structures to their work, they may act in deviation and resistance from the established social

order to establish a new form of social coordination. These new pathways and resistance to social

norms of an institution were prevalent throughout the research where people have ways of pushing up against the boundaries of policy and institutional discourse.

For example, at Ashland University, when higher administration removed survivors' voices during the Clothesline Project, many faculty spoke out against this and the harm it caused. They discussed in a joint letter that they disagreed with the university and they "demand change" (Faculty and Administration). They also acknowledged their roles and power as faculty, staff, and administration and vowed to work toward improving campus response to sexual violence. Relatedly, due to various scandals and mis-operations of the university, the faculty senate voted no-confidence in President Campo of 34-1 in 2020 (Leturgey). Despite faculty pushback, the Board of Trustees renewed his contract to extend until 2024 (Leturgey). This decision "has raised tensions with the Faculty Senate" (Jenkinson and Ross). These are some moments of resistance against the expected social coordination within Ashland, with some specifically addressing sexual violence.

These moments of resistance against macro-level social coordination are evident in the interviews as well. Two participants described ways that resistance has occurred in both actual and hypothetical moments of harm within their units. For instance, one participant declared:

> And I feel like at least in our unit, we can have open conversations about what has occurred, you know, what might be happening, you know, problem instructors, you know, things like that. So it's been our, our unit, at least, is very open to those discussions, and are always trying to, you know, to root out those issues. So like, we will make suggestions. So we have at least one instructor in our college, who has been investigated multiple times. And every time he's come out "clean," or he's done his penance and so we have to just pretend like nothing's happened, but we definitely make recommendations of like, maybe we don't do trainings in his class or maybe he doesn't really meet with job candidates one-on-one.

This participant is discussing how even though university investigations have declared a professor as "clean," there are different ways in which the whisper network and administrative

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structures are trying to protect the campus community, such as not giving him more power and authority to harm others. This form of resistance can come at a great cost to the administrator where scholars, such as Trinh Võ discuss how that disruption may cost those with (multiply) marginalized positionalities to have "their own careers disrupted" (103). This work of disruption and whisper networks is a form of resistance that can come at a high cost—emotionally, intellectually, and economically—for administrators.

In other examples of resistance and disruption, another participant gave a hypothetical example and proclaimed:

> And I don't know, but I think, you know, there, there may be cause for me to intervene in a situation like intervene directly in a situation like that, where, you know, where I would call a TA into my office and say, "this is inappropriate behavior, and it's going to stop right now." Now, that would not preclude me reporting it to Title IX. Right. [...] So I don't know if it's appropriate for me to intervene in a TA situation. But I might do it anyway.

This participant is still aligning with their requirements of reporting according to the university; however, they are deviating from relying solely on the university for "justice" by instead also intervening using their own power and authority to address harmful behavior. They may recognize that institutional processes are slow and that they must intervene in harm now. These practices are obviously not in the Title IX policy and procedures at that institution, but they are going beyond the minimum that was outlined by the university to resist.

Across most participants, they all described how they respond to survivors upon disclosure, and many of them use scripts that they had to develop on their own to be more care-based that also go beyond the university minimum. They are not the scripts of the training they received, but instead ones that highlight compassion and care for survivors in more trauma-informed ways where they respond with scripts such as "thank you for trusting me" and "I'm so sorry this happened to you." Many participants also highlight how they try to assert professional

boundaries in these responses and forefront what the processes around the Title IX reporting process are. As each participant who discussed these responses told me, it was never something they were officially trained to do. As Hensley Owens discusses in their chapter of *The Things We Carry*, "Sexual assault prevention is not an official component of my position as an English professor and director of a writing program. Nevertheless, working to prevent the richocheting trauma of sexual assault has become a component of the work I do and encourage others to do" (Hensley Owens 125). This is common for administrators to do this resistance and emotional work of responding to sexual violence, and they are doing extra labor to do so despite the university and their own job descriptions.

In addition to going beyond the given training, there are additional ways mid-level administrators in this study were pushing boundaries and resisting the norms of social coordination. For example, one Michigan State participant discusses how they work to get many accommodations and alternatives for survivors, such as current and retroactive class drops, tuition reimbursement for affected semesters, substituting courses, moving students to remote coursework, parking passes, single-room dorms (even when housing was full), and more. They stated, "Yeah, like really just about anything we can get, we can figure it out for a student." In this, they are not only demonstrating a deep sense of care and support for students, but also the ways they push university structures to provide this support.

Furthermore, to do these accommodations, this participant discussed how they advised students to ask for certain accommodations from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR). They spent a long period of time in the interview describing how they wished that students in the Michigan State systems could have an internal designation that they were working with the Office of Civil Rights. They argued that this internal designation would prevent survivors from having to share

their stories over and over again as well as for administrators to streamline the accommodations process. They also discussed how they will push administrative boundaries to make the accommodations happen:

> And, honestly, sometimes I can, I will request things that OCR hasn't requested because I know that the student needs this and I'll just be like, "this student is working with OCR." And I won't say that OCR requested because that's not true. But, um, but I could probably get them to make the requests.

Here, they do not lie to other administrators, but how they word their requests in rhetorically savvy ways to get those accommodations to happen by using the authority of OCR's credibility to enact care for their students.

Yet, that care can come at a cost to the individual where they said, "I am okay with my hands being tied a little bit, because I'm somebody who will put my entire self into a person's experience." In this, the participant notes that they want to care for students, but university and administrative boundaries are still important to protect them. This is a moment where it is an act of resistance up to the line, but still staying within the scope of their role so as not to burn themself out. In discussing the origins of the term "burnout," Malatino declares:

> Because the people drawn to such work were generally altruistic, empathetic, and concerned with socially just transformations of health care, because they were intimately involved with the communities in which they labored, because the work was poorly paid or unpaid, and because the emotional and physical demands of the work were intense, these workers began to suffer from a particularly toxic combination of exhaustion, irritability, and cynicism. (137)

In this, the origins of burnout overlap with the care required to resist university responses to sexual violence, which as discussed earlier, is not in the job description. Moreover, for the job they are already being asked to do, they are underpaid and overworked. This participant is noting how the structures of the university are also important to make sure that they do not get burned out.

Yet, this burnout may appear in other ways as this study's participants navigate inequitable systems. Several participants noted the inequity of response and resources for those in the university community. For example, a Ball State participant mentioned how they want all students to receive equal accommodations and access to these supports but know currently this support and access is inequitable. A similar instance of resistance was evident in a Ball State participant where they talked about how accommodations for survivors can typically only come if the survivor files a complaint; however, they worked within their own administrative power to still support that survivor by socially coordinating with instructors in their unit to move a survivor's course section. However, they acknowledge the imperfect solution that this is within the structures that they have to operate because "it's just kind of unfortunate that the burden of that falls on the one that's being harassed." Participants were acting where they had control to support survivors and respond to sexual violence even though the university's response and procedures were inadequate.

These acts of resistance, however, are still hampered by university, state, and federal policies. These policies operate as institutional discourse that makes it harder for certain changes to occur. For example, one participant discusses how they try to work around certain harmful individuals yet have to be cognizant of all the institutional discourse "in a way that is still you know, in line with the employee's rights, but also making sure that people feel safe." They are describing the difficult labor that comes with resistance and when that resistance pushes against law and policy. Similarly, another participant discussed how they wish they could have unit-specific policies, but said, "we couldn't have any policy that exceeds the scope of the university policy. I mean, the main thing that we can do is make people aware of what the university policy is, and if possible, what their role is in that policy?". Here, the participant acknowledging the

boss texts that guide their work and how they might limit them, so their course of action is to

instead "make people aware." Both of these moments of resistance illustrate how they are

focusing on what they can control and do despite the constraints they face.

Lack of Institutional Communication and Transparency

To some administrators, institutional discourse and boss texts limit action. Yet, many

participants also discuss how they feel like some institutional discourses lack transparency and

communication. For instance, in Ashland University's *Campus Climate Survey*, both employees

and students felt neutral to the Likert question of "I believe the university is transparent

regarding the scope of criminal activity on or around campus." Similar to how I discussed how

employees felt that sexual violence reports may be covered up by the university in Chapter 3,

nine additional comments were made in the employee benchmark comment section about how

they had no idea what the scope of the sexual violence problem was at Ashland. Similarly, one

Ball State administrator remarked:

> Is that, are they doing what they're supposed to do? Are they, you know—unless they
> covering things up, or, you know, trying to push things under the rug—are they really,
> you know, aggressively pursuing in cases that they should? That is a mystery. Right? And
> that goes back to my question about, like, is what we're doing actually working? Is it
> having any effect? And, and also, you know, emphasizing the prevention side I think it's
> more important. I shouldn't say more important, but, you know, it would be better if we
> prevent it from happening in the first place.[...] I think the university should be more
> proactive in making people aware of what constitutes harassment, and assault, and etc.
> And that it's unacceptable on our campus, or anywhere, for that matter. And I don't know
> if that, I don't know if that involves having a policy, right. Or not? Or does it mean
> having a sexual assault awareness week, maybe we have a Sexual Assault Awareness
> Week? I don't know. If we do, it's not well advertised.

This participant does not feel like they have transparent and communicated information to even

know the scope of sexual violence at Ball State. They also note how many prevention efforts

have been potentially ineffective and "not well advertised." Worth noting is that the campus

climate survey for Ball State that should have been made available in Fall 2022 on their website

is still unavailable which further illuminates how Ball State may not be making data, prevention, and response as transparent as it should be (Ball State University, *Culture and Climate Survey*).

Another Ball State participant discussed how they wished for more assessment and feedback on the Title IX policies and the process. To take the case in point, they asserted, "You know, like, that sort of feedback, I think would be helpful. And again, it may already happen on my campus. And I just don't know about it. But I think that that sort of information would be really useful if we could get it." In this, yet another administrator discusses how they "don't know about it," if it is done, but this is now multiple people who are asking for data and a website that does not exist. Where the data, feedback, and results live and how they are communicated at Ball State is a mystery. Also, even though the climate surveys are available at Ashland, many respondents don't know the scope of the problem regardless.

Relatedly, at Michigan State, results and documents related to various sexual violence happenings and scandals have also yet to be revealed[8] (LeBlanc). In a point of diverging perspectives, one Michigan State participant felt as though faculty were not as protected as students and staff in university policies and procedures after Nassar and instead argued for equal protection for both faculty as well as staff and students when accusations occur. Conversely, the other Michigan State participant talked at length about the harms some faculty and upper administration have caused, and how they wished there was more protection for students. Both perspectives may arise out of the fact Michigan State has been a place of harm with a lack of transparency. It is hard to see the scope of a problem if it's obfuscated and covered up, so both participants may be arriving at those conclusions out of their own social coordination in their roles because there is a lack of university norming and communication.

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[8] After this dissertation was defended, Michigan State's Board of Trustee did vote to finally release the documents on December 15, 2023 ("Michigan State Trustees").

To continue the lack of communication theme, a Michigan State participant discussed how they wished there was more discussion and communication about sexual violence policy in their roles, particularly because they felt that no discussion of it makes sexual violence seem more acceptable. They discussed plans to raise the policy and issues in a department meeting and in a class for graduate students; notably, a similar idea was raised by a Ball State participant as well.

Another Michigan State participant discussed how they wished there were more town halls for the campus community and faculty to discuss sexual violence response and prevention so that Michigan State can "better inform and train people and see how they can update the communications around it [.... to have] more open dialogue about how this information is, is delivered and received [...]." Therefore, people are wanting more transparency and communication for sexual violence response and prevention, and they are not receiving it in the ways that work best for their everyday working lives.

This communication and transparency also extend to communication between different stakeholder groups. In particular, tensions amongst competing ideas about enacting change make communication more difficult. For instance, one participant stated:

> So there's a huge disconnect, to be like, well, you know, Conduct and Title IX have to make these changes, because it's federally mandated. Faculty can suggest these changes, but they're not federally mandated to be made. So they might be frustrated with the policy changes. But they're, you know, there's, it's the communication piece, like I talked about earlier, I think that's the issue. And I would argue that that's probably an issue on every campus.[...] I find it interesting that [Faculty Senate is] getting together to try and make these considerations but not think to loop anybody else in that's like directly connected to policy like not that they need to be on the subcommittee but like, Faculty Senate doesn't get to make, like final decisions about what that policy looks like. So they get to look at it and offer suggestions. But there's not really any mechanism in place for them to be a change agent, like my students, you know, so I can imagine that's pretty frustrating on their end. But I was just like, man, you need to get partners, like you need to have student affairs partners or like our Vice President, you know, as somebody who's on board with this to get any movement on stuff.

In this excerpt, this participant highlights some of the tensions with enacting change. First, they discuss how faculty and other stakeholders do not always know policy and law the way other campus organizations and folks do. This can cause rifts between the groups when their ideas of what is possible to change and what can be changed differ. Second, this participant also discusses how there's not opportunities for those making suggestions, even if they're not possible, to feel like "change agents" which can lead to frustrations. Third, they discuss the importance of forming partnerships and communicating across these stakeholders in order to get "movement." They are naming the very real, complex, and messy work that comes with trying to enact change for sexual violence.

Toward Transformation and Solidarity

Throughout this study, there are many moments where administrators are trying to enact care but are forced to do it individually rather than collectively. The institution is not communicating with them, and they are not able to see transparent information from within. Mirroring the trends in higher education broadly, these participants are also overworked, underfunded, and understaffed. They all have various ways of enacting resistance to the institution, such as going beyond their training to enact care, addressing harm within their own units, and protesting larger university decisions. However, it's also important to remember that this resistance still may be costly for participants, such as through disruptions to their own careers and/or through burnout. Participants noted that if they were able to have more resources and not be siloed in this work, more may be possible. Better worlds could be possible if transparent and collective communication and solidarity were made possible by the institution.

INTERLUDE V

i wasn't always a Feminist,
especially not an
Intersectional one.

i hold the complex histories
of a past-me who got an "A"
for arguing women were inferior,

of a past-me who was forced to
sign an abstinence-only card
while secretly dating a woman,

of a past-me who believed
being "good" outweighed
unreflective ignorance,

and, that's just the tip of these
stored memories.

I'm still not always a Feminist,
especially since I have so much
(un)learning left.

I hold the complex tensions
of knowing more than Her,
but still never enough,

of holding onto the
Discomfort,
like it's my final report card,

of letting go of
Order & Control
to be Messy & Imperfect.

But, maybe that's all I can ask
from a Feminist.

CHAPTER 5: WHERE TO GO

Jennifer: "And so that's, that's always like, getting, you know, trying to move a giant ship like this is never easy. But I feel like the ship is at least heading in the right direction. And now we just kind of need to refine everything."

Robert: "But if the university were to mandate this at the level that all the departments have to give one hour of Title IX training to their faculty, and it's required—that's protecting our community. Right. And I don't see how that's any less valuable than the [discipline-related] stuff. So I think that that's one way to move this conversation forward, right?"

Rosie: "We're in higher education, because we care a lot about the students and their experiences, even if they're horrible and unique. [...] I would love to not have a job either. You know, I don't know what I would do for food and things. But like, I would love for campuses to be [equitable for all]. And yeah, that would be great. Do I think that's going to happen in the near future? Absolutely not."

William: "I guess if we're going to talk about like, the, in terms of ethics, then we'll go back to the legal minimum, right, like reporting that a sexual assault happens is an inadequate response to a sexual assault. Right. And I really, I think the university should do a lot more, or, you know, make everyone more aware of what they're doing to prevent it from happening in the first place."

I open this chapter by once again turning to the contributions of the research participants. Across these quotations, I see administrators who not only deeply care about students, but also administrators who recognize change must occur in sexual violence response and prevention in universities to become more proactive and equitable. They acknowledge that more needs to occur to be able to enact care and how that may be a slow, lengthy process. Throughout this dissertation, I have unearthed some of the inadequate responses by universities and where they can improve.

Much of sexual violence policy and rhetoric has generally had a white feminism framework, which is uncritical, non-inclusive, and works in tandem with white supremacy. Instead, this dissertation centers queer, disabled, and/or Black and intersectional Feminisms, which challenges white feminism's harm. This framework of intersectional Feminism considers

how all identities are also social and cultural constructs and the ways that society has interlocking and overlapping systems of oppression. For instance, Chapter 1 overviews how sexual violence in higher education lacks an intersectional Feminist framework. I applied a Feminist frame to institutional ethnography to conduct this study, as discussed in Chapter 2. From conducting this institutional ethnography, I discussed in Chapter 3 the tension and disconnect between texts, people, and practices at the three institutions. This disconnect exists in the universities' macro-level actions as well as in their policies and training. Across all these realms, universities fail survivors by removing their agency, reinforcing harm, and ignoring the intersections of power and control. In Chapter 4, I delved into how mid-level administrators— despite being underpaid and overworked—are resisting their universities to enact care for students. This resistance goes above the minimal training they do receive to work against the harm of the universities. Participants discuss how they could do this work more effectively and at less of a burden if they were not siloed within university structures. Based on these previous chapters, in this Chapter, I utilize Feminist frameworks and approaches to transformative justice to offer implications and recommendations for myself, mid-level administrators, and universities.

Implications of this Study

While it would be wonderful if there was one way to embody Feminist praxis, the actual work is messy and imperfect. Yet, it still moves toward collective action. For instance, Sara Ahmed and Gloria Anzaldúa talk about the fragmentation and in-betweenness of embodying Feminisms where Feminists exist in a liminal space between what could be and what is. In other words, a tension exists between a better world we can imagine and the practice of being fragmented, messy humans who are also Feminists. Roxanne Gay asserts that we often have to

choose to be a "bad feminist" in order to "embrace [one]self as a [F]eminist and be [one]self" (318), as a person that is messy and sometimes strays from the "perfect" Feminist (and questions if "perfect" Feminisms even exists).

These ideas of the messy and imperfect also overlap with queer and/or disabled scholars' views. For instance, Banks et al. discusses how these Feminisms work on "intentionality, failure, and forgetting" (16) and reject the clean, linear ways of thinking and doing. This idea of messiness and failure is also discussed by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, a "queer disabled femme" activist and writer. They discuss how Feminisms and care work are messy (sometimes resulting in failure) as well as collective. They examine cripping Feminisms toward a better future where no body/mind is left behind. They discuss how disability justice and cripping the world "comes from years of relationship building and building trust, from fucking up, making repair, learning from mistakes, and showing up for each other" (Piepzna-Samarasinha 127). In this, they discuss that it will be messy and in-between where people are "fucking up" and trying anyways because it's the trying together, as a community that will make our world better.

Self-care is an act of community solidarity toward a better world. For instance, Lorde's pivotal work discusses how self-care is an act of survival and community solidarity to care for one another in a world that doesn't care about those with (multi)marginalized identities (Lorde, *The Cancer Journals*). In this, both Lorde and Piepzna-Samarasinha call for community webs that work against the systems trying to kill people. That care can be pieced together but relies on a collective community to do the work, as this dissertation's participants name when they discuss the ways that partnerships are needed to make "movement" occur: those movements of connecting, trying, messing up, and trying again anyway. I recognize that not everyone can

always show up and provide that level of generosity and flexibility with others, but that doesn't mean we should stop working toward better futures, together.

That collective, intersectional, messy work is also the work that strives to liberate the systems of oppression and dream of different worlds and futures. To reiterate discussions in Chapter 1, the Combahee River Collective declared, "If Black women were free, it would mean that everyone else would have to be free since our freedom would necessitate the destruction of all the systems of oppression." Feminisms are different from white feminism in that it asks Feminists to dream and work toward a world that does not rely on the same systems and institutions that simultaneously cause oppression and are symptomatic of oppression. For example, as Larson discusses, "one reason rape laws and institutional codes frequently fail to bring justice to victims of rape is because at their core, these definitions are rooted in liberal subjectivity" (118). White feminism relies on the institutions' policies, criminal justice system, law, and other carceral ideologies for "justice" whereas Feminisms envision entirely new possibilities to destroy those systems and build a world away from oppression[9].

As Mia Mingus discusses, the transformative work of Feminism is abolitionist and resists relying on the state's carceral systems and perpetuating oppressive norms. This Feminism also seeks to be active in cultivating "healing, accountability, resilience, and [community-based, non-carceral] safety for all involved" (Mingus). In this, we would have a world that does not rely on police, criminal justice, and institutions—a radical and transformational departure from what's

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[9] Worth noting here is how when I was called for jury duty in Lansing in the summer of 2023, I was able to witness first-hand how fucked up our "justice" system is. I was called to be a potential juror, along with a hundred other folks, on a sexual violence against a child case. I watched as the judge required everyone to state for the public record, in front of a hundred other people, why they would not be able to be "impartial" for this case. Not only does objectivity and impartiality not exist, but the sheer trauma of public disclosure for the sake of "justice" was abhorrent. When it got to me, I was asked what I do and then what I study. As I revealed I study sexual violence policy, I was immediately dismissed. I don't know who was ultimately selected for that jury, but I do know that it was not one founded upon the ideologies of equity.

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happening now. As the intermediary moves as we work toward that new future, we would have care-plans that center reciprocity, Feminism, and accountability to our harm and un/learning. To further the idea of transformation, in A Bridge Called My Back, contributors discuss "El Mundo Zurdo" where they have a "vision" to work toward a metaphorically, "left-handed world" (Moraga and Bambara 218). In that, these Feminists seek to create a world that is built for those with multi-marginalized identities. This world would be built together to "brew and forge a revolution" (Moraga and Bambara 219) toward community-based safety. Furthermore, Piepzna-Samarasinha discusses how multi-marginalized folks particularly need to think of other ways to embody Feminisms' collective care and transformation. They state, "I want us to keep dreaming and experimenting with all these big, ambitious ways we dream care for each other into being" (65). From this, Feminisms' transformative world building necessitates ambitious dreams that become actualized into tangible, collective care.

Takeaways, Limitations, and Future Research

After doing this dissertation, I have had many takeaways and learnings. For instance, I navigated complex emotions, triggering, and emotional labor in this work. I learned that my feelings are valid and to make space for myself to feel those emotions so that I did not get burnt out. Relatedly, I had not expected transcribing the interviews to be as emotional as it was, but I now know to go about the work of re-listening slowly and with care for self. Doing work with sexual violence policy and response is difficult and sometimes made me want to give up and stop; however, I leaned into my dreaming for a better future and how necessary this work is for everyone, as a world free from sexual violence is not going to happen in isolation nor will it occur overnight.

Before beginning this project, I used to see universities as this nebulous place that I knew needed to be disrupted, but it was too unclear to conceptualize how. From this work, I am now able to map and understand some of the dialogues and everyday work within institutions by mid-level administrators. The four participants had such rich and complex perspectives that were just four of thousands that work at a university. The hidden nature of their resistance and diverging viewpoints were energizing for me, and our aligned care for students, campus, and our communities made me feel very connected to them and this work. Moreover, these conversations illuminated better understandings of the inner-workings from the macro-level of the institution down to the unit-level. I came to find that the reason I maybe saw universities as an ambiguous zone was because the work is *messy*. There are thousands of complex people that are working together under one organizational structure, thus meaning there will be inconsistencies, misalignments, and tensions. I have a re-affirmed belief that community solidarity, accountability, and transformative justice alignments can help us work together through dysfunction and messiness.

In addition, I learned through this project that writing studies is uniquely positioned to take on this work within higher education. We are experts in rhetoric, communication, and ethical pedagogy as well as are interdisciplinary contact zones for administration and first-year students. Because of this, we must be more intersectionality Feminist and work to address where we have fallen short. We have many avenues that our field can be leaders for in higher education: 1) rethinking systems, frameworks, and professional statements (e.g., the CCCC's position statement); 2) creating position statements and tangible support for administrators to be able to better enact care; 3) collaborating to deliver care-based, Feminist trainings and policy in

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higher education; 4) creating supplemental training for the field's practitioners to engage with that individual institutions may not provide.

This study is just a beginning, not an end. To me, this is just an exploration to graduate that can be extended for the next phase of my career. My specific schedule that was required to graduate on-time only allows for a PhD candidate to do so much, such as only including three institutions and four participants. Additionally, the time limit and other barriers played a role in this process as well. For instance, the very long and slow IRB process made the timeline dwindle further (and I am grateful that it wasn't longer); in the future, I would not have such a short timeline to be able to account for the difficulties in IRB approval for sexual violence research. Furthermore, I did not receive any responses from participants who are in the sexual violence realm of mid-level administration. In the future, not only would I also extend my timeline to account for this, but also the number of universities in the study to be able to have a larger pool to draw from.

In the future, I want to continue to build on transformative justice and Feminisms to guide this work. In particular, I'd love to look at just R1s and understand what's happening across them, such as comparing how institutions with sexual violence scandals (e.g., Michigan State, Penn State, Ohio State) compared with those without notorious and public scandals. I would also like to expand my pool of participants at each institution and make a dedicated effort to listening and learning from more mid-level administrators both in student-support and sexual violence-related realms. Another avenue for research includes expanding into a global context and understanding how other institutions and countries around the world are also grappling with sexual violence policy and response.

Considerations for Universities and Administrators

As Cox discusses in her chapter on institutional ethnography, "IE offers transformative potential in this way because it so easily builds a relationship between critical evaluation and a mapping of locations for positive change. It does so by providing actionable research tools to illuminate shared concerns, identify patterns of oppression, and move institutional participants toward transformation of our social and material conditions" (35). In this, by mapping the relationships and viewpoints within the three institutions, there are realms that can transform "social and material conditions." Therefore, below, I will offer suggestions for universities and mid-level administrators for future change.

Universities

Universities must remember what their stated values are and let those guide their actions. To do this, they should consider:

- Listening to stakeholders (e.g., administrators, students, faculty, alumni) and providing opportunities for stakeholders to connect and talk with each other about sexual violence prevention and response.
- Making processes and policies about sexual violence transparent and clear to all stakeholders.
- Revising sexual violence policies and training to be more trauma-informed, intersectionally Feminist, and robust.
- Investing in mid-level administrators' work to continue to allow them to enact care in the limited time and energy they have.
- Moving away from ineffective prevention strategies (e.g., mandatory reporting, bystander intervention) to proven and intersectional methods of response and prevention instead.

Mid-Level Administrators

Mid-level administrators should continue to build on the values and actions that exhibit their care for students. To continue to build on these assets, administrators can consider:

- Self-reflection and unpacking of intersectional identity, power, and control.
  - *Example Reflection Questions:* How am I considering aspects of identity and intersectionality in my everyday work? How may I be complicit or conforming to dominant ideologies in society? What are my pre-conceived notions of sexual

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violence? How might I resist myths and dominant ideologies in my everyday work?
- Hiring and retaining students and staff that are aligned with Feminist, transformative ideologies as well as have diversity in lived experiences and positionalities.
  - *Example interview questions:* How do I conceptualize intersectionality, identity, and privilege? How do those concepts inform my approach to my [job]? How do I engage with the process of un/learning? What new learning grew from a specific experience of un/learning and how does that shape what I do now? What do I think the purpose of my [unit] is? In an ideal world, what would my [unit] look like?
- Finding connections with others both in and outside the university to respond to and prevent sexual violence.
  - *Example Connections:* On-campus organizations for sexual violence; off-campus organizations for sexual violence; mid-level administrators in student support organizations; faculty senate; student senate; advocacy groups for sexual violence prevention and response
- Requiring internal sexual violence response training and professional development for your staff
  - *Example training and professional development:* https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1wdRvRhss9IeHkv19KSVesAFcfRc1UeFe Yt6Kjxb-S58/edit?usp=sharing
- Allocating part of your unit's budget toward support for workers and students to navigate this topic with care and intentionality.
  - *Example Implementation of budget changes:* Allotting 2 hours per semester for students and staff to engage in supplemental training or events on the topic
- Providing opportunities for those that you supervise to do additional training and self-reflection on sexual violence.
  - *Examples of opportunities and support:* Provide paid time to attend conferences and training on care and sexual violence; allot room in orientations to provide training on sexual violence and mandatory reporting; consult with DEI experts to improve workplace conditions related to identity; have organizational structures in place to respond to disclosures of sexual violence.
- Having a care-based plan for when a survivor discloses sexual violence to you and supporting your staff in creating their own plans.
  - *Example Care-Based Plan for Disclosures:* I plan to stay up-to-date on current university resources and reporting structures. I will keep these connections and procedures in an easy to access place on my Google Drive.
  - If a survivor discloses, I will first plan to actively listen to the survivor (e.g., "I appreciate you sharing this with me. That takes a lot of vulnerability. I'm so deeply sorry this happened to you.").
  - I will be transparent with the survivor that I am a mandatory reporter (e.g., "I want to let you know that I'm a mandatory reporter for [___ type of event here]. What that means is that I'm going to have to put in a report with the institution. I know that is really difficult to hear and you may be feeling a lot about that. I want you to know that you'll be contacted via email 2-3 times, and you can choose

whether you want to open them and/or pursue it further. In almost all cases, it will be your choice to respond.")

- o I will check in with the survivor on their immediate safety (e.g., "Are you feeling suicidal or like you may harm yourself? Do you feel safe to go home or to class?") and if necessary, connect them with immediate resources.
- o I will, if necessary, set boundaries with the survivor (e.g., "I'm hearing that you may want to discuss specific details. Would you like to spend some time today finding resources for people you can talk to confidentially?") and connect them with resources. This may look like providing a list, walking with them to a campus office, etc.
- o I will file a mandatory report with the university.
- o I will take care of myself after the survivor leaves (e.g., canceling appointments to give time and space, scheduling a therapy appointment, going on a walk).
- o I will follow-up with the survivor in a week to check-in with them.
- Having a care-based plan for addressing harm within the organizational workplace that also includes tangible consequences for policy breakers.
    - o *Example of a plan* (adapted from Aguilar Shank 37–38 as well as MSU Prevention, Outreach, and Education's assessment toolkit)*:* Complete the climate assessment toolkit.
    - o Enact changes based on the toolkit.
    - o Believe survivors, always. Do not align yourself with alleged perpetrators or make excuses for their behaviors.
    - o Have protocols and consequences for those causing harm.
    - o Make these protocols transparent and accessible for all within the organization.
    - o Make commitments and actions toward dismantling systems of racism and heteropatriarchy within and beyond the organization.

This dissertation research already revealed gaps across university types and administrators where universities do not match their values and mid-level administrators are left to care for students on their own. This dissertation was dedicated to the possibilities for a better, future world, and I still believe in that better world despite the work we have left for us. The work is slow (an observation mirrored by the study's participants). We will probably never live to see it come to fruition, but that doesn't mean we still shouldn't try. I yearn for a future where we work collectively towards transformation. In our potential future, I imagine that we have taken accountability for the harm we have done as a field and within institutions and organizations. We hold perpetrators and the privileged systems/institutions accountable for their harm in a non-carceral way. This transformed future would be abolitionist and full of mutual aid

and community care. I also imagine a world that doesn't even have institutions, but instead, messy, non-institutional, collective solidarity. Institutions themselves are so much the cause of the sexual violence problem that they were never going to be the place that fixes it. Instead, in my imagination, we have a community-based, reciprocal model that decenters oppressive systems and instead liberates and works to address harm and violence proactively. It is possible. We owe that world to survivors—all those who did not survive and those that are still here with us.

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Initial Call for Participants

Student-Success Related Administrators

  Greetings! I'm Bethany Meadows, a doctoral candidate in Rhetoric and Writing at Michigan State University, and my IRB-approved dissertation study seeks to understand how mid-level university administrators interact with sexual violence policy and procedures in their professional lives. Ultimately, this project seeks to (1) uncover administrators' everyday practices, stories, and experiences with sexual violence policy, (2) articulate and maps the interconnections between texts, practices, and social relationships, and (3) conclude with proposed changes toward sexual violence policy and practice within institutions.

  I'm writing to invite you as a research partner to participate in this project. I am interested in working with participants who are:

- Employees of Michigan State (not employed as a student) for at least 5 years.
- Willing to participate in initial interview in July 2023 and potential follow-up interviews;
- A mid-level administrator, meaning that they are in charge (or co-responsible) for units and personnel but housed under larger organizational structures and colleges. This does not include individuals such as individual teachers, students, provosts, deans; and
- A mid-level administrator for a student success related program/organization. This could include (but is not limited to): Department Chairs, Student Support Administrator, Academic Engagement Administrator, or Tutoring Support Administrator

  Additionally, I particularly welcome partners from a variety of administrative roles, careers, and positionalities. If you may be interested and meet these criteria, please email meadow53@msu.edu with your name, contact information, and how long you have been in your current role at the university.

  Interested participants will be invited to one, 2-hour interview (hopefully in July 2023). After the interview, participants will be invited to share any documents and/or follow-up interviews afterward. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact meadow53@msu.edu

Sexual Violence Organization Administrators

  Greetings! I'm Bethany Meadows, a doctoral candidate in Rhetoric and Writing at Michigan State University, and my IRB-approved dissertation study seeks to understand how mid-level university administrators interact with sexual violence policy and procedures in their professional lives. Ultimately, this project seeks to (1) uncover administrators' everyday practices, stories, and experiences with sexual violence policy, (2) articulate and maps the interconnections between texts, practices, and social relationships, and (3) conclude with proposed changes toward sexual violence policy and practice within institutions.

  I'm writing to invite you as a research partner to participate in this project. I am interested in working with participants who are:

- Employees of Michigan State (not employed as a student) for at least 5 years;
- Willing to participate in initial interview in July 2023 and potential follow-up interviews;
- A mid-level administrator, meaning that they are in charge (or co-responsible) for units and personnel but housed under larger organizational structures and colleges. This does not include individuals such as individual teachers, students, provosts, deans; and
- Be an administrator for an institutional sexual violence-related program/organization. This could include (but is not limited to): Office of Civil Rights Administrator, Title IX

Administrator, Housing Director, Survivors' Resource Center Direct, University Ombudsperson Administrator.

Additionally, I particularly welcome partners from a variety of administrative roles, careers, and positionalities. If you may be interested and meet these criteria, please email meadow53@msu.edu with your name, contact information, and how long you have been in your current role at the university.

Interested participants will be invited to one, 2-hour interview (hopefully in July 2023). After the interview, participants will be invited to share any documents and/or follow-up interviews afterward. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact meadow53@msu.edu

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

As a reminder, your interview will be anonymized. Do not state anything that is identifiable about yourself or others during the interview.

Demographic and Introductory Questions (before audio/video recording begins)
- If you want to share, what are your pronouns? Would you prefer pronouns to be used in the dissertation writing (i.e., would you prefer pseudonym-only to be used or pseudonym and pronouns to be used)?
- Do you have any preferences for the pseudonym I use?
- Is there anything you want me to know about your background or identities?
- How long have you been at this institution? In your current position?

These are just some of the questions I may ask, but also our interview is more of a conversation that may organically bring up new or different questions than the below. [audio/video recording begins]
- Tell me about the environment you work in. What does a general day or semester look like for you? What types of populations do you generally interact with in your job?
- What do you think about policy to address sexual violence, in general?
- What do you consider to be ethical responses to college sexual violence?
- How do you feel about your [specific university's] sexual violence policy? What do you think are its strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the goals of your university and [your specific unit] in terms of sexual violence response? What initiatives have there been around sexual violence prevention/response?
- How have you had to interact with Title IX policies and [university specific text] policies in your work?
- Are there requirements for sexual violence prevention training and/or mandatory reporting policy in your work? How do you interact with those materials/policies in your work?
- Do you think these policies need to be changed to work for your program/university/unit? [If so, how, and why? If not, why?]