FIGHTING RAPE CULTURE AT HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY:

CHALLENGES AND GROWTH IN STUDENT ACTIVISM

By

Ariel Rose Fishkin

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Committee Membership

Rebecca Robertson, Committee Chair

Dr. Mary Scoggin, Committee Member

Dr. Llyn Smith, Committee Member

Rebecca Robertson, Program Graduate Coordinator

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ABSTRACT

FIGHTING RAPE CULTURE AT HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY:
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Ariel Rose Fishkin

The term Rape Culture is used to describe a culture in which sexualized violence is normalized and encouraged. Resistance to Rape Culture has existed as long as Rape Culture itself. Efforts take on a unique form in institutions of higher education such as Humboldt State University (HSU), in that the organizers of these efforts are often students. I analyzed three efforts to address Rape Culture at HSU with a feminist approach, using participant observation and qualitative interviewing to assess how these programs can be improved for the students organizing them. Take Back the Night is an annual event with a goal of eliminating sexualized violence. Check-It is a bystander intervention program that promotes healthy relationships, consent, and teaches how to intervene when witnessing situations that have a potential for violence. Deconstructing Rape Culture was a project facilitated in the Fall of 2017 as a part of this thesis research. The project used artistic mediums to explore different facets of Rape Culture with a small group of HSU students. I found that participating in organizing against Rape Culture has a positive impact on students, that the presence or absence of, and the nature of, leadership or mentorship impacts student organizing, and that student organizers view intersectionality and inclusivity as an essential part of programming against Rape

Culture. From these findings, I recommend that HSU prioritizes the continued funding of spaces that offer students the opportunity to organize, that concerns of student organizers should guide changes to programming against Rape Culture, and that this programming address forms of oppression such as racism, classism, and ableism alongside sexism.

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INTRODUCTION

This research project sought to contribute to the efforts to change a culture which normalizes and encourage sexualized violence. This contribution was made by analyzing the ways in which a California State University (CSU) in Northern California, Humboldt State University (HSU), makes efforts to address this form of violence. I focused on the programs and events that are hosted primarily by students, to give those students who are also activists a voice in the academic literature.

Background

Rape Culture

Sexualized violence is a prevalent issue. In the US, 1 of every 2 women, 1 of every 2 transgender individuals, and 1 of every 5 men is a survivor of sexualized violence (Black, M.C. et al, 2011; Office for Victims of Crime, 2014). The term Rape Culture was coined by feminist scholars and activists to acknowledge that acts of sexualized violence are not isolated incidents (Ferreday, 2015). Rather, the phenomenon of sexualized violence is the product of a culture that normalizes these acts of violence (Ferreday, 2015). What normalizes sexualized violence is beliefs about perpetrators of violence and survivors that are inconsistent with the factual reality of the violence (Burt, 1980). The word perpetrator in this context describes the individual who committed the act of violence, and the word survivor is used as shorthand for anyone who has survived any form of sexualized violence or abuse. One major consequence of these false beliefs about sexualized

violence is that individuals who are targeted are blamed for it, while the individuals who choose to commit the acts of violence experience limited consequences and are rarely convicted (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017; RAINN, 2018). Research which studies Rape Culture acknowledges the systemic causes of sexualized violence, and such research is necessary in working towards building a society in which sexualized violence is not a common experience (Ferreday, 2015).

This research project, an effort towards ending Rape Culture and sexualized violence, is situated within the context of a long history of activism in the United States. A group of five African American women were some of the first to publicly break the silence around rape when they testified to congress after being gang raped during the Memphis Riot of 1866 (Greensite, 2003). In the 1870's, Ida B. Wells was at the forefront of anti-lynching campaigns which lead to formation of Black Women's Clubs. These clubs addressed many issues, including that of sexualized violence in their communities, and laid the groundwork for larger organizations such as the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (Greensite, 2003). The year of 1972 saw the opening of the first Rape Crisis centers, places dedicated to providing services to victims of rape, in major cities in the United States (Greensite, 2003). As more organizations began to emerge with the goal of ending sexualized violence, women of color found that individuals in these organizations refused to address internal issues of racism (Black Women's Blueprint, 2015; INCITE!, 2014). Out of these experiences of racism and exclusion, women of color activists created organizations such as A Long Walk Home, Black Women's Blueprint,

and INCITE! to forefront their voices and experiences (A Long Walk Home, 2011; Black Women's Blueprint, 2015; INCITE!, 2014).

Within institutions of higher education, sexualized violence and consequential activism take on unique forms. Fraternities tend to contribute to a campus Rape Culture by overtly promoting sexualized violence (Foderaro, 2011; Foubert, 2013). In 2011, a Yale fraternity was banned from conducting any activity for 5 years after members led their pledges in offensive chants such as "No means yes!" (Foderaro, 2011). A Georgia Tech fraternity was disbanded after multiple incidents, one of which included a member of the fraternity distributed an email titled "Luring your rapebait", in which he described how other members should go about getting women to sleep with them (Foubert, 2013). Men who are in fraternities are three times more likely to commit rape than other men on college campuses (Loh et al., 2005).

While these organizations within institutions of higher education have arguably the most overt display of Rape Culture, efforts of student activists to combat these issues have been relatively slow-moving (Hess, 2013). This is due in part to the high turnover rate of students, whose efforts to fight campus sexualized violence usually end once they graduate, and the incoming student activists have to start from scratch rather than build on existing efforts (Hess, 2013). Fortunately, with the increased prevalence of social media being used as a tool for activism, student organizers can connect and keep track of issues related to campus sexualized violence (Hess, 2013).

Efforts by student activists on campuses have also been increasingly supported by policy changes and implementation. The Dear Colleague letter published in 2011 by the

Vice President Biden and Secretary Duncan outlined the legal obligations that institutions

of higher education have in addressing sexualized violence under Title IX (U.S.

Department of Education, 2011). The Dear Colleague Letter requires institutions to

provide procedures for students to file complaints of sexualized violence, to take

immediate action to investigate claims of sexualized violence, and to pursue efforts to

prevent the occurrence of sexualized violence (U.S. Department of Education, 2011).

As a student who is, and has been, involved in activism on my university campus,

I wanted to conduct a research project with fellow student organizers which would

further campus and wider societal efforts to end sexualized violence and Rape Culture.

The term "student organizer" in this research refers to any student who volunteers or

works to help develop programs and/or events that are aimed at ending sexualized

violence and Rape Culture.

Institutional Context

This research project was conducted at Humboldt State University (HSU), a California

State University (CSU) located in Arcata, California (Humboldt State University, n.d.).

Located 275 miles north of San Francisco, HSU is the northernmost university in the 23-

campus CSU system (Humboldt State University, n.d.). With a student-faculty ration of

21:1, and a total enrollment of approximately 8,000, HSU is a relatively small public

institution (Humboldt State University, n.d.).

HSU has been recognized for its efforts to address sexualized violence on campus

on a national level ("Grant to Expand," 2015). Many of these efforts were spearheaded by

the Sexual Assault Prevention Committee, referred to as SAPC for short. The SAPC is a

committee comprised of staff, students, faculty, law enforcement, and community partners ("Stop Rape,", n.d.). In April of 2011, the SAPC launched the Rape and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response website, which outlines resources and courses of action available to survivors of sexualized violence and individuals who have incidents of sexualized violence reported to them (Scott-Goforth, 2015; "Stop Rape,", n.d.). The SAPC created a comprehensive sexual violence prevention and response program for HSU after receiving a $250,000 Campus grant from the DOJ's Office of Violence Against Women ("HSU's Violence Prevention," 2014). After the establishment of the comprehensive prevention and response program, the campus noted an increase in reporting of sexualized violence ("Humboldt State Acknowledged", 2014). This indicates not that incidents of violence increased, but that increased awareness of resources leads survivors to come forward. In 2016, HSU student Celene Lopez was honored with the It's On Us White House Champion of Change award for her work as a peer educator in sexual assault prevention, stalking, and dating violence (Creswell 2016).

For this research project, I looked at three specific efforts to address Rape Culture on the HSU campus. These were Take Back the Night, Check It, and a project that I facilitated entitled Deconstructing Rape Culture. I selected these projects because they are primarily organized by HSU students, as opposed to community organizations, staff, or faculty. The three efforts I chose are also event-based, in that they primarily deliver their content through workshops and events. While these specific efforts are unique to the HSU campus, they are a part of the wider cultural movement to acknowledge and end Rape Culture.

Take Back the Night

Take Back the Night is an annual event which aims to raise awareness about sexualized

violence. Groups of activists around the world host their own Take Back the Night events

every year. Take Back the Night traces its origins to activist marches in the 1970's, which

occurred as reactions to incidents of violence against women (Take Back the Night:

History, n.d.). In the early 2000's the Take Back the Night Foundation was formed, a

501(c)3 nonprofit which provides resources and support for survivors, as well as supports

campuses and communities in hosting their own Take Back the Night events (Take Back

the Night: Hold an Event, n.d.). The mission of the Take Back the Night Foundation is to

create safer communities by raising awareness of sexualized violence Take Back the

Night: Take Back the Night Foundation, n.d.). They state that their ultimate goal is to

eliminate all forms of sexual violence (Take Back the Night: Take Back the Night

Foundation, n.d.). At Humboldt State, Take Back the Night is hosted as a collaboration

between the Women's Resource Center and the North Coast Rape Crisis Team

(NCRCT), a local rape crisis center. It is difficult to say exactly when the first Take Back

the Night happened at HSU, given a general lack of documentation at the Women's

Resource Center, but my personal conversations with staff and faculty indicate that it was

already an established event in the 1990's. The earliest newspaper archive I found that

mentioned the event was in 2002 (Arthurs, 2002).

The HSU Take Back the Night events that are planned every April vary yearly,

but the rally, survivor speak-out, and march are always part of the event. This rally and

speak-out typically takes place in the Kate Buchanan Room, the largest meeting space on

the campus with a capacity of three hundred to four hundred and fifty people depending on room setup. The rally takes place first, featuring tabling from local service-providing organizations such as North Coast Rape Crisis, Planned Parenthood, Humboldt Domestic Violence Services, and Two Feathers. After the rally, there is usually some kind of presentation before the speak-out, such as a keynote speaker or musical and poetry performances. The speak-out is a space for survivors of abuse and assault to speak openly about their experiences to an audience of other survivors and allies that show up in support. This is a way of raising awareness of the prevalence of sexualized violence, and educating about the nature of this violence through personal testimony. Following the keynote and the survivor speak-out, there is a march (Figure 1). The march, which starts on the HSU campus and proceeds to the Arcata town square, is meant to raise awareness of sexualized violence to bystanders as well as empower those who are a part of the march (Figure 1). Chants such as "no more silence, no more violence" are called out in unison by marchers. In my personal involvement planning this event, I have heard the march explained as a way to reclaim personal safety for individuals who have been taught that it is too dangerous to walk outside alone at night.

Until 2011 at HSU, it was stated that only individuals who identify as women would be allowed to join on the march (Whatcott, 2011). With an increasing recognition of a spectrum of gender identity, as well as criticism of the march for excluding transgender and gender nonconforming individuals, the TBTN Planning Committee has sought alternatives to making the march exclusive to individuals who identify as women.

The most recent march, which took place in April 2018, was open to marchers of all genders.

Take Back the Night is an event that is large in scale. As mentioned above, it is hosted in the largest meeting room on campus. The scale of Take Back the Night correlates to its goal of ending sexualized violence through education and awareness. Given that the focus is on raising awareness, the events of Take Back the Night are not necessarily tailored to generating intimate conversations and personal reflections about this form of violence and Rape Culture. The main event is a march to declare that anyone should be able to walk home safely at night, which theoretically positions assault by strangers at the center of the event. While there are survivors who were assaulted by strangers, statistically most sexualized violence is committed by somebody known to the survivor (RAINN, 2018). Even this being the case, the workshops and presentations offered as a part of Take Back the Night represent forms outside of the narrative of assaults by strangers.

Check It

In February of 2014, HSU students collaborated with the SAPC to launch Check It. The program was created to prevent sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking ("Grant to Expand," 2015). Check It is a bystander intervention program, which means that it's strategy for prevention includes both educating about sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking, as well as teaching strategies for disrupting acts of sexualized violence before they happen and while they are in progress (CHECK IT 2014; Lynch & Fleming, 2005). Check It takes an approach which acknowledges the prevalence of sexualized violence,

and teaches how to intervene to stop acts of violence before they can happen, or before they can escalate. Check It refers to these moments of potential harm, or when harm is in progress, as Check It moments (CHECK IT 2014). Check It moments are characterized by an absence of consent, or where there is a crossing of boundaries. A Check It moment is also one where someone may be at risk of being harmed or targeted for sexualized violence, or any situation where the bystander determines an individual should be checked-in on to make sure they are safe (CHECK IT 2014).

Check It collaborates with other campus organizations by being present at their events. If organizations request it, Check It can set up a "bar" at their event (Merchandise Descriptions, 2014). The "bar" is staffed by Check It educators and volunteers, or they will train members of the collaborating organization to serve drinks (Merchandise Description, 2014). Check It has a list of consent-themed beverage names that they use, but they also will work with organizations to create names for beverages that are specific to an event. Some of the beverages that Check It offers are AccountabiliTEA (Earl Grey Tea), Self-Carin' Tea (Chamomile Tea), CHECK-IN-gerale (Ginger Ale), and Love KNOWS Boundaries Coffee (Caffeinated Coffee) (Merchandise Descriptions, 2014).

Through personally attending CHECK IT events, I have seen that this program centralizes concepts of enthusiastic consent, self-love, and self-care as ways of changing Rape Culture. Like Take Back the Night, Check-It is fairly large in scale. Their annual anniversary party is usually held in the KBR. In 2018, their fourth anniversary party was incredibly popular and there was a long line out the door of the KBR, and out of the building that the KBR is in, with people waiting to get in.

Unlike Take Back the Night, however, the focus of Check It is not necessarily assault by strangers. Check It emphasizes cultivating a consent culture, which states that individuals should treat each other with respect regardless of whether they are strangers or best friends. With an emphasis on bystander intervention, Check It is calling upon individuals to question what they may have previously thought of as normal behavior. In Check It workshops, they play a game titled "Cards for Humanity" in which players are presented with scenarios and must brainstorm how they would respond. In this sense, Check It is more oriented towards fostering personal reflection and conversation about Rape Culture and sexualized violence in a tangible way.

Deconstructing Rape Culture

Deconstructing Rape Culture was a Participatory Action Research project utilizing Arts-Based Methods which I planned, organized, and carried out in the Fall of 2017. I wanted to carry out a research project that was subversive, or actively challenging oppressive norms, in terms of how it framed the researcher, participants, and data (see Theory chapter for explanation of this approach). I designed a project in which a small group of student volunteers would meet in a discussion group and collaboratively generate knowledge about Rape Culture based on their experiences and perceptions. This knowledge was generated through collaborative thematic coding. I gave each participant a notebook, which they were encouraged to take notes in during discussion groups based on what they felt was important or interesting. I taught participants how to thematically code their notebooks, and we collectively came up with themes within the broader topic of Rape Culture.

I wanted the knowledge generated to be turned into artistic works of using various media, depending on participants' interests and skills. I incorporated arts-based exercises in the discussion group setting to help foster conversation around the topics. The works that were created in the discussion groups were displayed during a culminating event, which was open to the public and had interactive arts-based activities for attendees to participate in.

With a group of six students, Deconstructing Rape Culture was substantially smaller in scale than both Take Back the Night and Check It. However, the project arguably allowed for the most in-depth and critical reflection about Rape Culture among participants. By agreeing to participate in the project, participants agreed to engage in a critical discussion that would analyze Rape Culture from their own personal standpoints. Not only were they engaged in discussion, but they analyzed notes that they took during the discussions for recurring themes. The themes then were used as inspiration for artistic works. Larger scale projects are arguably less conducive to the level of intimacy and privacy that Deconstructing Rape Culture allowed for.

<div align="center">Research Objective</div>

There is currently a gap in the literature on Rape Culture in terms of understanding programming to end Rape Culture from the perspective of student organizers. The vast majority of campus research around programming that seeks to end Rape Culture frames students as survivors/victims, perpetrators, or bystanders. There is a lack of campus research which positions students as agents of change on campus and centers their voices.

The intention of this research project was to make an assessment of programming to end Rape Culture on the HSU campus, in order to make recommendations about how the programming could be improved. This assessment would be based on the experiences of student organizers and on data collected through participant observation.

To this end, my data collection was guided by the following research questions:

1. What content is being delivered by programming aimed at ending Rape Culture at HSU?

2. How is the programming delivering this content?

3. What are student organizers' experiences / perceptions of the anti-rape culture events and programs?

4. How could these activities be improved for both student organizers and programming participants?

To answer these questions, I utilized methods of qualitative interviewing and participant observation.

<div align="center">Thesis Anatomy</div>

This section provides a summary of each of the major chapters of this thesis.

<u>Theory</u>

The primary guiding framework for this research was a feminist approach. One facet of a feminist approach is intentional efforts made to address hierarchy and power relationships within the research process (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Feminist approaches to research also acknowledge that there is a potential for empowerment of participants and

social change (Krause, Midema, Woofter, Yount, 2017; Fonow & Cook, 2005). Both in conducting the Deconstructing Rape Culture project, as well as in interviews with student organizers of Check It and Take Back the Night, I adhered to these feminist principles. The theory of intersectionality was a major guiding theory when analyzing my data (Crenshaw, 1991).

<u>Literature Review</u>

My review of literature is separated into two sections, Rape Culture and Campus Action Against Rape Culture. In the Rape Culture section, I will review research that seeks to understand the nature of Rape Culture. In the Campus Action Against Rape Culture section, I will cover the available research on sexual assault prevention programs, both those that discuss program effectiveness as well as those few that do center student experiences. Research reviewed also discusses specific elements of these programs that make them effective. I will also discuss research addressing challenges within student activism. The majority of academic research on campus action against Rape Culture in the United States consists of evaluating the impact and effectiveness of sexual assault prevention programs. This is a practical use of resources, given that such programs are frequently tasked with proving their effectiveness to maintain their funding. However practical, the result is that there is limited research which discusses student-based action against Rape Culture from the student perspective.

<u>Methods</u>

To develop an understanding of approaches to addressing Rape Culture at HSU, I analyzed the experiences and perceptions of students who are involved in organizing

within those approaches. I interviewed nine student organizers of Take Back the Night,

Check It, and Deconstructing Rape Culture. I also conducted roughly thirteen hours of

participant observation in organizing and attending events for Check It and Take Back

the Night, and roughly twenty hours in organizing and carrying out the Deconstructing

Rape Culture project.

Findings

I had three main findings from this research project. My first finding was that being a part

of organizing facilitates personal growth. My second finding was that the presence of

absence, and the nature of, leadership and mentorship impacts student organizing. My

third finding was that student organizers view intersectionality and inclusivity as an

essential element of programs and events.

Discussion

Based on my findings, I make recommendations for HSU as an institution. Given the

positive impact that involvement in organizing has on students, I recommend that HSU

prioritize the continued functioning of spaces that facilitate organizing against Rape

Culture. I recommend that when considering ways to improve programming on campus,

that administrators, staff, and faculty forefront the concerns and suggestions of student

organizers. Student organizers prioritize inclusivity and intersectionality in their

organizing efforts, so programs should consider how multiple facets of identity such as

race, ethnicity, physical ability, and class status affect an individual's experience of

sexualized violence. I also recommend that programming which relies heavily on student

organizers for labor find effective and appropriate ways to facilitate mentorship between

generations of organizers, and leadership within groups of student organizers. Lastly, I recommend that when developing programming, Deconstructing Rape Culture be used as an example for designing alternatives to the speak-out, which was identified by one organizer as exclusionary to individuals with certain identities and experiences.

THEORY

A major guiding framework for this research was feminist approaches to research. One goal of a feminist approach is to reduce the hierarchy between the researcher and research participants (Hesse-Biber, 2007). Reducing hierarchy in the research process began with selecting the research topic. The methods of anthropology were originally developed by colonizers and missionaries who were seeking to assimilate the indigenous populations of the lands they were colonizing (Cove, 2014; Smith, 2012). This situates anthropology within a context of colonialism (Asad 1973; Pels & Salemink, 1994). As such, anthropologists who conduct field work in communities of which they are not a part can easily end up perpetuating power relations and hierarchies that originated in the processes of colonization. For this reason, I chose to work with students who organize against Rape Culture, as I am myself a part of the community of student organizers against Rape Culture at HSU.

Feminist approaches to research recognize that there is potential in the research for social change and empowerment of marginalized groups and individuals (Krause, Midema, Woofter, Yount, 2017; Fonow & Cook, 2005). This research utilized a feminist approach, in that it centered the voices and experiences of student organizer participants as the primary method of analyzing approaches to addressing Rape Culture. My approach centered student organizers as agents of change on the HSU campus, as opposed to looking at students only as potential survivors, perpetrators, or bystanders. As Krause et. al. (2017) illustrate, the positioning of students as agents of change, as opposed to objects

for study, is lacking in academic research. I considered the voices of student organizers to be marginalized in a research context given their exclusion in academic research projects. Deconstructing Rape Culture as a research project was designed from a feminist approach because it sought to utilize the research space itself as an arena for social change and empowerment. The space allowed for both open discussions about different elements of Rape Culture, as well as private reflection and exploration of the topics for those who did not choose to participate in discussion.

When conducting interviews with student organizers, and in the Deconstructing Rape Culture project, I utilized feminist principles which seek to reduce hierarchy between framed these conversations as co-constructing data with participants, as opposed to extracting data from participants (Hesse-Biber, 2007). By teaching the participants of Deconstructing Rape Culture thematic coding, and having them code and analyze their own notebooks, they maintained ownership over their own data and knowledge (Creswell, 2003). This gave them more control over what they chose to share with myself and the group, and what they chose to keep private in their notebooks.

When interviewing student organizers, I wanted them to first and foremost share what they felt was important about their perceptions and experiences. When sharing their frustrations, however, I wanted to offer support by acknowledging shared experiences. I also wanted to use our dialogues as a way to collaboratively develop knowledge. This co-construction of data/knowledge with participants also derives in part from a feminist approach, specifically a Black feminist epistemology which uses dialogue as a method for creating and validating knowledge (Collins, 2009).

Introduced by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1991, the theory of intersectionality was used to discuss the ways in which black women experience oppression based on both their race and gender. The theory served to facilitate discussions about ways that black women experienced racism in feminist circles, as well as sexism within antiracist circles (Crenshaw, 1989). In a later paper, Crenshaw expanded her theory of intersectionality to speak on the ways in which the reality of violence against Women of Color in general is ignored within discussions of sexualized violence (Carbado, 2013; Crenshaw, 1991). For the purposes of coding interviews, I used the term intersectionality to identify whenever elements outside of gender, primarily race or ethnicity, were included or centralized in a discussion about sexualized violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rape Culture

Sexualized violence is an unfortunately common experience of people living in the United States. In the US, 1 of every 2 women, 1 of every 2 transgender individuals, and 1 of every 5 men is a survivor of sexualized violence (Black, M.C. et al., 2011; Office for Victims of Crime, 2014). The Center for Disease Control defines sexual violence as a "...sexual act committed against someone without that person's freely given consent" (CDC, 2017). Sexualized violence can take many forms. Some examples include physically forced sexual intercourse, sexual acts which someone is coerced into, verbal harassment, or sexual acts which an individual cannot agree to because of their level of intoxication (CDC, 2017). Seventy percent of survivors of sexualized violence experience moderate to severe distress, which is a larger percentage than for any other violent crime (RAINN, 2016).

Sexual assault is a gender-based violence, meaning that the gender of a person strongly influences their risk of being victimized ("Strengthening Health System Responses,", n.d.). While the most widely acknowledged, gender is neither the only, nor necessarily strongest, identity-based risk factor. For example, women of color in the United States experience domestic violence and intimate partner violence at significantly higher rates than white women (Women of Color Network, 2006). Because aspects of identity are risk factors for experiencing sexualized violence, White and Smith (2004)

argue that this violence is normative, meaning that its occurrence is not random, but rather because of beliefs and behaviors which are considered socially acceptable (White and Smith, 2004). A culture formed by a system of beliefs and behaviors that normalize sexualized violence is referred to as a Rape Culture (White and Smith, 2004). Naming an injustice and understanding its causes are the first steps towards addressing it, which is why it is important that the term Rape Culture exists (Freire, 1993).

Definitions of Rape Culture vary. Buchwald defines Rape Culture as "A society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent" (1993, p. vii). White and Smith define it as a culture or society with "...multiple pervasive issues that allow rape and sexual assault to be excused, legitimized, and viewed as inevitable" (2004, p. 174). What each definition has in common is that they frame sexualized violence as a social issue. Framing sexualized violence as a social issue calls upon all members of society to take responsibility in ending it, rather than only those most directly affected by it.

Beliefs that support Rape Culture are called Rape Myths (Burt, 1980; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Burt (1980) stated that Rape Myths are false beliefs about rape which create a hostile culture to victims and survivors. Burt (1980) provided examples of Rape Myths, such as that rape victims could truly stop rape if they wanted to, that women who wear revealing clothing are inviting any sexual advances, or that victims are frequently making up rape allegations to get revenge on the perpetrator for something unrelated (Burt 1980). It should be noted that while Rape Myths are directly addressing rape, the underlying implications of the myths apply to other forms of violence. For example, the rape myth that anyone being raped could stop the rape if they really wanted, so they must

actually like it, correlates to the belief that anyone in an abusive relationship could leave if they really wanted to, so they must actually like it (Edgar, 2014; Leubsdorf, 2013). The underlying myth here is that the victim or survivor of violence is exaggerating their claims.

Zaleski found that there is a prevalent societal belief that men are unable to control their impulses, and therefore cannot be held accountable for their actions when they sexually assault someone (Zaleski et al., 2016). With perpetrators of violence seen as being helpless in terms of controlling their sexual desires, the discourse shifts responsibility to the person who was assaulted (Zaleski et al., 2016). If men cannot control their impulses, then women are taught that it is their responsibility to not arouse any of those impulses (Zaleski et al., 2016). This specific Rape Myth illustrates the finding of Suarez and Gadalla, that the function of the Rape Myth is to shift the blame of a rape from the perpetrator to the victim (Suarez and Gadalla, 2010). Suarez and Gadalla also found that men display higher Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) than women, meaning that they believe Rape Myths to be true, and that having a high RMA is correlated to having prejudiced beliefs associated with sexism, racism, ageism, classism, etc. (Suarez and Gadalla, 2010).

Rape myths are perpetuated in large part by the media. As Cucklanz argues, representations of sexualized violence in the media have a strong influence on societal attitudes about sexualized violence (Cucklanz, 1998). When Fox News anchor Dana Perino suggested that women who experience sexualized violence could avoid this violence by "making better decisions", she asked that the victim take responsibility for

the act of violence, as opposed to the perpetrator who is ultimately the one who chose to commit the violence (Edgar, 2014). The film *Gone Girl* perpetuates the myth of women making false rape allegations as a form of revenge (Nair & Tamang, 2016). The film also implies that survivors are immediately believed and supported by public institutions (Nair & Tamang, 2016).

In addition to Rape Myths, there are other cultural values which contribute to Rape Culture, even though they are not directly about sexualized violence. In the United States, there is a social advantage to being perceived as masculine (Giraldi & Monk-Turner, 2017). This is because the United States society is a patriarchal one (Rozee and Koss, 2001). In a patriarchal society such as this, possessing traits that are culturally associated with masculinity such as being tough, aggressive, and competitive, are praised while possessing certain traits culturally associated with femininity such as tenderness, weakness, and nurturing, are not (Rozee and Koss, 2001). What results is a social imperative for men to act aggressively in order to prove their masculinity (Alison & Risman, 2013). This social imperative exists and is perpetuated through normalization in the media, and through social discourse and humor (Ford, 2000; Bemiller & Schneider, 2010). This social imperative often manifests, as Giraldi & Monk-Turner argue, as exerting aggression in the form of sexualized violence.

One consequence of prevalent false beliefs about sexualized violence, perpetrators, and survivors, is that those individuals and institutions tasked with responding to incidents tend to cause further harm to the survivor (Comack & Peter, 2005; Suarez and Gadalla, 2010). Institutions of education, for example, tend to respond

poorly when students report incidents of sexual assault, which leads to a situation where students don't report at all (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017) The judicial system also has tended to re-victimize survivors of rape, and ultimately perpetrators are given unfairly short sentences (Garcia & Vemuri, 2017).

The literature on Rape Culture defines the concept in terms of what are the beliefs and values that support it. What the literature is beginning to expand into is explorations of the resistance to Rape Culture in the form of activism.

<div align="center">Campus Action Against Rape Culture</div>

Universities in the United States began developing education programs aimed at addressing sexual assault in the 1980's (Worthen & Wallace, 2017). The Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act), an amendment to Title IX of the higher education act of 1965, requires that institutions of higher education employ prevention strategies including bystander intervention (H.R. 2016, 112th Cong. 2013; Worthen & Wallace, 2017; Lynch & Fleming, 2005). This legislative action marked an acknowledgment of the existence of a Rape Culture, because acknowledging that acts of sexualized violence are preventable is acknowledging that they learned, as opposed to inherent, behaviors. Prevention programs address the community as a whole in which acts of violence are happening, as opposed to only targeting those who would be considered perpetrators or victims (Banyard, Plante, & Moynihan, 2004; Haaken, 2017).

Prior to the SaVE Act, campuses were employing prevention strategies and researchers were attempting to gauge their effectiveness. Kress et al. (2006) created a

prevention program for college freshman, and evaluated acceptance of Rape Myths prior to, and following, completion of the prevention program. Acceptance of Rape Myths was evaluated using The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form (Payne, Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1999). The results of this study showed that participation in the sexual assault prevention program decreased acceptance of Rape Myths in college freshman participants (Kress et al., 2006).

In addition to addressing overall effectiveness, research has also sought to determine what specifically about prevention programs make them effective as well as potential issues with these programs. One specific approach to prevention that has emerged is known as bystander intervention (Lynch & Fleming, 2005). Bystander intervention teaches ways in which one can intervene when witnessing an act of harm, or a situation where there is a potential for harm (Lynch & Fleming, 2005). While this is a positive shift towards developing community accountability and more complex understandings of violence, it also has the potential to reinforce "savior" narratives, which takes agency away from potential victims (Haaken, 2017)

Many programs have been criticized for reinforcing heteronormativity and gender biases. When presenting hypothetical scenarios, for example, programs may always portray heterosexual relationships in which the male is the perpetrator and the woman is the victim. This excludes any relationships that aren't heterosexual, heterosexual relationships in which a male is not the perpetrator, and relationships in which one or more individuals do not identify within the gender binary. This being noted, researchers have suggested that programs should use gender-neutral language, and when developing

scenarios should use more than only heterosexual relationships (Worth & Wallace, 2017; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). Marine, Helfrich, and Randhawa (2017), in their research with campus-based women's centers, found that a majority of centers surveyed centers find value in gender inclusivity in their programming. Aside from working against heteronormativity and being gender inclusive, researchers also recommend that programs take an intersectional approach by incorporating activities which would encourage students to consider how different aspects of identity affect one's experience and understanding of sexual assault (Worthen & Wallace, 2017).

Along with considering how identity factors into experiences and understandings of sexualized violence, programs should also consider how affiliation with groups will affect experiences and understandings of sexualized violence (Worthen & Wallace, 2017). Fraternity and sorority members show a higher level of rape myth acceptance, for example, which should be considered when programs are developed for those groups (Worthen & Wallace, 2017).

Take Back the Night is an event that takes place internationally, and is hosted both by student organizations as well as community organizations. At Humboldt State University, Take Back the Night is co-sponsored by the University Women's Resource Center and North Coast Rape Crisis Team, a Humboldt-based Rape Crisis Center. There is very limited research on Take Back the Night as an event that is challenging Rape Culture. In their article, *Feminist Memorializing and Cultural Countermemory: The Case of Marianne's Park*, Bold, Knowles, and Leach discuss Take Back the Night (TBTN) as

a process of active countermemorializing. They specifically analyze the case of TBTN events that take place in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. Active countermemorializing, as opposed to hegemonic memorializing, promotes remembering acts violence as opposed to laying it to rest. This article notes how TBTN events have been criticized for being exclusionary, because they highlight sexualized violence only as it is experienced by white women (Bold, Knowles, and Leach, 2002). The authors attribute this in part to the fact that these TBTN events are hosted by Guelph-Wellington Women in Crisis (WIC), a group made up entirely of white women.

Research on student leadership and activism has shown that student organizers challenge oppressive social norms on campuses (Domingue, 2015; Elliott, 2016). However, research about student activism against Rape Culture specifically is significantly lacking in the literature. The majority of research on Rape Culture on college campuses positions students as perpetrators, victims, or survivors of sexual assault rather than agents of social change (Krause, Miedema, Woofter, & Yount, 2017). Here I review those research endeavors which centralize the experiences student-organizers against Rape Culture.

A study by Kasper (2004) surveyed 75 Women's Resource Centers (WRCs) at private and public institutions of higher education to review common issues and practices. The study revealed that the most common issues faced are lack of funding, negative attitudes towards feminism on campus, apathy toward political issues in the campus community, lack of time, lack of visibility, unsupportive administration, poor event attendance, and territorialism (Kasper, 2004).

In an acknowledgment of the lack of research on student activism against Rape Culture, Krause, Miedema, Woofter, and Yount conducted a research project in collaboration with Student Activists who organize against sexual assault. They argue that a feminist approach to understanding campus sexual assault should engage students in knowledge production. The researchers collaborated with a campus organization, Campus Peer Advocates, to address the research questions of why students take the advocacy training offered by the Campus Peer Advocates and what students take away from the training.

METHODS

Of the variety of approaches to addressing Rape Culture on the HSU campus, three were chosen for a descriptive analysis. The three projects/programs selected were chosen due to the relatively high involvement of students in the organizing work. The three projects/programs were Take Back the Night, Check It, and Deconstructing Rape Culture.

In all three of the projects, interviewing and participants observation were the primary methods of data collection. I received IRB approval to conduct interviews and participant observation on February 6, 2018 (See Appendix E). From the Take Back the Night event planning committee, four student organizers were interviewed, and I conducted participant observation for roughly six hours in planning committee meetings, direct organizing, and volunteering. When conducting interviews with organizers of Take Back the Night and Check It, I followed the same interview topic guide (see Appendix C).

I received IRB approval to conduct the Deconstructing Rape Culture project on October 19th, 2016 (IRB #16-037). From the Deconstructing Rape Culture project, three participants were interviewed after project completion, and conducted roughly twenty hours of participant observation in organizing the project and carrying it out. The project facilitator's notebook and progress journal was analyzed as well. Interviews were guided by an interview topic guide (See Appendix D).

Participant Recruitment

Participant recruitment for student activists at HSU was conducted both by contacting individuals by email (See Appendix F), and by reaching out in-person to student organizers at events. Having been personally involved in student organizing at HSU prior to the beginning of this research, I was already acquainted with many student organizers. I recruited four student organizers who I previously knew from organizing to take part in this research. I also emailed the Check It coordinator and asked if they would send out an email to their student staff with information about this project, so that the staff could contact me if interested. The coordinator responded saying that they would be willing to do so, and asked for more information that they could share (see appendix G). Through this method I recruited one participant. Another organizer expressed interest when I spoke to them about the project at a Check It event, and ultimately became a participant in the research.

<div align="center">Interviews</div>

Nine total in-person interviews were conducted with student organizers. One interview was conducted over email, with the respondent answering a list of questions. Seven of the in-person interviews were one-on-one, and one was conducted with two student organizers simultaneously. Each interview was conducted at a location agreed upon by myself and the participant. Interviews were conducted in conference rooms on the HSU campus, in the campus Women's Resource Center, in a restaurant, and at a public park. Interviews lasted between twenty and forty minutes, with most lasting about twenty five minutes. Each participant signed and received a copy of a consent form (See

Appendix A), along with a list of Mental Health resources in Humboldt County (See

Appendix B). I utilized two separate topic guides to structure the interviews. One for

student organizers within Take Back the Night or Check It (Appendix C), and one for

participants of the Deconstructing Rape Culture project (Appendix D). With organizers of

Check It and Take Back the Night, I asked how they became involved, what kind of work

they do for the program, what important things the program covers and what they think is

missing, how they would describe their experience organizing, any challenges they have

faced, and how they think the program could be improved. With Deconstructing Rape

Culture Participants, I asked how they felt the project went, what they would have

changed, their favorite and least favorite aspects of the project, and what they felt they

were taking away from the project. Each interview was recorded using an Apple iPhone.

Immediately after recording, the audio file of the interview was uploaded to my password

protected Google Drive, saved on my password protected personal computer, and deleted

from the iPhone.

<div align="center">Transcription</div>

All nine in-person interviews conducted were transcribed using a method of

selective transcription. Rather than transcribing interviews in their entirety, I would listen

back to the interviews and transcribe any sections that I determined were relevant to my

research questions. It was necessary for efficiency of transcription given the relatively

unstructured nature of the interviews, which in some instances would go off-topic for

periods of time. I determined a section of the interview was relevant for transcription if it

elaborated on the theme of the anti-rape culture project or program, if the participant was describing their experiences or perceptions, or if the participant was speaking to how the anti-rape culture project or program could be improved. Transcription was done manually by myself, by listening to the audio file and transcribing into a word document. No transcription software was used.

<div align="center">Participant Observation</div>

I conducted participant observation at both small meetings where there were only five other individuals present, and large events where there were over one hundred people present. The goal of my participant observation was to gather overall themes and structural elements of these programs and events. As such, I did not record observations of specific individuals attending events and it was therefore not necessary to gather informed consent from individuals present. Whenever possible, however, I would verbally inform individuals I interacted with that I was attending in order to collect data for a thesis project. If they would ask for more information, I would explain the project in more detail. During participant observation, I took handwritten notes in a notebook. From the Check It program, participant observation was conducted at a volunteer drop-in hours session, Check It's Anniversary party, their volunteer team retreat that happens each semester, and a general Check It workshop. These events added up to approximately seven and a half hours of participant observation. From the Take Back the Night event, I attended three planning meetings and met with individuals from the planning committee

regarding separate specific projects. These events added up to approximately six hours of participant observation.

Data Analysis

For analyzing interviews, I used the method of thematic coding (Creswell, 2003). I first read through all of the interviews multiple times in order to familiarize myself with the content. Next, I identified themes or topics in the interviews that were recurring and developed codes for each. Each code was a brief sentence, usually summarizing a paragraph or more, as much as possible using the participants' own words (Table 1). Next, I looked at the codes that I had developed and organized them into broader categories. These broader categories became my primary findings.

Table 1 Thematic codes used to code interviews

Gave them a systemic viewpoint	Gave them a sense of purpose	Passing on the torch
Intersectional approach	Need for intersectionality and inclusivity	Juggling/balancing other parts of life
Supportive supervisor	Normalizes conversations about sexualized violence	Meeting people where they're at
Tailoring workshops to audience	Self Care	
No mentorship or leadership	Personal growth through organizing	

When incorporating participant observation into my data analysis, I decided to first complete thematic coding and analysis of the interviews. I took all of the findings

from the interviews, then looked back on my participant observation notes and took

inventory of my own experiences in organizing. With my findings in mind, I identified

points of data from my notes that correlated with findings from the interviews.

Deconstructing Rape Culture

Participant Recruitment

Recruitment of participants began upon receipt of IRB approval on October 19th,

2016 (See Appendix F). The initial recruitment efforts for the project utilized campus

emails (See appendix H) and distributing physical fliers on campus bulletin boards. The

emails and fliers encouraged interested students to attend an informational presentation.

There were four different presentation times the week of November 14, 2017. The

presentations were unsuccessful, in the sense that only one person showed up to any of

them and that person did not end up participating.

Many students responded to the initial batch of emails, but none from the initial

batch followed through in joining the project to the end. I also contacted professors in the

Critical Race, Gender, and Sexuality Studies department and was given permission to

drop-in at the beginning of some classes to talk about the project and recruit participants.

I went to 4 different classes in total. I did not recruit any participants from the class visits.

I also was working at the Women's Resource Center (WRC) on campus at the time, and

while tabling at an event I distributed fliers for the project alongside WRC materials.

I ultimately recruited the participants in ways that I was not expecting. In the

process of distributing fliers and discussing the project, mostly individuals who I knew

through campus clubs and centers expressed interest in joining the projects. I recruited 4

participants through established academic and extracurricular networks on campus in the

Fall 2016 semester. I met with these participants, and presented the slideshow that I had

prepared to show interested students.

At the beginning of the Spring 2017 semester, when the project was set to take

place, I sent out another email to campus centers and departments and ended up

recruiting 1 more participant. This left me with a total of 6 participants including myself.

Collaborative Discussion Groups

For this project I developed a unique focus group method to suit the specific

needs of this project, which I called the Collaborative Discussion Group (CDG) method. I

adapted the Collaborative Discussion Group from the Interpretive Focus Group (IFG)

method (Leavy 2007). In the IFG method, data about a community or group of people are

analyzed by other individuals who are of that same group or community, but who are not

professional researchers. The difference between the CDG method and IFG method is

that in the CDG method, the group of individuals who generate the data are the same

ones who analyze it.

I provided each individual participant with a notebook. During group meetings, I

facilitated discussions and art-based activities about Rape Culture with the participants.

During discussions and activities, I instructed participants to write in their notebooks

when they felt something particularly important, impactful, relevant, etc. was said. The

content of participants' notebooks was the data about Rape Culture that they would

subsequently analyze. During two separate group meetings, I facilitated an activity in which participants thematically coded their notebooks.

To facilitate thematic coding, I adapted the method of thematic coding as articulated by John W. Creswell, for use by the participants who had never practiced thematic coding (Creswell, 2003). At various points, participants were asked to go back and first read through everything that they had written in their notebooks. This corresponded to the process of "saturation". Next, I asked participants to identify recurring themes in their notes. Themes were defined as concepts or ideas that emerged multiple times throughout the notebook. Themes could be indicated by a recurring single word or a phrase, or themes could be ideas worded differently. I asked participants to identify each theme with a code, which could be a word or a phrase. Next, each participant would share the codes that they had created for their own notebooks. I wrote the "master list" of codes on a white board. Afterwards, the group worked together to narrow down the list of codes by combining redundant codes. Once we had a list of codes developed from the thematic coding of participant notebooks, the themes were used as potential starting points for the arts-based activities.

During the first two group meetings, I facilitated a free-write exercise about Rape Culture and facilitated general group discussions. During the third group meeting, I facilitated a poetry-based exercise. Given that not all participants expressed an interest or desire to write poetry, I wanted an exercise that would allow everyone to participate even if they did not necessarily feel skilled at writing poetry. After trying to find poetry exercises online and not being content with any results, I was inspired by fridge poetry

magnets. I produced 600 words using a random word generator online, print out, and cut

out the words individually. For the exercise, I spread the words out on the table in front

of the participants. The participants were asked to use these words to create one or more

poems on a provided piece of paper. I offered the following prompt that the participants

could choose to use as inspiration for their poetry or not: "Keeping in mind the themes

that we have come up with on the board, write a poem that imagines a new, alternative

world. A world beyond Rape Culture". I chose this prompt in response to a comment

from one of the participants, suggesting that as we deconstruct the issues with the world

we also have to imagine solutions and alternatives. Some participants used the words as

inspiration and wrote out poems on paper, while others physically took the words and

glued them to their paper to create poetry. After about 30 minutes, when all participants

seemed to be finished creating, I gave participants the opportunity to share their poetry.

Not all shared what they created, but 2 participants and the myself shared what we wrote,

and this generated further discussion. One student ended up creating a more polished and

larger-scale version of the poem that she created for the final project event.

For the fourth group meeting, I brought in a variety of art materials that the

participants could choose from to create something. I provided watercolor paints and

paper, collage materials (magazines, scissors, paper, and glue), a camera, acrylic paints,

and a small canvas. Two participants opted to create collages, while the other two

participants present opted to paint. The participants were encouraged to work with any

concept that had been discussed in the group, or any concept relevant to our theme of

Deconstructing Rape Culture. Participants were not required to share their thought processes, and most chose to work in silence for the duration.

During the fifth group meeting, I again brought the collaging and painting materials and the time was spent with participants working on their artistic works. During the sixth, and final, group meeting, a variety of tasks in preparation for the final event were divided among the group members according to their interest and skills. One participant worked on a poster for the event that would be distributed physically and on social media. Another participant and myself worked to create a description of the event that would both explain its purpose as well as what would be happening. We also drafted an email invitation to be sent out to campus centers and departments (See appendix I). This description was also posted to a Facebook Event that one participant created to invite our personal connections.

Disseminating Our Knowledge

From the outset of the project, it was stated that there would be some sort of culminating event to display artistic works created by participants that would most likely take place in April. When it came closer to April, I facilitated two conversations regarding what the participants would like this culminating event to look like. Rather than being an art show in which the participants would simply display their creations, some of the participants expressed that they wanted the event to be interactive. All agreed on this general idea. If the event were to have interactive components, the participants felt we could facilitate thought and conversations about the topic of rape culture among attendees of the event.

During these conversations, I asked participants about previous events that they had been to that addressed these topics. Some examples of such events were Take Back the Night and The Consent Project, as well as an open mic that students had hosted at the MultiCultural Center that semester. They brainstormed what about these events made them feel positive or successful, or just generally what made these events a good experience. Participants noted that the events would have a lot of things going on simultaneously, so attendees could choose what they want to participate in, or they could choose to not participate and just observe.

When I asked how the event could be interactive, participants suggested recreating the activities that were done in the collaborative discussion group meetings, such as the collaging and poetry activities. There was a consensus among participants to have those activities available for anyone to engage in, alongside the presentation of the artistic works. One participant particularly enjoyed poetry, and volunteered to facilitate a poetry activity similar to the poetry fridge magnet activity in our collaborative discussion group meeting. All participants agreed that having a collage table would also be a good activity.

In one of the final group collaborative group discussion meetings, I offered the idea of having some sort of visual model or 3D representation of the themes about rape culture that we had discussed in the group. This would be a way to organize the knowledge we had produced in a dynamic way. One participant expressed that she wanted to take on creating such a model for display during the final event. In one of our

group meetings, two participants worked to create two-dimensional versions of what could be turned into a three-dimensional model.

By participating in an event that would be open to the public, the anonymity of the participants, which was originally to be maintained from the outset of the project, would be compromised. I explained this to the participants, and all expressed verbally that they understood this and they consented to participate in the event with that knowledge.

Our culminating event had a variety of interactive activities, along with the art created by the participants, to stimulate discussion and thought. All of the elements present were agreed upon by all group participants. Upon entering, attendees were met with a white board where they were invited to write down ground rules for establishing a safer space. In one corner, we placed a television. The display showed the questions "What is Rape Culture to you?", and attendees were invited to use a provided device to

type their own definitions. These answers would then show up anonymously on the

screen (Figure 1).

Next to the television, the participant art was displayed. Some had artist

statements, and some did not. There were three paintings, one sculpture, and two poems

(Figure 2; Figure 3). Next to the artwork was a three-dimensional model. The model was
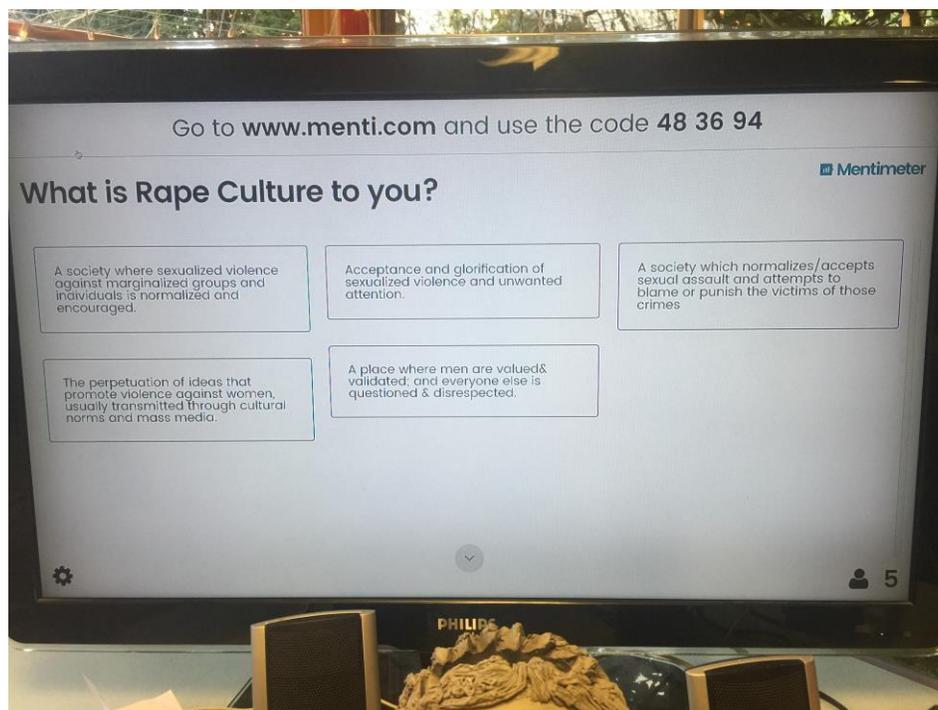
Figure 1 Attendees submitted their own definitions of Rape Culture

made of balls of yarn which hung from a hula hoop. Each yarn ball had a word taped to

it, and each word was related to Rape Culture in some way based on our group

discussions. Attendees were invited to choose concepts that they felt were connected,

Figure 2 Poetry pieces created by participant Kelsey Young

Figure 3 Painting created by anonymous participant

and twist those yarn balls together. The rest of the room was taken up by a collaging table

and a table for snacks and the poetry exercises. Aside from the project participants, six

people attended the event.

FINDINGS

Finding 1: Being a Part of Organizing Facilitates Personal Growth

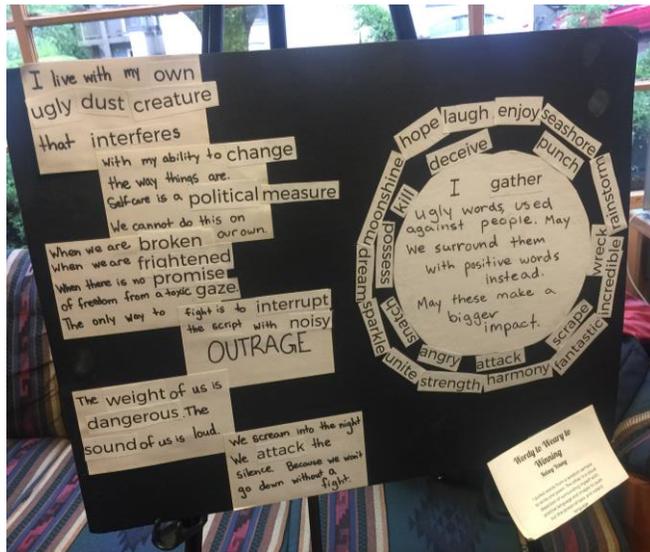Involvement in these programs facilitated student organizers' growth as individuals and gave them valuable skills, both directly within and outside of organizing. Student organizers expressed there being multiple positive impacts on their lives as a result of being a part of programs which organize against Rape Culture. Some of the positive impacts mentioned were positive personality changes such as becoming less shy and insecure. Student organizers spoke about how they felt they understood sexualized violence better, and stated that they felt better equipped both to recognize harmful things in their everyday lives, as well as address those things when they would arise. Student organizers also shared that they felt their skills of communication, especially in difficult situations, was improved.

One participant noted that their work within Check It has directly facilitated their growth as a person in general, "Like definitely when I came into this, I was very shy, and like insecure but I feel like, as I was working, she (the Check It Coordinator) gives us things that we're able to work on, on ourselves, but also like contribute to the team, so according to what we can offer and expand upon" (Informant C, Personal Interview, March 1, 2018).

Another participant said that prior to involvement with Check It, they did not really notice issues related to Rape Culture, they explained, "it wasn't in my mindset to

be looking for these kinds of things. I didn't have the right lenses" (Informant B, Personal

Interview, February 27, 2018). They explained that after their involvement with Check It,

they were not only able to identify elements related to Rape Culture, but also speak up

about it to those around them, "I've been able to speak up and state, 'hey this is fucked up

so I'm either gonna leave or you guys are gonna change this, cause… that… why are we

even watching this?' or things that they say… being able to have that confidence and

speak up. And then being able to explain to them why this is messed up. More than just

saying like, 'I am upset I'm going to leave' rather, I will explain to them why this is

upsetting and not make it personal" (Informant B, Personal Interview, February 27,

2018).

Participants both within Take Back the Night and Check It spoke about how their

involvement required them to work with difficult people, which helped them develop

communication skills. One participant who organizes with Check It spoke about learning

to "meet people where they are at" when communicating with others. They said that they

have had to learn to, "...in all circumstances, hear where people are at. Listen to whoever

you're speaking to and then when you need to, like, let them know about certain things.

Like it depends…" (Informant C, Personal Interview, March 1, 2018). The same

participant also expressed, "I definitely learned how to be more patient, and like very

understanding because you know I've been in situations where I wanted someone to be

understanding… so that definitely like… huge shift of like my own perspective of the

world and everything in general… so yeah it's made me a better person in that regard"

(Informant C, Personal Interview, March 1, 2018). One participant of the Deconstructing

Rape Culture project remarked about their participation in the project, "It actually just made me more interested in the topic and more interested in hearing people's stories about it. Like it obviously prompted other artistic projects in my life...and then other stories I've collected through that have been very like, touching and have helped me grow as a person, so.. Continuing, yeah, just like this experience of opening myself up to share with other people more especially on this topic… just trying to figure out other people's perspectives on why rape culture is a thing…" (Informant G, Personal Interview, , 2017).

One participant who organized with Take Back the Night spoke about their experience working with one individual that they politically disagreed with. They explained, "...It's kind of cool learning how to like deal with it because it's like, even though you may have different political views, you can still strive towards the same goal… you know? And yeah that's been a really good learning experience for me… learning how to work with people that i don't like, or that I don't have similar views with… but it's cool we're still creating something beautiful…" (Informant D, Personal Interview, March 6, 2018).

Participants noted how their work with Check It facilitated an expansion of their understanding of sexualized violence, explaining that before involvement with Check It they "...kinda felt hopeless a little bit and just thinking how could I do something about this world that just seems so horrible and gloomy…" (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018). They went on to say that:

"...Check It's really much about recognizing that even though violence does exist and it seems very hopeless and it seems like it's bigger than us, that you can be resilient and that communities of people have already been resilient and have already been surviving and just to recognize them and focus on the work that's already being done and to just continue doing work because eventually one day, it might not be our generation, our kids, or great grandkids or whatever future generations maybe one day they... will have a world without harm." (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018)

When speaking about why they joined Check It, one participant explained, "I know a lot of people in my life who have been harmed by a sexualized violence... stalking... Dating Violence, so it was cool for me to realize okay I don't have to just, you know, get angry that violence exists... I can actually do something constructive to help fix it" (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018).

Through my own experience organizing Take Back the Night, I found it to be true that participation in organizing the event lead to a great amount of personal growth. Most of the time, this growth came in the form of working through issues or challenges that arose. When I think back to how organizing the event helped me grow, the first thing that comes to mind is that I learned how important it is to be transparent. I was in a position as the primary student organizer, and I had received no training whatsoever on how to plan this event, so I was basically making it up as I went along. In retrospect, I realized that I was pretending like I knew what I was doing, so that I would be perceived as having it all put together. Because I didn't communicate that I was struggling, many of my fellow

organizers didn't know what I needed and I could not successfully delegate a lot of tasks. Since then I am much more transparent about when I am struggling, so that others are able to provide me with the help and resources that I need.

Being an organizer in programming against Rape Culture has a positive impact on students. Students expressed that getting involved in organizing was empowering because they had previously known that sexualized violence was an issue, but didn't realize there were already groups and organizations established to address it. One student organizer expressed being involved in organizing work gave them an outlet for their anger around issues of Rape Culture. Once students are a part of organizing efforts, they expressed that the challenges presented to them helped them to become better people. Some of the challenges that student organizers faced that helped them to grow were navigating bureaucracy, learning how to practice self-care, and learning how to communicate and work with others who have different beliefs and values.

Finding 2: The Presence or Absence, and the Nature of, Leadership and Mentorship Impacts Student Organizing

When looking at Take Back the Night and Check It specifically, it was clear that the presence or absence of leadership and some form of mentorship had a significant impact on student organizing.

Benefit of Having Strong Leadership and Mentorship

All of the Check It organizers who were interviewed spoke highly of their supervisor. They went into detail about the various ways that their supervisor, who is a professional staff member, facilitates successful student organizing.

One participant explained that their role and position within Check It is dependent on their skills and interests, "She basically said, 'whatever your interests are, whatever your projects wanna be'… she even makes our job roles catered to our interests" (Informant C., Personal Interview, March 1, 2018). This participant told me that the title they hold within Check It was created specifically for them because of their interests.

One participant explained how their supervisor student organizers in the Check It program them by checking in with them consistently. They explained, "she genuinely checks in with us, saying, 'how are you feeling?' like, 'are you okay?', 'Do you need… is like school getting too overwhelming where you can't focus on work?' like, 'have the day off'. Like, she's very transparent and she's very… like she gives us that security where like if we have a concern or something like, we can text her at any time, we can email her any time…" (Informant C, Personal Interview, March 1, 2018). They also explained that they have monthly check-ins where their supervisor asks, "personal questions like, 'how do you feel about, like, your job? Do you feel like you're reaching the goals as to what you're trying to gain from your experience working with check-it" and very in-depth things" (Informant C, Personal Interview, March 1, 2018).

Challenges with Lack of Leadership or Mentorship

A challenge within student organizing is a high turnover rate of students holding those

positions. It was clear that this was an issue within the Women's Resource Center, where

Take Back the Night student organizing is based out of. In my personal experience

working in the WRC, I identified a lack of mentorship and leadership as a significant

issue. When I came into the WRC it was an entirely new staff, and none of us received

any sort of training or guidance from previous WRC staff members of faculty. Although I

identified this as a significant issue, I found it difficult to invent a way for mentorship to

happen for the next group of staff members. One participant who works in the Women's

Resource Center explained how this lack of mentorship affected their entire staff,

> "I feel like because of the lack of communication, people were definitely stressed
> out. They were afraid they were gonna do something wrong, and like what are the
> consequences for doing things… or missing deadlines… the rest of the staff
> they're asking me questions and i'm like, i don't have answers… like, "what?
> You're supposed to because it's your position…", literally no one told me
> anything! And so it was stressful on everyone… i'm sure i did contribute to the
> stress that they felt even more because I like, wasn't able to help them or answer
> questions that they had, and specifically to Take Back the Night.. And so I think
> that that's probably one of the main reasons, because we didn't have any form of
> you know, guidelines, or something to like give us direction…" (Informant E,
> Personal Interview, March 8, 2018)

During this part of our interview, I shared my own experience of feeling the lack of

support, but consequently being responsible for the same thing happening later. To this

the participant responded, "I don't ever blame the students working here for that kind of

shit that happens because we also have a bunch of other shit… that we're held

accountable for, most important is our health and education, and I feel like, you know

everything else comes after that, and I understand why it would be difficult… to make time, you know, to have these conversations with the people you're hiring or even change how you hire people… I feel like that's just…. Kinda relies on the institution, and specifically AS because they also don't provide any sort of help…" (Informant E, Personal Interview, March 8, 2018).

Another participant noted of Take Back the Night that there is a lack of "institutionalized memory for organizing this event" (Informant F, Personal Interview, March 25, 2018). They clarified that, "there's not like an archive, or something, that you can refer to really… there's just people. And having those point people is helpful, but at the same time you're gonna be getting a limited perspective of what that looks like, or had looked like" (Informant F, Personal Interview, March 25, 2018). When I personally began working at the Women's Resource Center, I took the position of Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Prevention Educator. The student who takes that position is generally the one tasked with leading the organizational efforts of Take Back the Night. While there was a binder that was filled with physical resources from previous years such as flyers and volunteer schedules, these resources offered limited assistance to me, particularly in terms of navigating institutional processes and relationships. I was fortunate to have been a part of organizing Take Back the Night in previous years, so I was familiar with some of the processes of organizing. However I did not have any direct mentorship regarding organizing the event, which left me having to figure out many things on my own that I could have been taught.

One participant gave an explanation of how Check It facilitates passing of knowledge through mentorship and internships,

> "we have three interns… so we are passing the torch… we are actually mentoring them right now since a lot of our team will be either moving or graduating at the end of this year, so we have to train... we always have an internship cycle when we know that people will be leaving, so during that cycle we take on interns that we feel really reflect Check It's message and we feel like will grow under our mentorship and care, and that's really what we're doing" (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018)

Not only is there mentorship that happens when Check It has staff turnover, but one participant noted that it is their supervisor who facilitates the mentorship program rather than the students themselves. In response, I asked if they found it useful that their supervisor facilitates those elements, to which they responded, "...I think it's the most successful... if you have a good supervisor, good leader, good person, who is quote in the bureaucracy you have to work with that things will go way smoother than someone you have to fight against or someone you can't work well with" (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018).

After speaking to both the WRC and Check It organizers, and reflecting on my own experiences, it became clear that the way mentorship does or doesn't happen with new staff members has a substantial effect on student organizing. Wherever there was a lack of mentorship or leadership, student organizers expressed that their organizing was more difficult and that they themselves experienced much more stress. When there was the presence of strong leadership, and an established system of mentorship to pass the

torch from older to younger student organizers, student organizers expressed that their organizing was much less difficult and complicated.

When there is no established system of mentorship to pass the torch from one group of student organizers to another, the next group experiences stress and confusion and ends up trying to figure out things on their own. When there is no strong leadership, students are tasked with handling bureaucracy that a professional staff or faculty member might easily take on. Check It has a professional staff member whose job responsibility is to oversee the function of Check It's student organizers. The Women's Resource Center, on the other hand, has an advisor who typically is paid for another position on campus and volunteers their time to advise the center.

Finding 3: Student Organizers view Intersectionality and Inclusivity as an Essential Element of Programs and Events

Student organizers at Humboldt State feel that intersectionality and inclusivity are an essential element of the organizing work they are a part of. Participants involved in Take Back the Night and Check It all expressed in different ways that programs being intersectional and/or inclusive were positive aspects of the program. Intersectionality and inclusivity were discussed by participants both in the context of program/event structure as well as content. One respondent involved in the Check It program spoke about a Check It workshop titled, "Sex, Silence, and Voice in Communities of Color". They explained that the workshop content includes, "...how some identities are basically harmed more or fetishized more than... others and just how those dynamics of identity affect how we view

ourselves…. How sex is talked about in communities of color…" (Informant A, Personal

Interview, February 26, 2018). The same participant spoke about how there is value in

workshops such as this because it allows for, "…finding solidarity with others of the same

identity as you and from the same community". When speaking about service providers,

one participant explained why an intersectional and inclusive approach is important,

> "you have to craft resources for particular communities because not only is it
> necessary for your job to do that show you have integrity in your job but also to
> support the people who are in your community who may not feel that they need
> that's particular to what they're experiencing so yeah… cater to various identities
> not only people of color but for people who for example are disabled people who
> have particular mental illness like like I said the layers of sexualized violence
> people's identities really do affect how they experiencing so it'd be nice to to have
> that commonality was people who do speak services to know that they're there not
> alone and that there's people who are like them who they're experiencing that and
> people who are like them who are also surviving and thriving and being resilient
> despite it" (Informant A, Personal Interview, February 26, 2018)

One participant involved with Check It explained one strength of Check It, saying that

"…Check It is pretty quick on when they do get feedback… somebody wrote in our evals,

which we would do… after every presentation… what about like, if they've already been

targeted and how can you help that? So we started thinking about… okay what is that…

that's survivor support. So let's talk about that… because if one person brought it up then

maybe more people will. So we're pretty quick on that. We try to be as inclusive as

possible" (Informant B, Personal Interview, February 27, 2018). By linking Check It's

receptiveness to feedback, to its striving for inclusivity, this participant reveals one

mechanism by which Check It is able to improve its inclusivity and intersectionality.

Where Check It in some ways appears to be succeeding in terms of

intersectionality and inclusivity, organizers within Take Back the Night feel as though the

event is still lacking in those capacities. One organizer spoke about how even one of the

most signature parts of TBTN, the survivor speak-out, is not inclusive to survivors who

are undocumented because it can be much more dangerous for them to speak publicly

about their experiences,

> Like undocumented women that, you know, are domestic workers and you know, are a part of human trafficking, whose rights are being violated... I know Take Back the Night does focus on like, survivors coming up to a mic or just having that space for them, and its just like, even thought that space is there, like, folks still can't have accessibility to that so I think that's something that, first we need to educate ourselves as an institution, as an organization, on what that looks likes so that we are able to reach out to those communities in different forms, or have, or change the entire night, or the entire event, to better fit their needs (Informant E, personal interview, March 8, 2018)

As this organizer's perception of the event illustrates, while the content of an event may

be inclusive and intersectional in nature, structural elements of an event may not be.

The important to organizers of inclusivity and intersectionality was apparent in

my participant observation conducted during Take Back the Night and Check It

organizing, workshops, and events. At the Check It General workshop, as well as at the

Volunteer Team Retreat, the facilitators spoke about the fact that a variety of factors of

identity affect how an individual may experience abuse or assault. In particular, they

showed an illustration in which an individual who identifies as transgender is afraid to

leave their abusive relationship, due to a fear that their abuser will reveal their

transgender identity to others. Check It also shows videos of various scenarios during

their presentation. In the scenario videos that I personally saw, two portrayed

relationships between a man and a woman, and one portrayed a relationship between two

women.

Within the Check It workshops I attended, there was also discussion of the fact that "police do not represent safety for all communities". This was an intersectional element of the workshop because it acknowledged the reality that many communities of color are more oppressed by police presence than made safe. Including this ideally would encourage individuals attending to think of potential alternatives to calling the police when trying to address a situation.

The list of events offered during the month of April as a part of Take Back the Night reflected the prioritization of intersectionality and inclusivity by the organizers. Three of the workshops offered were the following: Sex, Silence and Voice within Communities of Color, Sexualized Violence on the US/Mexico Border, and Sex Trafficking in the Marijuana Industry. In addition to those workshops offered throughout the month, the keynote presented before the main event, the survivor speak-out, was titled *And Now You Know:* Combatting Systemic Violence for Indigenous Women. These events, and the keynote, are intersectional in nature because they discuss sexualized violence in situations that are highly influenced by various factors of identity.

DISCUSSION

For student on the HSU campus, getting involved in efforts to organize against Rape Culture was a positive choice that has challenged them and helped them grow as people. Being involved in organizing is positive for students because it empowers them to be agents of cultural change. Rather than feeling like sexualized violence will always be a reality, student organizers against Rape Culture imagine that it is possible to end violence and they work towards that goal. Rather than feeling helpless, student organizers can feel that they are positively impacting our culture.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research project, it is clear that participating in organizing against Rape Culture is positive for students. Students have the opportunity to engage in organizing large-scale events and programs both with community members and other students. These are opportunities that students may not have in the university classroom alone. As such, the educational institution of HSU should prioritize the continued function of spaces that provide these opportunities for students.

Student organizers are in a unique position where they have access to resources, and therefore a degree of power, and yet are not necessarily in positions of authority. This considered, student organizers may hear criticisms of events and programs that individuals might not express to someone in authority. For this reason, staff and faculty

on campuses should pay attention to the concerns of student organizers, because they may hold unique knowledge of student experiences.

I recommend that programming which relies heavily on student organizers for labor find effective and appropriate ways to facilitate mentorship between generations of the organizers, and leadership within groups of student organizers. Given my feminist approach to research which seeks to deconstruct hierarchy and power relations, I am aware of the potential for leadership to reinforce hierarchy. However, I believe that the type of leadership offered by the Check It coordinator is a positive model. The current coordinator was herself a student organizer in the Women's Resource Center before being hired on as a professional staff member. The experiences of student organizers in Check It illustrated that their coordinator's role is largely to facilitate the students pursuing what they feel is important. She is a support system for them, but ultimately the students are the ones who determine the direction of a program.

Student organizers expressed that inclusivity and intersectionality are crucial elements in terms of making an event successful. This corresponds to a finding by Suarez and Gadalla (2010) who, in their study of Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA), found that high RMA correlated with higher prejudiced beliefs associate with other "isms" such as racism, classism, heterosexism, etc. (Suarez and Gadalla, 2010). They suggest, therefore, that rape prevention programs address other oppressive beliefs not necessarily directly related to rape culture. This is consistent with an intersectional and inclusive approach, which recognizes that power relations operate on multiple levels. Therefore, when addressing a societal issue such as rape culture, programs should consider how multiple

facets of identity affect an individual's experience of sexualized violence. As one student organizer illustrated, it is important that programming not only have intersectional and inclusive content, but that the structure of the programming should be inclusive as well. In particular, they mentioned the survivor speak-out being exclusionary to certain survivors because of how visible they become when participating. I recommend that when developing programming, Deconstructing Rape Culture be used as an example for designing alternatives to the speak-out. Deconstructing Rape Culture allowed for total anonymity of participants, and participants were in complete control of what data/knowledge and artwork was made public. More projects such as Deconstructing Rape Culture conducted in small private groups could allow survivors who are excluded in other events the opportunity to be present and share about their experiences.

If HSU is looking for ways to improve events and programming, listening to the voices of student organizers would be a crucial first step. One way to do this would be to create more opportunities for students to be a part of creating programs, and to compensate them financially for their contributions. Paying student organizers to sit on the SAPC and other committees, for example, rather than expecting them to volunteer their already limited time.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

The student organizers who participated in this research were mostly students who had paid positions, or were volunteering a significant amount of their time to organizing. It likely would have been informative to also include the voices of students

who were only part-time volunteers, as well as students who did not organize but frequently attended the programming to end Rape Culture at HSU.

<div align="center">Future Directions</div>

As Krause et al. suggest, much more research should be done with student organizers to empower students as agents of change on their campuses. They also argued, however, that ideally research with student organizers would include the research participants at every stage of the research project. This would not only allow for their voices to come through in the findings of a project, but the design of the project itself would reflect their concerns, needs, experiences, etc.

Deconstructing Rape Culture, a project which I facilitated as a part of this research, was an attempt at collaborating with other students to co-produce knowledge about Rape Culture in the form of artistic works. I greatly enjoyed facilitating the project and valued the artistic works produced from it, however there was not sufficient data collected for findings from the project to stand on their own. Future research might look at ways to adapt Deconstructing Rape Culture such that it can stand on its own as a research project.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Consent Form

Principal Investigator: Ariel Rose Fishkin

Telephone: 925-594-2625
Email: arf64@humboldt.edu
Faculty Supervisor: Rebecca Robertson, Dept. of Anthropology
Telephone: 707-826-4342
Email: rer3@humboldt.edu

The intent of this research project is to develop an understanding of the various projects that address Rape Culture at Humboldt State University. You have been invited to participate because you are currently involved in, or have previously been involved in, one of these projects. An analysis of these projects will be informed by the experiences and perceptions of these projects by individuals who are, or have been, involved with them. Specifically, this research is looking at Take Back the Night Events, the Check-It program, and an event called Deconstructing Rape Culture which took place in the Fall of 2017.

Your involvement in this project will consist of one interview. This interview will last approximately 45 minutes. The questions within the interview will be directed at understanding your personal experiences pertaining to organizing and participation in Take Back the Night and/or the Check-It program. You may be contacted for an optional follow-up interview. Any follow-up interview would also take no more than 45 minutes.

The topics covered in these interviews may be potentially uncomfortable. You will be given a list of counseling resources to contact if needed.

I agree to these points:

1. I am willing to participate in this study. I understand the intent and purpose of this study.

2. I understand that I have the right to remove myself from this study at any time.

3. I understand that the principal investigator will answer any questions I have about this study, that participation is voluntary, and I may stop at any time.

4. I am aware that this interview will be recorded.

5. I am aware that others will be reading the results of this study. I understand that this study will eventually be published.

6. I understand that I will be kept anonymous, and my participation will be kept confidential, unless I request for my name to be included.

7. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

      If you have any concerns with this study or questions about your rights as a participant, contact the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects at irb@humboldt.edu or (707) 826-5165

_____ _____
Signature   Date

Appendix B

Mental Health Resources

LOCAL COUNSELING RESOURCES:

Thank you for participating in our study.

We understand that your experience in this study may have raised topics of potential concern for you, and for this reason or other reasons you may wish to talk to a mental health professional or seek out further information.

Therefore, we are providing you with contact information for local, free or low-cost mental health care options. Please feel welcome to use these resources to ask any related questions that you may have.

The following agencies and resources are available for you to contact:

HSU Counseling & Psychological Services Center http://www.humboldt.edu/counseling/	(707) 826-3236
Psychology Community Counseling Center (on HSU campus)	(707) 826-3921
North Country Clinic	(707) 822-2481
Open Door Clinic	(707) 441-1624
Humboldt Family Service Center	(707) 443-7358
Humboldt County Mental Health	(707) 445-7715
United Indian Health Services	(707)825-5060
North Coast Rape Crisis Team	(707)445-2881
Veteran Counseling Center	(707)444-8271

Once again, we thank you for your participation in the research project.

Appendix C

Interview Topic Guide

What inspired you to become involved with (take back the night/check-it)?

What type of work/volunteering have you done with (take back the night/check-it)?

What issues are discussed/explored during (take back the night/check-it) events that you feel are important? Are there any issues not included that you feel should be?

How would you, generally speaking, describe your experience with (take back the night/check-it)?

How do you feel (take back the night/check-it) could be improved? What difficulties have you faced in organizing as a student?

Appendix D

Deconstructing Rape Culture
Final Survey / Interview Topic Guide (in person or written)

1. How do you feel about how the project went?
2. What would you have changed about the project? (i.e. logistics such as meeting times, structure of groups, content of discussion, etc.)
3. If anything, what do you feel you're taking away from the project?
4. What was your favorite/least favorite aspect of this project?
5. How did you feel the final event went? Would you have liked to change anything?

Appendix E

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

707-826-5165 | irb@humboldt.edu | www.humboldt.edu/human_subjects

MEMORANDUM

Date: 2/6/2018

To: Rebecca E Robertson
              Ariel Rose Fishkin

From: Susan Brater
              Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRB #:   IRB 17-131

Subject: Approaches to Addressing Rape Culture at Humboldt State University

Thank you for submitting your application to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research. After reviewing your proposal I have determined that your research can be categorized as Exempt by Federal Regulation 45 CFR 46.101 (b) because of the following:

Your research will involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interviews procedures or observation of public behavior, and that information obtained will be recorded in a manner that the human subjects will not be able to be identified directly, or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

The Exempt designation of this proposal will expire on 2/5/2019   . By Federal Regulations, all research related to this protocol must stop on the expiration date and the IRB cannot extend a protocol that is past the expiration date. In order to prevent any interruption in your research, please submit a renewal application in time for the IRB to process, review, and extend the Exempt designation (at least one month).

Important Notes:
  • Any alterations to your research plan must be reviewed and designated as Exempt by the IRB prior to implementation.
        - Change to survey questions
        - Number of subjects
        - Location of data collection,
        - Any other pertinent information
  • If Exempt designation is not extended prior to the expiration date, investigators must stop all research related to this proposal.
  • Any adverse events or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others must be reported immediately to the IRB (irb@humboldt.edu).

cc: Faculty Adviser (if applicable)
      Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

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Appendix F

HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

707-826-5165 | irb@humboldt.edu | www.humboldt.edu/human_subjects

MEMORANDUM

Date: 10/19/2016

To: Rebecca E Robertson
Ariel Rose Fishkin

From: Roxanne O'Brien
Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

IRB #: IRB 16-037

Subject: Deconstructing Rape Culture: A Participatory Action Research and Arts-Based Methods Approach

Thank you for submitting your application to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research. After reviewing your proposal I have determined that your research can be categorized as Exempt by Federal Regulation 45 CFR 46.101 (b) because of the following:

Your research will involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interviews procedures or observation of public behavior, and that information obtained will be recorded in a manner that the human subjects will not be able to be identified directly, or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

The Exempt designation of this proposal will expire on **10/18/2017**. By Federal Regulations, all research related to this protocol must stop on the expiration date and the IRB cannot extend a protocol that is past the expiration date. In order to prevent any interruption in your research, please submit a renewal application in time for the IRB to process, review, and extend the Exempt designation (at least one month).

Important Notes:
 • Any alterations to your research plan must be reviewed and designated as Exempt by the IRB prior to implementation.
   - Change to survey questions
   - Number of subjects
   - Location of data collection,
   - Any other pertinent information
 • If Exempt designation is not extended prior to the expiration date, investigators must stop all research related to this proposal.
 • Any adverse events or unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others must be reported immediately to the IRB (irb@humboldt.edu).

cc: Faculty Adviser (if applicable)
    Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

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Appendix G

Initial Email

(Recipient),

I hope you are well. I am writing because the Check It volunteer coordinator, (name of student), expressed interest in being interviewed for my MA research project. He also suggested that I have you put the word out to other Check It student organizers to see if others would like to share their experiences with me as well. I'm wondering if that is something you'd be willing to do?

Thank you,
Ariel

Follow-Up Response

(Recipient),

Sure! I anticipate the interviews lasting around 30 minutes, but likely less. I will be asking some fairly general questions about folks' experience organizing with Check It. I'll be asking questions such as why folks were inspired to get involved with Check It, what type of work specifically they do for the program, what they enjoy about being a student organizer and what are challenges, etc.

Best,
Ariel

Appendix H

(Recipients),

I hope your semester is off to a good start. I'm writing because, as you may know, my graduate research is around the topic of Rape Culture. I am hoping to incorporate (the women's resource center, Take Back the Night)(Check-It) and the upcoming events of this semester into my research project. Specifically, I'd really like to talk about doing activist work like this in institutions, and talk about the experiences you have had in organizing.

In terms of working with you for this research project, it mostly would look like some 1 on 1 interviews, possibly a group interview, and I'd also attend the events and talk about that. I know you are busy so this could be during your office hours, or whenever is convenient for you. Let me know if this is something that you would be open to.

All the best,
Ariel Fishkin

Appendix I

Deconstructing Rape Culture Recruitment email

(Recipient),

Hello, I am a graduate student here at HSU in the applied anthropology program and I am looking for students to participate in my research. It would be greatly appreciated if you would be willing to forward the following information to students. Feel free to email me with any questions or concerns.

Graduate Student looking for students to participate in research on Rape Culture.

Rape Culture: A culture in which sexualized violence against individuals of marginalized groups is normalized and encouraged.

This research project seeks to generate knowledge about Rape Culture by talking to students at Humboldt State University about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences around the topic. This conversation will be facilitated in a small group discussion. Participants will also use artistic methods such as writing, collage making, drawing, etc. to explore the topic.

Ultimately, group participants will create artistic works, using any medium (painting, film, poetry, etc), to represent the knowledge about Rape Culture that the group

generates. The discussion group will meet multiple times January 2017 through April 2017.

If you are interested in participating, or getting more information about this project, please contact Ariel Fishkin by email at arf64@humboldt.edu.

There will also be four informational presentations this week for students who would like to learn more. These will take place in NHE 106, on Monday 11/14 at 11am, Tuesday 11/15 at 4pm, Wednesday 11/16 at 3pm and Thursday 11/17 at 2pm.

Appendix J

Deconstructing Rape Culture: Art and Knowledge Sharing for Social Change
Wednesday, April 26th
5pm - 7pm
Vine Deloria Room, MultiCultural Center

CW: Mentions of sexualized violence.

Rape culture is the pervasive tendency towards leniency, ignorance, and even celebration of sexualized violence, sexual harassment and sexual misconduct. When the president of this country brags about sexual assault, when perpetrators receive little to no consequences for their actions, and when burden of protection is in the hands of the survivors, we know we live in a rape culture.

Where does this come from? What can we do about it? Come to the Vine Deloria in the Multicultural Center on the Humboldt State campus to share in a night of information, art showcasing, crafts, and discussion of these ideas. Collaging and poetry-writing activities are some of the activities that will be hosted.

This event is hosted by a group of students as part of a collaborative MA thesis project in Applied Anthropology. Snacks and a safer space will be provided.

Please contact Ariel Fishkin with any questions, concerns, or if you'd like more

information at arf64@humboldt.edu