Mishandled: Turnhill University's Approach to Sexual Violence

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Abstract

Sexual violence on college and university campuses in Canada and the United States has been an unsettling issue for several decades. However, the understanding that politicians, policy makers, and academic administrations can no longer ignore these violations is a more recent development. This thesis investigates the management and the potential mismanagement of sexual violence policy and practice with a specific focus on one Canadian University in Southern Ontario. Intersectional feminist theory provided the conceptual framework informing this research and institutional ethnography was the methodology engaged to explore a range of university policy and practices. This research illuminates the difficulties that policy makers and students identified in the development of accessible sexual violence policies and practices and provides recommendations to help post-secondary institutions implement sexual violence policies and protocols that are more useful for students and more socially just.

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Chapter One

An Introduction

The prevalence of sexual violence on university campuses is not a new problem. In the 1990s, Canadian studies like DeKeserdy and Kelly's (1993) highlighted the scope of the issue and advocated for mobilizing the political will to ensure these violations would no longer be ignored. However, the actual development of legislation, policy and protocol for handling reports of sexual violence by politicians, policy makers, and academic administrations is a more recent development. This research project investigates the management of incidents of sexual violence through policy and practice with a specific focus on one Canadian University in Southern Ontario. To maintain confidentiality, the Southern Ontario University was given the pseudonym: Turnhill University. Intersectional feminist theory provided the conceptual framework to inform this research and institutional ethnography was the methodology I engaged to explore a range of university policy and practices. The purpose of my research is to explore how Turnhill University's sexual violence policies and protocols might become more useful for students and more socially just. While I interviewed both policy developers and students, to maintain a manageable scope for my project I focused particularly on students' experiences of attempting to navigate sexual violence policies and protocols at Turnhill University.

This thesis will be organized in several chapters. The first chapter will provide a brief overview of why I pursued this topic. Chapter two highlights my use of intersectional feminist theory as the lens for this project and provides a concise review of sexual violence policy in universities and identifies gaps in the literature. Next, I provide an overview of my methodology, institutional ethnography, as well as the research questions and methods I used to conduct this

research. In chapter four, I map out the political climate at Turnhill University in relation to

sexual violence policy and then provide a chronology of the university's approach to sexual

violence policy development. Next, I analyze the main themes that emerged through assessing

sexual violence policies and interviewing policy developers. Chapter five highlights the main

themes that emerged through interviewing students who had been directly impacted by sexual

violence at Turnhill University or who knew a close family member or friend who was directly

impacted by sexual violence while a student there. In my conclusion, I will map out

recommendations that I believe will help universities develop sexual violence policies and

protocols that are more useful for students and more socially just.

Author's Standpoint

One of the reasons why I pursued this topic was because I have been affected by sexual

violence. I first got involved in activism during my undergraduate degree, and when the

opportunity to get involved with the university based student sexual violence center (SSVC)

presented itself, I immediately signed up to volunteer. One of the most unexpected experiences I

had during this period was while I was campaigning during the SSVC second referendum for

funding when many students told me that sexual assault was not an issue at the university. This

perception suggests that although there is information on the rate of sexual assault on Canadian

campuses provided by organizations like the Canadian Federations of Students, at the time, there

was a lack of local awareness about the impact of sexual violence amongst students. Although

my research focuses on sexual violence policies and practices at Turnhill University, this

experience reflects the lack of awareness students have on sexual violence in general. I will

explore this issue further in chapter five.

A few years later when I started this research study and decided to focus on sexual

violence in the university setting, word of my project spread and many people provided me with

potential contacts and/or participants, news articles, scholarly research, conference opportunities,

and the opportunity to be part of university committees on sexual violence prevention and human

rights. For instance, a university administrator invited me to the Taking Action: Sexual Violence

on Campus conference hosted by the Ontario Committee on Student Affairs at York University

on February 20, 2014. The majority of those who attended were administrative employees who

worked in Ontario universities but there were also a few student representatives. Overall, the

conference was meant to provide a space for sharing information about sexual assault on

campuses across Canada. I was also invited by the Graduate Student Association to attend

Consent Culture: A National Forum to End Sexual Violence on Campus hosted by the Canadian

Federation of Students in Ottawa from March 19 to 20, 2015. The purpose of the forum was to

provide an opportunity for "student activists to gather, share stories of success and struggle, and,

ultimately develop a common vision to combat sexual violence and rape culture" (Canadian

Federation of Students, 2015). On the second day of the forum, I led a workshop with my

roommate from the University of Western Ontario, who I met the day before, to ensure that

students would be able to stay connected after the forum ended. As a result, we created a

Facebook group; #consentculture- Making Connections Taking Action, which currently has 47

members from the 70 attendees of the forum. These conferences recognized the decades of

feminist work and research on sexual violence, but also emphasized the urgent need for new

directions in continuing research and activism. Overall, conferences, news articles, scholarly

research, and committees provided opportunities to network, collaborate, learn and with contacts

and research across Canada. These connections will help contextualize my analysis of sexual violence at Turnhill University.

Chapter Two

Intersectional Feminist Theory and Literature Review

Intersectional Feminist Theory

The conceptual framework informing this research into sexual violence on university campuses is intersectional feminist theory. I provide an overview of the beginnings of intersectional feminist theory and review the implications of using intersectional feminist theory to examine the handling of sexual violence as this affects students in post-secondary institutions.

Sexual violence is gendered. According to Statistics Canada (2013), a review of police-reported violence indicates that, "women are eleven times more likely than men to be victims of sexual offences" (p. 6). Moreover, about one in three Canadian women will experience sexual assault in their lifetime (Benoit, Shumka, Phillips, Kennedy, & Belle-Isle, 2015, p. 1). Police reports do not fully reflect the reality of how many people are affected by sexual violence, as it is the most underreported crime (Ontario Ministry of the Status of Women, 2015). In short, as Gunraj's (2013) notes, "women are at high risk of victimization and men are overwhelmingly the perpetrators" (p. 5).

Harrison and Lafreniere (2015) use the term gendered violence in their report, "The Change Project," to highlight the "gendered power inequities resulting in physical, sexual, emotional, economic or mental harm" (p. 19-20) which include "sexism, gender discrimination, gender harassment, biphobia, transphobia, homophobia and heterosexism, sexual assault, sexual

harassment, stalking, and intimate partner violence" (p. 20). This wide-ranging definition recognizes that sexual violence is shaped by social and institutional forces with particularly negative repercussions for sexual and gender minorities. I find intersectional feminist theory best assists me in understanding how these broader forces shape interpersonal violence and a framework to assess the impact of sexual violence in post-secondary institutions. Intersectional feminist theory recognizes that sexual and gender minorities are more vulnerable to sexual violence, and so too are racialized people, people with disabilities, and those who are poor and lack financial options.

The term intersectionality was first introduced by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) (Yuval-Davis, 2009, p. 44) and focused how "the dual positioning of women of color as women and as members of a subordinated racial group bears upon violence committed against us" (Crenshaw, 1997, p. 247). In other words, an intersectional feminist framework began by investigating how and why the social divisions of race and gender shape who is more susceptible or vulnerable to violence and the barriers they face in ensuring their experiences are recognized by institutions meant to help them, such as women's shelters and the courts. Although Crenshaw's original introduction of intersectionality focused on gender and race, intersectionality now "examine[s] how both formal and informal systems of power are deployed, maintained, and reinforced through axes of race, class, … gender" (McCall, 2009, p. 1), sexuality, ability, and more.

According to Archer Mann (2012) sexual violence has "occurred at the nexus of gendered, racialized, and class-based ideology and practice … [and] has been one of the primary arenas in which intersectional theorists have developed and applied their theory and intersectional activists have created a critical movement" (p. 193). For example, Crenshaw (2011) argues that:

> The singular focus on rape as a manifestation of male power over female sexuality tends to eclipse the use of rape as a weapon of racial terror. When black women were raped by white males, they were being raped not as women generally, but as black women specifically (p. 35).

In other words, focusing only on a person's gender identity does not provide an understanding of how racialized women are targeted or experience sexual violence. Furthermore, stereotypes about black women "as "Jezebels" who cannot be raped due to their sexual promiscuity and accessibility" (Lykke, 2015, p. 239) while white women are considered the "ideal" victim are additionally problematic considering that women of colour are more likely than white women to experience sexual violence.

During the second wave of feminism, many activists focused on improving the criminal justice system in a way that could eradicate the "second rape" (Archer Mann, 2012, p. 194) women experienced when going through the legal system. Scholars like Kimberlé Crenshaw and Angela Davis criticized this microlevel approach as it only focused on gender and most often failed to recognize other systems of oppression such as class and race that shaped racialized women's experience of violence (Crenshaw, 2011, p. 151). Archer Mann (2012) explains how the violence against a poor woman of colour happens when their gender vulnerability is exacerbated by race and class inequality that converges to produce patterned conditions where the intersection makes them more likely to experience a cycle of poverty and violence. Furthermore, women of colour have a different experience with law enforcement and in fact have a higher rate of experiencing violence perpetrated by law enforcement and state officials than white women (Archer Mann, 2012). I focus on sexual violence in post-secondary institutions where the same systems of oppression apply resulting in "15 [to] 25 per cent of college and university-aged women [who] will experience some form of sexual assault during their academic career" in North America (Women's Directorate, 2013). Given this context, I was

interested to explore how an intersectional perspective would help me to assess the differential impact of university policies, and practices, and the cost of survivorhood.

By using intersectional feminist theory to analyze sexual violence in universities, I will argue that unclear, inaccessible and underfunded policies, processes and protocols do not affect everyone equally. For instance, students who identify as women, LGBTQ2+, Aboriginal, a person of colour, a person with a disability, or someone from a low socio-economic background, are not only more vulnerable than others, but they also face additional barriers to accessing policy, services, and supports – a reality I will discuss further in Chapter Five: Student Perspectives. Next, I will review the literature on sexual violence policy and practice in Canada and the United States.

Literature Review

As the purpose of this study is to research how Turnhill's University's sexual violence policies and protocols might be more useful for students and more socially just, it is vital to first understand what is currently known about sexual violence policy in universities and what gaps there are in the literature. First, I will highlight the political climate around sexual violence on university campuses as it is represented in popular news media. Then, I will provide an overview of legislation and policies that relate to sexual violence at university and college campuses in Canada and the United States, with a specific focus on Ontario university policies and procedures. Next, I will explore how the scholarly literature portrays the experiences of students that have navigated university and college sexual violence policies and procedures. Lastly, I will review the supports and services that often are the foundation for practical student supports in relation to sexual violence policies and procedures on campuses.

Sexual Violence in Popular Media

Sexual violence on college and university campuses in North America has been a topical issue for several decades and within the last few years, there has been a significant increase in the media's attention to the issues. For instance, there have been major news sources releasing articles like, "Why don't Canadian Universities Want to Talk about Sexual Assault?" (Browne, 2014) from Maclean's Magazine, "Canadian Post-Secondary Schools Failing Sex Assault Victims" (Mathieu & Poisson, 2014) from the Toronto Star, and "Sexism and Violence on University Campuses" (2015) from CBC news. Browne's (2014) article for Maclean's focuses on the case of Emma Sulkowicz, a Columbia University art student who alleged she was raped by a fellow student in 2014. Sulkowicz developed an endurance performance art piece called Mattress Performance (Carry That Weight) that involved her carrying her dorm mattress around campus until the person who sexually assaulted her was expelled. While the article documents this performance, it also provides a survey of the problem of sexual violence and 'rape culture' at a range of universities across North America. Similarly, Mathieu and Poisson's (2014) article for the Toronto Star discusses notable individual cases of sexual assault on campus, but also makes larger connections to rape culture through foregrounding a report that discovered that of 100 Canadian universities and colleges only nine had policies designed to address sexual violence. This suggested that over 90 percent of universities lacked a policy framework at all. Another article, "Sexism and Violence on University Campuses" (2015), argues that schools should be teaching basic values around sexism, misogyny and violence before students enter university because sexual assault does not only occur on campus, but also occurs to individuals before they become post-secondary students. Overall, this media coverage recognized sexual assault on campuses as a significant and ongoing concern, collectively focusing on the need for earlier

education on sexual violence, and analyzing the lack of policies at universities and colleges in Canada. This increased attention to the epidemic of sexual violence facing students has placed increased pressure on universities and colleges to develop better sexual violence policies and procedures that address rape culture. On the other hand, it is unclear if this hyper-visualization of the impact of sexual violence on campus represented in popular media will be useful to students. Although many universities have agreed to update their policies and procedures, it is unclear whether the best interest of the university will match the best interest of the students affected by sexual violence.

Comparing the Legislative Framework: United States and Canada

Frequently literature and media coverage conflate the climate regarding sexual violence at universities and colleges in the United States and Canada. An example of this is in Browne's (2014) article "Why don't Canadian Universities Want to Talk about Sexual Assault" which focuses on Canadian Universities yet includes a U.S. example of sexual violence and a U.S. campaign "It's On Us". I argue it is important to recognize the distinctions between legislation and practices in these two countries while also acknowledging that policy in one country can shape the other. Thus, I will outline legislation in the United States and Canada to highlight the differences between these contexts and highlight the implications of these differences for policy development at the level of individual universities.

Clery Act

Currently, the United States has more legislation than Canada to protect students from sexual violence. The federal law, Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990 (also

known as the Clery Act) was drafted in response to the preventable rape and murder of Lehigh

University freshman Jeanne Ann Clery (Dowdall, 2009). Although the university was aware of

security problems that endangered Jeanne Clery, it did not warn the student or their family. The

Clery Act requires all colleges and universities in the United States:

> (1) to prepare and publish an annual security report that presents crime statistics and policy; (2) to disclose timely information in a public crime log and issue warnings about threats; and (3) to protect the rights of sexual assault accusers and accused (Dowdall, 2009, p. 63).

In 2014, a new provision called the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (also known

as the Campus SaVE Act) amended the Clery Act, to "add new crime reporting

requirements specifically relating to sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and

stalking" (Napolitano, 2015, p. 398). The Campus SaVE Act also required that universities

and colleges must formulate specific policy statements about how they train students and

employees as well as how they address and conduct investigations. Furthermore, campuses

are required to provide written notifications to people who have been sexually assaulted

about the on and off campus resources that can provide support, options in regards to

reporting and their right to "obtain protective orders both on campus and through the

criminal and civil courts" (Napolitano, 2015, 398).

Title IX

Another form of legislation in the United States is Title IX. According to the United

States Department of Justice (2015) "Title IX is a comprehensive federal law" (para. 1) which

states that: "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from

participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education

program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance" ("Title IX," n.d.). Title IX covers sex

discrimination in sport, "discrimination against pregnant and parenting students and women in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) programs" ("Title IX: The Basics", n.d.), sexual harassment, gendered-based discrimination and sexual violence (including attempted or completed rape or sexual assault, sexual harassment, voyeurism, exhibitionism, stalking, verbal or physical sexuality-based threats or abuse, and intimate partner violence). Although Title IX has been used to focus on female students, the federal civil right protects anyone from sex-based discrimination, including faculty and staff. Furthermore, per KnowYourIX (n.d.), a website focused on "empowering students to end sexual and dating violence in schools" and information on Title IX (About KYIX, n.d., para. 1), a school must act to eliminate discrimination, harassment or violence which can create an unsafe environment for any student without discouraging the survivor to leave a team, club or class. Title IX also dictates that schools must have an established procedure and Title IX Coordinator to manage complaints of sex discrimination. Furthermore, survivors must receive arrangements to accommodate their needs for safe housing, campus job, and class or sports schedule, and so on before a formal complaint. The school can also "issue a no contact directive under Title IX to prevent the accused student from approaching or interacting with [the survivor]" (para. 7) similar to a restraining order by preventing the accused student from directly or indirectly contacting the survivor, but the school should provide information on how to obtain a court-issued restraining order. Moreover, the school is "prohibited from encouraging or allowing mediation (rather than a formal hearing) of the complaint" ("Title IX: The Basics", n.d.). Lastly, there should be no cost to students for accommodations such as counselling, campus housing changes, or tutoring. There are also strong accountability and enforcement mechanisms for Title IX, for if a university does not follow these regulations it can lose federal funding.

Canadian Legislation

In Canada, there is no federal legislation similar to Title IX that might provide consistent and overarching standards for how sexual assault is handled on campus. Consequently, there are differing practices from institution to institution, which "may compromise student safety and willingness to report violence; monitoring and evaluation of policies; and overall access to justice" (Gunraj, 2014, p. 15).

However, during the period that I was working on this thesis, Ontario Premiere Kathleen Wynne's released "It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment," (March 2015) which has contributed to recognizing sexual assault as a significant policy issue in Ontario. The plan aims "to challenge and change the deep-rooted attitudes and behaviours that contribute to sexual violence and harassment" (2015, p. 2). Wynne's Action Plan highlights the need for better training, education and policy within the justice system, education curriculums, workplaces and university and college campuses, and highlights the interconnections between these spaces. Regarding safer college and university campuses, the plan has several areas of focus. First, it requires that universities and colleges have a sexual assault policy that includes "significant input from students" and which is updated every four years (p. 27). The proposed legislation also aims to ensure that each campus has "clearly stated complaint procedures and response protocols; effective training and prevention programs; and services and supports for survivors available 24/7" (p. 27). Universities and colleges would be required to report situations of sexual violence publically and regularly review the effectiveness of new initiatives in reducing sexual violence and harassment. Lastly, the plan aims to "make sure all students have information about preventing sexual violence and harassment and are informed of resources and supports, starting with their first week of orientation and continuing throughout the year, for

subtends in all years of study" (p. 27). Overall, the Action Plan aims to make institutions

accountable for preventing sexual violence.

On March 8, 2016, Bill 132 passed into law in Ontario and now governs every college

and university that receives government funding. The legislation requires that they have a sexual

violence policy that:

> (a) addresses sexual violence involving students enrolled at the college or university;
> (b) sets out the process for how the college or university will respond to and address
> incidents and complaints of sexual violence involving students enrolled at the
> college or university, and includes the elements specified in the regulations relating
> to the process;

Consistent with the Action Plan, Bill 132 also requires universities and colleges to ensure

there is student input on the sexual violence policy each time the policy is reviewed or

amended and requires the policy be reviewed and amended at least once every three years.

Universities and colleges are also required to collect data and other information on the

number of times sexual violence supports, services, and accommodations are used by

students, the initiatives and programs that promote awareness of the supports and services

available, the number of incidents and complaints of sexual violence reported by students,

and the implementation and effectiveness of the policy. To comply with this legislation,

colleges and universities had to incorporate these requirements by January 1, 2017.

Although it is encouraging to see the emergence of Canadian legislation requiring

universities and colleges to address sexual violence, it is also important to acknowledge the

differential impact of legislation. Arguably, the United States has more robust regulatory

and legislative practices than Canada, and these differences are not inconsequential.

Conflating these two countries media reports often negate these differences. For instance,

not all provinces in Canada even have legislation that requires post-secondary institutions

to have stand-alone policies on sexual violence while in the U.S. this is a requirement. This uneven legislative environment can mean there is a wide variety of regulations, funding restraints or incentives, and policies that ultimately change the way in which a post-secondary institution has to prioritize and address sexual violence prevention and protocol.

The university I researched is in Ontario, however my study began prior to the passage of Bill 132, as my interviews and the bulk of my research was completed before these new requirements were in place. Hence, the environment I investigated is shaped by a lack of any substantive provincial oversight or legal requirements in relation to sexual violence policy.

Evaluating Sexual Violence Policies and Recommending Alternatives

I now turn to providing an overview of the recent surge of research on sexual violence on campus. First, I will provide an overview of research done in the United States, which focuses primarily on the accessibility of policies and procedures as well as definitions of sexual violence and adjudication processes. Then I will review Canadian research that addresses a plethora of concerns regarding campus climate and policies including a recommended template for college and university sexual violence policies and procedures by the Ontario Women's Directorate (2013).

One area that researchers have focused on in the United States is the accessibility of policies and services online at universities and colleges. For instance, Schwartz, MacMahon, and Broadnax (2015) found that of the 28 colleges and university web pages in New Jersey they visited, that 27 campuses had sexual assault policies on the school web page. However only 33% of those policies "were a distinct, stand-alone policy, whereas the others were brief statements

within the Student Code of Conduct, more detailed statements within the Student Code of

Conduct, or brief statements within another policy statement" (p. 279). Furthermore, they also

found that only "six schools had a department, office or center on campus that focused on sexual

assault" (Schwartz, MacMahon, & Broadnax, 2015, p. 279) and there was some difficulty in

finding these offices online. Similarly, a larger study by Lund and Thomas (2015) researched

102 United States colleges and universities across 35 states to find the availability, location and

content of sexual assault information online and found that 88.2% of schools made some

information on sexual assault available on their website and that 83.3% of those institutions

posted their policy on sexual assault online. Few schools included any information on state laws

related to sexual assault or trainings and workshops in the area but most provided counselling,

medical services, or law enforcement information. Not all United States schools have

implemented improvements to their websites by including more information on sexual violence

policies and services. However, there does seem to be an increase of information when

comparing these studies to Krivoshey, Adkins, Hayes, Nemeth, and Klein's (2013) study of 105

Ohio college websites where only 66% of colleges had an online sexual assault policy or

statement.

　　　Not only have scholars studied the accessibility of sexual violence policies or procedures

in the United States, they have also examined the effectiveness of those policies and procedures.

One area that was mentioned in multiple studies was the definitions used in sexual violence

policies. These definitions ranged from sexual misconduct, sexual assault, sexual harassment, to

sexual violence. According to Lang (2015), it is the institution's "responsibility to the campus

population to define what exactly these broad terms entail, as well as providing examples of

behaviours that fit into each definition" (p. 42). Without a proper understanding of what

behaviours are covered under the policy, that policy is less effective in addressing sexual violence or supporting survivors. Furthermore, researchers also focused on the adjudication processes (voluntary or mandatory), and sanctions against survivors through separate drug or alcohol policies as these processes would determine if a student would even report their experience (Amar, Strout, Simpson, Cardiello and Beckford, 2014, p. 580). For instance, students were sometimes forced through an adjudication process where they were cross-examined in the same room as the perpetrator, and this could deter them from going through university processes. Furthermore, if a student was drinking while an incident of sexual violence occurred and the university or college had a strict policy against alcohol, that student may decide not to come forward in fear of being penalized for their drinking. Thus, Amar et. al. (2014) conclude that policies will be more effective if survivors are not forced through an adjudication process, or penalized for drinking or using drugs during the incident. In short, a policy is more effective when a survivor is not deterred from seeking help. Overall, the accessibility of policies and services, definitions of sexual violence, adjudication processes, and drug/alcohol policies are some of the ways in which policies are evaluated as effective, or not, when supporting survivors of sexual violence in the United States.

In Canada, there has also been research on how to improve the effectiveness of policies or procedures on sexual violence on university campuses. Some areas in which policies have been deemed problematic include but are not limited to a: "lack of confidential and/or online reporting options, discouragement to report incidents to the police, failure to provide interim measures to protect and support the complainant, [and] a requirement that those who file complaints must participant in an adjudication process" (Gunraj, 2014, p. 10).

There have been critiques of sexual violence policies in colleges and universities, even before Bill 132, including The Ontario Women's Directorate (2013) guide for "Developing a Response to Sexual Violence: A Resource Guide for Ontario's Colleges and Universities" which included a recommended template for sexual violence policies and procedures at colleges and universities. The template included suggested language for a policy statement including "sexual violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated," "survivors will be believed and respected as the final decision-makers as to what is in their own best interest," and "individuals who have committed an act of sexual violence will be held accountable by the institution, and face disciplinary action up to and including expulsion" (Women's Directorate, 2013). Other sections in the Women's Directorate (2013) document recommended: education and discussion on sexual violence, a statement of survivor's rights, a sexual violence response protocol, a listing of local services, a glossary, and information about relevant legislation. While this guide does not provide an explicit critique of existing policies, it does imply that many policies (where they exist) do not follow what the Women's Directorate (2013) considers to be best practices and protocols that put the survivors' interests first in the reporting and investigative process.

One of the most recent studies of sexual violence in Ontario universities is The Change Project, a collaboration between the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region (SASC), the Social Innovation Research Group (SIRG), the Centre for Women and Trans People* (CWT), the UW Women's Centre, the Diversity and Equity Office at Laurier (DEO), Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU/Laurier), and the University of Waterloo (UW). The Change Project Report, authored by Harrison and Lafriere (2015) aimed "to work toward ending gendered violence on campus through transforming the institutional and cultural climate of the universities and the community" (p. 9). The study recommended "coordinated, student-centered responses"

(Harrison and Lafriere, 2015, p. 91) to sexual violence so that survivors and the campus community have clear protocols for responding, reporting, investigating and adjudicating incidents. Harrison and Lafriere (2015) found that there were a number of policies at Wilfrid Laurier related to gendered violence, but that there was still a lack of clarity about the protocol for how individual cases should be addressed. Harrison and Lafriere (2015) also recommended training for likely first contacts (all staff, faculty and student leaders at the university) regarding how best to handle students' disclosures of gendered violence and to support students through referrals and resources.

In 2014 the Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC) carried out an informal "snapshot" of relevant policy documents of 15 post-secondary institutions to get a sense of the Canadian campus context" (Gunraj, 2014, p. 7). Their review included 10 universities and 5 colleges across Canada that had relatively easy-to-find online policies on sexual violence. To evaluate these institutions, the study focused on whether there was: a specific sexual assault policy, a definition of sexual assault, conflict of interest processes for those following up on sexual assault reports, confidentiality processes, complaint rights, interim measures to protect complainants, mediation or informal resolution processes, training for those leading investigations, hearings or mediations, and information on the rights of complainants to a support person in mediations, hearings or investigations, an exemption of lesser violations (ex. alcohol policy) in a case of sexual assault, a prevention clause to refuse irrelevant inquiries into complainant's sexual history, a commitment to the right for the complainant to be informed of the result of an investigation, hearing or disciplinary process, and a right for the complainant to appeal. Based on METRAC's preliminary review, some institutions "lack comprehensive policies to deal with sexual assault" (Gunraj, 2014, p. 8) and

some of the markers for determining effectiveness of policies were not addressed by any institution. In light of this research, Gunraj (2014) recommended that more effective policies and procedures for sexual assault must include: "robust processes for reporting, investigating and adjudicating sexual assault cases" (p. 10), and "a team of specially trained first responders and advocates who, among other things, help survivors/victims make reports, develop safety plans and access services and accommodations" (10). Thus, Gunraj's (2014) research incorporates a range of policy and practice as suggestions for implementing an effective system for addressing sexual violence on campus.

Alani and Jeffry (2015) also recommend a related set of best practices to ensure universities have an effective policy including: having "key terms such as "consent", "force", and "incapacity"" (p. 16) defined in their policies, making clear who the policy applies to (students, staff, faculty, volunteers, etc.), informing all students, staff and faculty of the policy, incorporating student voices in the development of the policy, clearly outlining the rights of the accused and survivor as well as the institution's response which includes referrals, treatment, and services, emphasizing an individual's choice in how to proceed in the reporting process, and ensuring respectful and confidential reporting (especially for the most marginalized students). While Alani and Jeffry (2015) emphasize the importance of these recommendations, they also recognize these as first steps in policy development. Indeed, other researchers such as Tremblay, Harris, Berman, MacQuarrie, Hutchinson, Smith, Braley, Jelley, and Dearlove (2008) argue that: "although most universities and colleges have sexual harassment policies in place, these need to be routinely reviewed and revised to ensure that they provide the requisite degree of safety students need and have the necessary depth and breadth to encompass a wide range of situations" (p. 72). Thus, there is a significant body of Canadian research on sexual violence policy and

protocol that includes templates and suggestions on confidentiality, definitions, and training to ensure survivors and the campus community has a clear understanding of responding, reporting, investigating and adjudicating incidents of sexual violence.

Evaluating Effective Sexual Violence Services

Just as sexual violence policies need evaluation to ensure their effectiveness in supporting survivors, so do the services that augment those policies and procedures. For example, preventative sexuality and consent education and programing such as bystander training, and peer-to-peer awareness campaigns are crucial for sexual violence prevention and education on healthy relationships. Streng and Kaminmura (2015) focused on education and programming and found that: "programming should not happen just one time in a student's academic career, but during every school year, to keep the material fresh, and maximize preventative results" (p. 69).

Separate from education, very few of the studies I found focused on evaluating the services and supports students used in the aftermath of their experience of sexual violence. In one of the few studies that did, Sudderth, Leisring and Bronson (2010) argued that:

> It is not simply the characteristics of the assault that determine disclosure by women students who experience sexual violence. Maturity, familiarity with campus resources, proximity, and an increasing number of violent incidents [on campus] also influence the decision to disclose to campus authorities (p.61)

Thus, this study suggests that if students are not familiar with supports and resources on campus they are less likely to disclose. However, the study did not explore the effectiveness of those resources as a factor in disclosing. Shifting to the broader context, Lang's (2011) study of sexual misconduct policies and universities and colleges, highlighted "the reality is that many universities today are understaffed and underfunded" (p. 44) a conclusion which emphasizes that robust sexual violence policies, education, and supports must compete for resources in a

neoliberal environment where funding is extremely limited. Overall, other than the recognition that supports and services are underfunded and understaffed, there is little information on the effectiveness of supports and services that augment sexual violence policies and procedures.

Francis, Giesbrecht, Henry and Turgeon's (2016) work, "From the margins to the centre: Re-thinking sexual violence education and support at Brock University," was one of the only sources I found that provided an in-depth look at supports and services for survivors of sexual violence in a university setting. The report focuses on the prevalence of rape culture on campus and its differential impact for Indigenous, racialized, LGBTQ2+ students and those with mental health struggles. Overall this research found that sexual violence is not experienced by all people in the same way, regardless of race, sexuality, or relationship to the colonial state. Indeed, interviewees highlighted the importance of colonial and racial stereotypes about sexualization; survivors' feelings about reporting, as marginalized populations are already subject to over-policing and police brutality; as well as access to support services that do not have the cultural competency and so alienate the very people who are most in need and who face multiple barriers – all of which affect survivors' safety to report. One of the professionals that the authors interviewed was Farrah Khan, the Sexual Violence Response Coordinator at Ryerson, who emphasized that campus security is viewed very differently by students of colour compared to white students. As mentioned previously, women of colour have higher rates of experiencing violence perpetrated by law enforcement and state officials than white women (Archer Mann, 2012). Consequently, it is no surprise that women of colour are less likely to trust and seek the help of campus security.

The report also outlined some of the barriers survivors face when requesting

accommodations, which was especially evident in interviews with students who self-identified as

having mental health struggles. For instance, one student stated:

> You need a certain level of ability in order to access disability services. It can be very
> difficult because they have a lot of assumptions on your ability to go through these
> motions…. I know a lot of people who aren't registered with a disability precisely
> because of their disability, and their inability to go through that whole process
> (Francis, Giesbrecht, Henry, & Turgeon, 2016, p. 12).

Given the bureaucratic barriers facing students with mental health struggles, the fact that these

students are more likely to be affected by sexual violence, and the likelihood that students

affected by sexual violence often need mental health services, it is clear that some already

marginalized students face significantly more problems accessing supports and services.

Students interviewed for this report highlighted that teaching assistants and professors

were often unhelpful to survivors of sexual violence because "TA's themselves didn't know how

to proceed because the policy was shrouded or unclear; and others were turned down when they

asked to be accommodated in part because they waited too long due to confusion about how to

proceed" (Francis, Giesbrecht, Henry, & Turgeon, 2016, p. 15). Thus, when students do try to

access support, teaching assistants and professors do not have an understanding of policy or

possible accommodations. Yet those same students must know the policy and proceed within

appropriate timelines for accommodations.

Similar to Lang's (2011) study, which recognized the impact of understaffed and

underfunded universities, students in Francis, Giesbrecht, Henry, and Turgeon,'s (2016) report

expressed their dissatisfaction with university leadership who often left the responsibility for

sexual violence supports to organizations funded by students. Indeed, at Brock University, most

services were provided through student levy. Thus, this report also emphasized the problems of a

neoliberal university environment where administration rarely provided the kinds of leadership, funding, information about policy and protocol, and supports and accommodations that students felt were necessary.

Overall this literature review aimed to provide an understanding of contemporary sexual violence policies and practices on university campuses. Starting with an examination of representations in popular news media, I then summarized U.S. and Canadian legislation that shapes policy. Finally, I assessed the scholarly literature on student experiences of university and college sexual violence policies and procedures, and the supports and services that often are the foundation for practical student responses. This literature review revealed significant gaps in relation to sexual violence as many existing policies did not include comprehensive definitions of sexual violence, nor do they address issues of confidentiality, or mention proactive training or services. Ultimately these problems can undermine university and college members responding to and adjudicating incidences of sexual violence.

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Chapter Three

Methodology and Methods

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This chapter will outline the methodology of my thesis, the methods I used, and the process of recruiting six student participants and two policy developer participants in individual semi-structured qualitative interviews.

Methodology

For the purpose of my research, I used institutional ethnography (IE) as my methodology. Dorothy Smith "introduced the term *institutional ethnography*" (DeVault & McCoy, 2004, p.

191) in Smith's (1987) book, *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*, which focused on a sociology that would incorporate "women's everyday worlds" (p. 176). In Smith's earlier work, she argued that the overwhelming majority of research was investigated and written from the perspective of men. Although Smith (1987) focused on women's exclusion and oppression, other scholars using institutional ethnography have taken up this methodology to provide a framework for illuminating, examining, and explaining multiple and intersecting forms of oppression. IE was chosen for this research study as the same "consequences of a silence, an absence [and] a nonpresence" (p. 20) that Smith describes in her early work still applies to the systemic silencing of sexual violence on university campuses. Although there has been a lot of attention to this issue in the media I argue that this coverage only reinforces how most university systems, policies, and practices continue to silence the perspectives and experiences of survivors on university campuses regarding sexual violence.

In Smith's (2005) later work, *Institutional Ethnography: A Sociology for People*, she argues that the aim of institutional ethnography is to make the taken for granted and invisible structures that affect local actualities begin to be more visible as "an extension of our ordinary knowledge" (p. 29). In other words, institutional ethnography situates the individual and local within institutional settings and charts how these people and settings are connected to larger macro structures and discourses. In my research, I used institutional ethnography as a methodology to assist me in situating the individual's experience(s) of being affected by sexual violence within the context of the university I studied, in a network of other universities in Ontario and across universities in Canada and the United States. By connecting the micro and macro levels of oppression, institutional ethnography works as "a piece of a quilt that remains to be attached to other pieces in the creation of a whole pattern" (Smith, 1987, p. 177). Thus, this

one study at Turnhill University is one piece of the quilt that is interwoven with other

representations and analyses of sexual violence on campus across North America. This

methodology also provided a relatively open and fluid structure for my research because, as

DeVault and McCoy (2004) argue:

> There is no "one way" to conduct an IE investigation. Rather, there is an analytic
> project that can be realized in diverse ways. IE investigations are rarely planned out
> fully in advance. Instead, the process of inquiry is rather like grabbing a ball of
> string, finding a thread, and then pulling it out; that is why it is difficult to specify in
> advance exactly what the research will consist of. IE researchers know what they
> want to explain, but only step by step can they discover whom they need to interview
> or what texts and discourses they need to examine (p. 194).

As there is no "one way" to conduct an institutional ethnography, I aimed to use the central

procedures of this methodology while allowing space for my research to take shape organically

as DeVault and McCoy (2004) describe. This process allowed me to follow up on leads that were

provided through more informal connections as well as formal interviews.

        According to Smith (1987), "institutional ethnography involves three main procedures"

(p. 166): analyzing ideological procedures, engaging with the people who are directly involved

with the everyday world's institutional processes, and connecting social relations and work

processes in a way that creates social courses of action. Through these procedures, I aimed to a)

analyze all available university documents related to sexual violence, b) engage with people

directly involved with the everyday processes regarding sexual violence on campus (such as

policy developers and students), and, finally, c) connect social relations and work processes in a

way that creates social courses of action by using the data collected to make recommendations

regarding university policies and protocols. My hope was to begin to imagine the creation of

policies and procedures that are more effective for survivors and more socially just. Overall then,

I found the framework of institutional ethnography beneficial as it directly correlates with my

research questions and methods. In addition, institutional ethnography as a methodology itself created a space to conduct this study organically, and this was the best fit for my research.

Methods

This section provides an overview of methods chosen and procedures taken for collecting documentary evidence, participant interview recruitment, and the interview process.

Initially I chose document analysis, qualitative one-on-one semi-structured interviews and focus groups as my methods to answer the following research questions:

1. What prevention, support, and education policies and procedures constitute Turnhill University's protocol regarding sexual violence on campus?
2. How has this protocol been developed? To what effect?
3. When Turnhill University's students experience sexual violence, do they involve university officials, policies and/or procedures? Why or why not?
4. How could Turnhill University's sexual violence protocols be improved to facilitate better outcomes for sexually violated students?

To answer my first question, I would use document analysis, with my second question, I would conduct one-on-one interviews with policy developers and for my third question, and I would conduct one-on-one interviews with students. For my final question, I hoped to synthesize an analysis of documents, one-on-one interviews with both groups of participants, and focus groups with the same group of student participants. Similar to Madriz's (2000) view of focus groups, I believed focus groups would expose and validate the everyday experiences of those affected by sexual violence. Focus groups would therefore enable me to provide a safer space for student participants to have their voices heard and shared and a place where they could consider the perspectives of others while providing rich recommendations for future policy and procedures. However, the Research Ethics Board (REB) suggested that there were substantial ethical risks in using focus groups as it could compromise student confidentiality. Consequently,

I decided it was best to forgo focus groups as I could ask about students' recommendations regarding policies and procedures within the context of one-on-one interviews with less risk to participants. Although I followed through with the recommendations from REB, I still believe that it would have been beneficial to conduct focus groups. Students would have been given the opportunity to not only provide their perspective on what recommendations they would provide to the university but they would also have the opportunity collaborate with one another to provide recommendations that incorporated complex and intersectional perspectives in a safe space. Overall, the restrictions of the REB led to my using two main methods: document analysis and qualitative semi-structured one-on-one interviews. I used both methods in multiple stages of my study.

Document Analysis

According to Gee (2011), there are two forms of discourse (written and/or spoken communication) analysis: descriptive and critical. Descriptive discourse analysis often uses statistics to measure or explain whereas critical discourse analysis not only aims to describe something or offer deep explanations, but it also aims to "speak to and, perhaps, intervene in, social or political issues, problems and controversies in the world" (Gee, 2011, p. 9). When analyzing documents, I used a critical discourse analysis because this approach is not politically neutral, nor is my research neutral, as I aim to understand how a university can create more just and effective sexual violence policies and protocols for survivors. Similarly, Jorgensen and Phillips (2002) explain that critical discourse analysis as an approach that recognizes "discourse is an important form of social practice which both reproduces and changes knowledge, identities and social relations including power relations, and at the same time is also shaped by other social

practices and structures" (p. 65). Furthermore, critical discourse analysis can be linked to the notion of intertextuality, in which every text or document gains meaning in relation to other texts and documents (Fairclough, 2013). Jorgensen and Phillips' (2002) conceptualization of critical discourse analysis will be further employed in chapter four where I chart my experience gaining access to policies and procedures and analyze the university's bidirectional policies and procedures on sexual violence as these shape and are shaped by social and power relations.

I began my document analysis by researching which university policies and procedures existed, past and present, which related to sexual violence. I used web searches, email inquiries, attended university task force meetings, and organized one-on-one interviews.

Initial Google searches using the university name and variations of key words "sexual assault policy" led me to the Human Rights Office webpage, which housed the Sexual Assault Response Protocol, as well as two other policies for use in a situation of sexual violence: the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy and the Student Code of Conduct. Unfortunately, any time there is a new version of a policy the university only replaces the old policy with the new policy, deleting the history of previous policies. To address this, when I found a policy or visited the website, I would check to see if there had been a new draft or change and print copies.

To better understand and address my research question regarding how the Sexual Assault Response Protocol and related policies constitute the university's approach for dealing with sexual violence on campus, I aimed to chart changes in the development of the main Sexual Assault Response Protocol, as well as related policies, from the founding of the university to the present.

My other main source for tracking policies and procedures for use in a situation of sexual

violence came from attending university committee meetings. During one of the early meetings

of a relevant committee, members received a breakdown of all policies related to human rights.

Lastly, I became aware of another policy during a one-on-one interview with a student

participant. This participant was part of the undergraduate student union at the time of their

sexual harassment experience and told me that the undergraduate student union had a separate

policy and procedure on sexual harassment. Unfortunately, the undergraduate student union did

not make that policy available. Currently, the student union uses the Respectful Work and

Learning Environment Policy.

  Although not all policies and/or procedures may be directly relevant to students, those that

potentially relate to how the university handles sexual violence include:

- Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Sexual Assault Response Protocol
- Student Code of Conduct
- Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Employment Accommodation Policy
- Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
- Accessibility (AODA) Policy
- Statement on Respectful Dialogue and Freedom of Expression
- Residence Community Guiding Principles
- Board of Trustees Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Academic Integrity Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Safe Disclosure Policy [i]

  Overall, through web searches, email inquiries, and one-on-one interviews I found the

following to constitute the main sexual violence policies and procedures used in the university's

response to the sexual violence of students past and present:

- Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Sexual Assault Response Protocol
- Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy
- Student Code of Conduct

Thus, these four policies and procedures will be the focus of my research.

Interviews

Drawing on Seidman's (2012) conceptualization of interviewing and Smith's (1987) framework of institutional ethnography, I aimed to explore the everyday experiences of students and policy developer staff to provide a multidimensional analysis of how sexual violence against students is handled at Turnhill University. Although there is previous research on sexual violence on North American campuses, very few studies include the perspectives of policy developers and students whose experiences reflect the everyday organization, deployment, and use of sexual violence policies and procedures.

First, I sought to interview two policy developers. I aimed to interview at least one previous employee of the university because they could provide the historical and institutional knowledge in addition to a working knowledge of the current policies. To minimize risk to the participants I use different job titles and pseudonyms. In my initial policy searches, I aimed to interview policy developers from the Human Rights Office (HRO). Through word of mouth a previous employee of the HRO, Jade, was told about my research and expressed interest in an interview. I sent Jade a letter of invitation, informed consent form, and interview questions, and interviewed them shortly thereafter. I also sought to interview the current HRO employee, Sarah, who was revising the current policies related to sexual violence on campus. At the time, both Sarah and I were part of the Turnhill University committees and this assisted in creating a professional rapport. I inquired about an interview via email with the letter of invitation, informed consent form, and interview questions and interviewed Sarah shortly thereafter.

I did not have a predetermined goal for demographics when recruiting policy developers and although both participants did not disclose all identity markers (class, sexual orientation, ability, etc.) both participants were white women. Interviews with policy developers were scheduled for 30-60 minutes however both interviews went slightly over the time scheduled. Jade's interview went for 1 hour and 23 minutes and Sarah's interview went for 1 hour and 2 minutes. I believe that Jade's interview was the longest (including among student participant interviews) because they had the most historical and institutional knowledge and longest experience at the institution. Although I initially planned to interview both policy developers at the university in a private room, Jade requested to meet at an off-campus location. Due to the sensitive nature of the interview, I accommodated their request to meet in a private room at a library in town. Since Sarah was comfortable meeting on campus, we met in their office for the interview. Although Sarah was comfortable meeting in their office, they were the only participant who asked that certain details of their interview not be included in the final thesis. Sarah did not explain their reasoning, but I speculated that they might have concerns about disclosing information or analysis that could risk their employment. One consideration I had not thought about in my ethics application was the email address I should use to send my correspondence to policy developers. To mitigate risks to the current employee at the HRO we shared personal email accounts so that the transcript and any questions they had would not be on their work email. Overall, both interviews with policy developers provided rich data and the semi-structured interview format led to discussions outside my original purview, which I will explore further in later chapters.

As the intent of this study is to serve as a resource for students and survivors and to advocate for universities to change policy in ways that benefit these groups it was vital to

incorporate the voices of students who were directly affected by the university's policies and procedures. I did not target any specific demographic of students regarding age, gender, sexual orientation, race, or ability. However, I recognized the likelihood of having primarily white, cis-women participants, due to the Turnhill University's demographics, as the student population is 57% female,[ii] combined with the stigma associated with people who identify as men disclosing sexual violence (Ralston, 2012, p.290)**.** There were further challenges to obtaining a diverse group of participants as I did not want to tokenize individuals solely based on how they identify, not all forms of oppression are visible, and participants may not have wanted to disclose some aspects of their identities even when asked during the interviews. To minimize risk to the student participants I am using pseudonyms here.

My initial aim was to recruit four to six student participants directly affected by sexual violence while a student at the university. However, due to anticipated difficulties with recruiting this specific group of students I expanded my scope to include students who had a family member or friend who was directly affected by sexual violence while a student at Turnhill University. Initially word of my research project spread informally, and many people provided me with potential contacts and/or participants. With the consent of potential participants, I obtained their contact information so that I could forward my letter of information, informed consent form, and interview questions. I also put up posters around the school titled "Participants Needed for Research about Sexual Assault" for two weeks during the second semester of the 2016 school year. I also shared digital copies of the poster on my Facebook page as well as on the page of an activist group of students against sexual violence. Finally, I shared the poster, letter of invitation, informed consent form, and interview questions with the university based student sexual violence center (SSVC) and they forwarded this material to their current volunteer

list. I also contacted a sub-group of the center that focused on men working towards violence prevention, but received no response. Overall, I recruited six student participants.

I believe part of the reason why I could reach my goal of six student participants was because during my recruitment a popular media outlet released a series of articles about an incidence of sexual violence at Turnhill University where I did my research. This publicity could have had a range of effects, both magnifying interest and potentially scaring off potential interviewees: for example, some students who initially inquired about my study did not reply to my follow up email. Possibly, the publicity about this case left them feeling overwhelmed or triggered. While I can only speculate about the reasons for students not following through on an interview, I believe it is important to recognize the impact that publicized incidences of sexual violence can have on students/survivors. At the same time, I also believe some of the silence surrounding sexual violence was finally breaking down as the university's committee on sexual violence prevention had a large meeting during this same period with 100 people in attendance that focused on the experiences and voices of students who were affected by sexual violence. Overall, I do believe that national media coverage of this scandal and the courageous survivor, who came forward to share their experience, had a positive impact on my being able to recruit participants.

Although I did not target any specific demographics, every participant was comfortable self-identifying. All but one participant identified as a survivor and/or as a person directly affected by sexual violence. Students ranged from second to fifth year students in a range of programs including Dramatic Arts, Concurrent Education, Social Sciences, Kinesiology, Applied Linguistics, Business, and Women's and Gender Studies. Their ages ranged from 19-21 and all but one participant identified as female. The one person who identified as male was also the one

person who did not identify themselves as directly affected by sexual violence. Regarding race, participants identified as: White (3), Indo-Canadian (1), Filipino (1), and a person of colour (1); and two participants identified as queer, one participant identified as pansexual, and the rest of the participants identified as straight. Again, with such a small sampling, I did not want to tokenize individuals but this overview does indicate that I was able to recruit a broad pool of student participants.

Like the interviews with policy developers, the target length of interviews for students was 30-60 minutes. Student interviews ranged from 22 minutes to 1 hour and 19 minutes. The shortest interview was with the male participant not directly affected by sexual violence. The male participant, Marc, also did not know very much about the campus, services or policies, which made our conversation shorter than other participant interviews. The participant with the longest student interview also had the most experience with policies and services at the university as well as the services in the area, which ultimately ensured an informative interview.

In both categories of participants, I collected data by audio recording and note taking during interviews. All participants received the transcripts to review to ensure that they were comfortable with they way they were represented. I also ensured all interviews were confidential so that no one other than my supervisor and me had access to interview transcripts. Then I analyzed the data by labelling words, phrases, sentences, and sections I saw as relevant, and then identifying emerging themes. I then went over all interview transcripts and began to create categories to reflect on how they connected with each other. I developed my analysis through critically assessing the themes that emerged from all of these sources and reflecting on how these connected with previous literature in this area.

Through my analysis, I identified six main themes. Three themes emerged from interviewing policy developers: working conditions, confusing and/or outdated policies, and lack of record keeping; and three themes emerged from interviewing students: the cost of being a survivor, disconnected and/or inconsistent services, and, as many students described, an "empty" policy. I organized my themes into two chapters: Policy and Political Climate, and Student Experiences. In these chapters, I will provide some history of the institution I studied, an analysis of relevant university policies and procedures that relate to sexual violence, and analysis of the six themes. Then, I will reflect on how everything connects in my conclusion.

Chapter Four

Policy and Political Climate

In this chapter, I analyze the main themes that emerged through assessing sexual violence policies and interviewing policy developers Jade and Sarah. In particular, I highlight the poor working conditions for the HRO staff, the confusing and/or outdated nature of university policies and procedures, and an overall lack of record keeping. I start with an overview of the political climate and chronology of the university's approach to sexual violence policy development. I then move to assessing how this climate affected policy developers through reflecting on their interviews and highlighting the relationship between climate and staff working conditions. Then I outline the main policies that constitute the university's approach to handling sexual violence against students. Here I focus on three areas: policy versus practice, the impact of power dynamics on policy implementation, and definitions related to sexual violence. Lastly, I will provide an analysis of areas in which the university lacks proper record keeping on incidences of

sexual violence and reflect on the impact of all of these practices for a sustained commitment to sexual violence response.

Political Climate and Chronology

There is no record of the university developing any policy framework to address sexual violence for nearly three decades from its founding. I came to this conclusion while trying to chart changes in the Sexual Assault Response Protocol, and related policies. To accomplish this, I first inquired about an archive of policies related to sexual violence on campus with a librarian at the front desk of the library to see if they had a public record of policies at the university. Unfortunately, they did not, so I was directed another Librarian who then directed me to a Secretary to the University who then directed me to an IT employee. After a few friendly reminders over a month to the IT employee, I was directed to an Associate Vice President. Again, after a few friendly reminders over a month to the Associate Vice President I received an email attachment with a photocopy of a policy on harassment and diversity. Unfortunately, it was unclear when the policy was originally approved since it was a photocopy of the Human Rights Office webpage. Despite repeated attempts to inquire about earlier policies, it became clear I had come to a dead end.

Around the same time as my initial inquiries at the library, I emailed an employee at the Human Rights Office (also known as HRO) to ask if they had access to an archive of policies related to sexual violence. Through their search, they found that the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy and the Sexual Assault Response Protocol were the first and only versions of policy in this area. While analyzing the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy I saw that it referred to another policy called "Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures"

from the early 1990s. Unfortunately, the current HRO employee did not have access to files from that period. Like my search for an archive of policies with the Associate Vice President, the HRO employee was unable to find any further policies. Fortunately, though, a few weeks later, the HRO employee switched offices (again) and in the process of packing and unpacking found a hardcopy of the earlier policy, which they shared with me, as well as the Associate Vice President. Thus, the only record I have of the university working against sexual violence is from the 1990's policy on sexual harassment. After comparing the policy from the early 1990s to the policy on harassment and diversity from the webpage, I realized that the two were the same. Thus, from the early 1990s to mid-2000s there was no change in the university policy on sexual harassment. While the policy remained consistent over 14 years, I was unable to determine if this policy was actually implemented as there seems to be a lack of institutional accountability with record keeping and a lack of knowledge about the existence of this policy.

Since most of the work on student cases of sexual violence on campus goes through the Human Rights Office (HRO), I focused my attention on the political climate surrounding that office. Unfortunately, there is not a full record of the HRO's funding and staffing trends so the majority of information I gathered was from a policy developer participant, web searches (including available HRO Annual Reports), and informal inquiries.

According to an annual report, the HRO was established in 2005. However, before it was the HRO, it was called the Office for Harassment Prevention. Unfortunately, there is no record of when the Office for Harassment Prevention was established, but according to the early 1990's policy on sexual harassment, there was a Sexual Harassment Advisor working at the university, perhaps within Human Resources. Jade, a policy developer participant and previous employee of the HRO for just over six years provided more information on the evolution of the office.

According to Jade, the Office for Harassment Prevention had "two full time staff members, manager, and an officer." For most the time Jade was employed (2008-2014), there were two employees in the HRO and the office was accountable for the administration of policies and procedures related to the Ontario Human Rights Code as well as the Occupation Health and Safety Act. Jade was responsible for dealing with complaints under the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy as well as providing education and training and assisting in policy and program development.

While the formal administration of policies related to sexual violence against students were overseen by Human Resources and then the HRO, self-organized student groups also shape the climate and services available for students on campus. Unlike most other universities in the province, the university I studied had only recently passed a student levy to fund a center that would serve as a hub for student organizing on sexual violence. In the fall of 2013, students organized a successful referendum to fund a student sexual violence center (SSVC) with an organizational budget of $200,000. Although this was a great accomplishment, it is important to know that an earlier referendum was defeated. As I was an undergraduate volunteer for the SSVC for two years, I can attest to the fact that there were many challenges before the referendum was passed, as I outlined in my introduction. Currently most support services for students, staff, faculty, allies and first responders specific to sexual violence come through the SSVC and students fund them, not the university.

Theme One: Working Conditions

In 2014, Turnhill University started an organizational restructuring process, which resulted in mass layoffs, including one of the staff people in the HRO. This left Jade to manage

the operations of the entire HRO office on their own and a shift in accountability meant they

reported to Human Resources rather than directly to the President. This organizational

restructuring came after several years of program cuts that had reduced the budget for proactive

outreach considerably. In this context, Jade mentioned that they never collaborated with the new

student sexual violence center. Nevertheless, Jade was in contact with one of the founders about

the process and procedure for laying complaints under the Respectful Work and Learning

Environment Policy.

By January 2015, Jade chose to leave the HRO. In reflecting on this decision, they

commented:

> Number one the office had gone through some downsizing and the workload was
> unmanageable for one person... [While] there were plans … for moving- growing
> the office again and allocating more resources... there were no specific timeframes
> for that. So I think that when an offer came along for me to move to another
> institution [I took it]. … Also, part of my reasoning for leaving was, um, I
> received this offer just shortly after the … most recent incident of [racism] on
> campus and I guess I was disappointed that this was the third incident that had
> occurred and I was, I would say not 100% satisfied with the way in which the
> institution responded to that. So I felt perhaps it was time to move on.

After Jade left the university, the position was filled on an interim basis for about 10

months by a new employee in Human Resources over-and-above their own workload.

Reflecting on this sequence of events: layoffs, program defunding, Jade's resignation, and the

reallocation of this work to Human Resources – it seems the university was not prioritizing staff

and financial resources, which could address incidences of racism or sexual harassment. While

the HRO was undergoing these problems, male students at Turnhill University posed with a sign

outside of residence with the message: "Drop your daughter off here."[iii] While this incident was

similar to those at other Canadian and American institutions, there was little in the way of an

institutional response, another sign of the failure to respond to sexual harassment.

By November 2015, the HRO once again had one staff, Sarah, who the university hired to become compliant with the requirements of Bill 132. Following from provincial requirements, Sarah was very involved in sexual violence policy development that includes feedback from students, staff, and faculty on campus. While this hiring could be understood as a re-commitment to sexual violence policy development, it should be noted that this only happened after the Ontario Liberal government announced that all universities *must* have a sexual violence policy in place by January 1, 2017.

Nevertheless, this movement constituted some progress. This perception of 'progress' was, however, seriously challenged in 2016, when national news media reported that a student had been sexually assaulted by a professor at the university. The university investigation into the matter had concluded three months prior to the media storm, yet the professor remained teaching on campus up until the week the article was published. Given the lack of any discipline for the professor in this case, students concluded that the university was more concerned about damage control and public image than its commitment to survivors on campus. Hence, students organized a demonstration on campus a few days later with university community members who refused to stay silent. During the demonstration, the President of the university was provided with demands. A few students, myself included, met with the President, Sarah, and a Senior Administrator to review the following list:

> 1. That [the professor who sexually violated their student] immediately resign.
> 2. That the administrator responsible for the handling of this case, including the report and discipline that should have come following the report, immediately resign.
> 3. A full time, permanent, on campus Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator be hired before September 2016. The hiring committee for this position will include at least 25% student membership, elected by and from the Sexual Violence Prevention Task Force. All complaints about sexual violence will be directed to this one individual, who acts as the central point of contact, and the university will ensure that all on campus (students, faculty, staff, and other

support providers) know to direct complaints to this individual. Their job will include, but is not limited to: handling complaints, providing education for students, faculty, staff and administration focused on consent and rape culture.
4. University-funded sexual violence prevention and bystander intervention training be required for admin, campus security, undergraduate and graduate student unions, and that training be made available and highly recommended to union members including faculty and CUPE members.
5. Hire a university-funded sexual violence-specific counsellor, who is also culturally sensitive, and who will be made regularly available to students and other survivors in the same space as the Sexual Violence Prevention Coordinator.
6. Provide immediate trauma counselling services on campus specific to sexual violence until the university-funded sexual violence-specific counsellor is hired.
7. The updated sexual assault policy be survivor and student-centered, and make specific provisions for cases that involve power imbalances. This policy should necessitate that employees be placed on paid leave pending the results of a third party investigation. The policy and procedures should be made accessible to students, and must include clear guidelines about who to speak with and possible outcomes of complaints.
8. [The university] work to create a more diverse and senior administration that better represents the diversity of students. The university will do this by committing to have 25% of senior administration self-identify under one of the protected grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code by 2026 (personal communication, March 18, 2016).

During our meeting, the President agreed too many of these demands and students offered to collaborate with the university to write a statement on our joint commitment to work together. However, the university rejected this suggestion and subsequently, the President failed to confirm that they had agreed to any of the demands noted above.

Although this withdrawal from dialogue by the most senior levels of the administration was very disheartening, during the same week over 70 faculty members signed an open letter addressed to the President calling for action. The Faculty letter demanded that: the university make a significant commitment of resources (funding, staff, and autonomy) to the HRO office, develop a clear and responsible survivor-centered process for handling complaints in consultation with unions, counselling services, and campus security, and disseminate a clear set of instructions and guidelines for faculty, staff, and students regarding their rights in reporting

complaints (personal communication, March 16, 2016). Faculty members also stated that

Turnhill University administration should be supportive in advocating for a culture of

pedagogical commitment and trust (personal communication, March 16, 2016).

     Jade left the university several months before these events unfolded. However, she was

aware of the developments through the media reporting on this issue. In my interview, they

commented on the open letter written by faculty:

> [My reaction was] where have you been for the past 7 years? When the resources
> in this office have been cut, and cut, and cut, and cut, and cut to the point where,
> certainly it was unmanageable. ... So now that there's an incidence that's public,
> that's created a bit of a safety in coming forward, now you choose to do it... I
> understand why they did that, but it really pissed me off. It made me very angry.
> Had 75 of you stood up when the office was reduced to one person or had you
> stood up when our budgets were being cut by, you know, 10/15% a year
> then...you could've prevented [this]. I'm not saying that you could have prevented
> this particular situation but you could've provided more support to students, staff,
> and faculty all along. So yeah I guess I have a little bit of a jaded perspective and I
> know other people think this is great faculty are coming forward but I don't.

Jade's comments speak to the ways organizational restructuring and de-funding of the human

rights office was overlooked by the broader university community, specifically faculty, allowing

for the fundamental erosion of institutional policy and services. They also speak to the isolation

of HRO staff from other members of the university.

     Two days after the open letter from faculty was released, the President sent out a letter to

the university community to announce the forming of a new presidential task force to review

relevant policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment, sexual violence, and

unprofessional behaviour of students or employees. The President also announced that the

university would hire a new sexual violence response coordinator – thus accepting one of the

student demands. Lastly, the President said that the university would immediately review and

enhance trauma counselling services as needed, indicating some attention to other student

concerns in the wake of this scandal (personal communication, March 18, 2016).

Jade and I discussed the idea of this new coordinator position, which she heard about

through our interview, and she responded:

> Part of me is happy that regardless of how it got there it's getting there and it's
> what needs to be in place… [but] I don't really know enough about the
> coordinator role … to make an educated assumption or comment whether or not
> those positions are effective. So I'm happy there's more resources towards equity
> work in general but I worry that … those resources aren't necessarily going to be
> allocated in the best way, they're just going to be allocated in a way that is going
> to appease public outcry. And so I don't really have confidence that the institution
> really knows what is needed because right now there lacks an institutional
> history... [The current staff] has only been in that role for a short period of time.
> Most of the individuals who did work closely with our office are no longer with
> the institution.

By September 2016 the new sexual violence education and response coordinator had started

working in the HRO – though most of their time is now consumed with accommodations

requests and front-line support for students.

As for the other two areas the President referred to, reviewing and enhancing trauma

counselling services as needed, and a new presidential task force, I am not aware of any current

enhancements in trauma counselling but am aware that many university members on campus are

still pushing for improvements. The presidential task force took nominations (including students,

staff and faculty) and I was appointed as a member. Instead of focusing exclusively on sexual

violence, the task force focuses on human rights in three main areas: sexual violence, racism, and

ableism.

There is so much more to say about the political climate of this university and I only

know a portion of that history as the period of my study was from 2014-2017. When comparing

the university's HRO current staffing (with two employees) to similar sized institutions in

Ontario, it does not meet the same standards. For instance, George Brown College has twenty-two thousand students (compared to Turnhill University with 18,000 students) and has a Human Rights and Equity office staffed with five full time employees (Francis, Giesbrecht, Henry and Turgeon, 2016). Consequently, it seems the most one could say about the university I researched is that it has been reactive to incidences of sexual violence. While student, staff, and faculty activists continue to urge the university to make changes, it is providing few resources for proactive education on rape culture.

Policy Developers' Reflection on Working Conditions

This brief set of reflections on the university's approach to sexual violence demonstrates the challenges faced by those who work in HRO. In the next section of this analysis, I will assess the implications of these challenges as described by the policy developer participants who experienced them first hand. To preface this analysis, I would like to highlight that when I interviewed her, Jade had already left the institution I was researching. Consequently, she faced fewer risks in speaking out about working conditions than Sarah who was then working for the institution. Unsurprisingly, out of all of my participants Sarah was the only one to request sections of our conversation be taken out of the transcript. Despite the protections offered by my use of pseudonyms, and ensuring I withheld the name of the institution I studied; I was not shocked when Sarah wanted to exclude sections of our conversation. Indeed, documentary studies like "The Hunting Ground" (2015) or "It Happened Here" (2014) highlight that employees in post-secondary institutions have been let go or fired after making negative comments about how the institution handles sexual violence. Thus both Sarah and Jade took a risk in just speaking with me. This is one of the factors I would include in poor working

conditions: employees are afraid to talk about the conditions of their work. It also speaks to the difficulty faced by staffs who wish to articulate constructive criticisms that could ultimately improve how a university handles sexual violence.

Both participants, Jade and Sarah, had the same job requirements, and described their job as dealing with complaints of harassment and discrimination from students, staff, and faculty. These staff members also provided training on university policies, the Ontario Human Rights Code, bystander training and partnered with campus security, health services, and residence staff. Both also mentioned their involvement in committee work and policy development.

As Jade highlighted, the lack of support and isolation from faculty and other staff during a period of budget cuts was one key indicator of the poor working conditions for HRO staff. While Jade felt they had many good partnerships with campus health services, security, and residence, they also believed the HRO was under-resourced: "Do I think there was enough institutional support in terms of dollars and resources that way to the office? Probably not." Jade's point about the under-resourcing of the HRO is made clearer when you consider the political climate at the university. Indeed, as highlighted earlier, this under-resourcing was critical to Jade's decision to leave HRO in 2014.

To wrap up, the key problem highlighted by Jade, who was the only policy developer who felt comfortable to provide any critique of the university, was the intense workload and lack of political support for the office. HRO employees are responsible for training, policy development, collaborating with others on and off campus, record keeping, handling complaints of harassment and discrimination from students, staff, and faculty. These responsibilities were made more difficult, as staff faced high expectations with little support and few resources from the university. Jade's comments outline the years of defunding that took place in the HRO where

there were cuts to funding each year, cuts to staff, and a lack of support from faculty which ultimately impacted the way in which policy could be created, updated, and implemented. It is no surprise that many Ontario universities have hired new staff for the position of a sexual violence coordinator because the workload and demands of employees in offices of Human Rights are too high. However, based on my analysis of the political climate in relation to sexual violence at the university I studied, it seems unlikely that the institution has really recognized the importance of this labour. Instead, it seems that the national media coverage of a sexual violence scandal at the university, accompanied by student, faculty, and community response provided crucial internal pressure for the university to manage its 'risk' through a reallocation of resources. In addition, the new provincial legislation required increased staffing.

Theme Two: Outdated and/or Confusing Policies and Protocols

My initial intention in this study was to map out policies in a way that any student who was affected by sexual violence would be directed to and better understand their options for using the university processes. However, it soon became clear that this would be impossible, as the policies in place from the early 1990s to 2015 were confusing, outdated and internally contradictory – a point that was also mentioned by policy developers. First, I will provide a chart which gives a brief snapshot of the main policies and protocols that constitutes the university's approach to handling sexual violence on campus: The Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures, Sexual Assault Protocol, Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, and The Student Code of. Then, I will provide summaries of the main policies and protocols. After each policy, I will include my initial analysis and then I will provide a critical analysis of the impact of these policies. Overall, I argue that the university policies in this area are confusing and outdated and

these problems have made it difficult for policy developers to work within this policy framework

and for students to be aware of their existence. In addition, three subthemes emerged from

reviewing university practices in my interviews: a) significant inconsistencies between policy

versus practice, b) hierarchical power dynamics within the university (for example, between

students and faculty), and c) important inconsistencies and problems with definitions relating to

sexual violence. All of these undermine effective sexual violence policy and procedures.

Sexual Violence Policies and Protocols

Below is a chart that provides a snapshot of each document. Following this chart will be

an overview of each document in more detail as well as my analysis.

DOCUMENT	IN USE	WHO IT APPLIES TO	HOW SEXUAL VIOLENCE IS MENTIONED	ACCESSIBILITY	ANNUAL STATISTICS
SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	Early 1990s to mid-2000s	University community	Sexual harassment in the title, defines sexual harassment	Not very accessible based on my searches	No
SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE PROTOCOL	Mid-2010 for about a year	University community	Sexual assault in the title, defines consent and sexual assault	Not very accessible based on student feedback	No
STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT	Mid-2000s to present	Students	No mention of sexual violence	Not very accessible based on student feedback	No
RESPECTFUL WORK AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT POLICY	Mid-2000s to present	University community, includes volunteers and visitors	Defines sexual harassment	Not very accessible based on student feedback	Yes

The Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures was the first policy to constitute the

university's protocol regarding sexual violence on campus. This document applied to all

students, staff, faculty, and visitors of the university community and was in place from the early

1990s to mid-2000s, when the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy was instituted.

The Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures (SHPP) states that it is the university's policy: not

to condone sexual harassment, to promote awareness and an understanding of sexual harassment

through education and training, to prohibit sexual harassment, to ensure confidentially, to

promptly and fairly act on complaints on behalf of both parties, to ensure a university member

does not fear reprisal, and to ensure that authority figures communicate the policy to others in

their jurisdiction. Drawing on legal frameworks, the policy highlights that the burden of proof is

with the complainant and advises that anyone has the right to seek the services or advice of the

Ontario Human Rights Commission. Unlike any subsequent policy, this document also includes

a job description for the Sexual Harassment Advisor which includes: increasing awareness of

sexual harassment and the policy, being the official contact for allegations of sexual harassment,

providing confidential advice to any individual on complaints of sexual harassment, providing

counselling to complainants/respondents, referring individuals to other institutions, being a

member of the President's Sexual Harassment Advisory Committee, and annually reporting to

the university community through the President. To initiate the procedures, the policy outlines

that a complainant should be made to the Advisor and notes that vexatious or malicious

complaints are considered serious offenses. Complaints will only be accepted for 6 months from

the incident. Complainants have the option to resolve the complaint through informal procedures,

mediation, or a formal complaint process. In the case where formal procedures are initiated by

the complainant, then a three member Hearing Panel is to be struck by the President, which

includes the Advisor as the chair, the Supervisor of the respondent and the Supervisor of the

complainant. Within 10 days of the conclusion, the hearing panel submits their written decision

and recommendation of penalty (which includes but is not limited to warning, reprimand, adjustment of salary, suspension, dismissal, expulsion). If an individual would like to appeal the decision they can do so based on their constituency (for example, whether they are following a union or student process).

One of the strengths of the SHPP policy was the inclusion of a job description for the Advisor in HRO. Although it is not a necessity, this job description can help provide a more transparent process as the Advisor is central to how the policy is carried out. In addition, the complainant and respondent can then become aware of the services they can access as well as potential limitations of the Advisor. I also appreciated that the policy did not reinforce the gender binary through repeated use of he/she. Instead, the policy refers to people based on their status as a student, staff, faculty, advisor, president, etc. Furthermore, I found it interesting that this policy functioned as a standalone document, as currently there are multiple policies, which can create a lot of confusion. Indeed, the university is trying to revert back (as much as possible) to a standalone policy on sexual violence and harassment. Having said this, I also found several gaps and have critiques of the policy. First, the assumptions and language used, such as the complainant bearing the burden of proof that harassment or assault occurred, mirrors the framework in a criminal court system. The policy may have been framed in this way simply because it was one of the first in Ontario. Hence, the only other examples for dealing with cases of sexual violence were through the legal system. Unfortunately, this type of framework could have deterred complainants from using the policy as legal frameworks do not tend to favor the complainant in an incidence of sexual violence and minoritized women are particularly ill served by this system. In addition, the policy and procedures do not clearly outline who makes or implements the recommendation for discipline from the Hearing Panel. Without a clear idea of

the formal resolution processes and a lack of public record on how this policy was used, it is unclear if the policy was ever implemented, or monitored, or whether any discipline was carried out, or even if any students used the policy. Other gaps I found included questions such as: How were potential conflicts of interest in putting together an internal panel handled? What percentages of complaints were handled through informal discussion, versus mediation, versus formal report? What was the process for mediation? For staff, was this policy more or less helpful than grievance procedures initiated through their union? Overall, it was difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of this policy when there is little available information about its implementation.

The next protocol that dealt specifically with sexual violence was the interim Sexual Assault Response Protocol. The protocol was in effect for about a year in the mid-2010s. The protocol itself does not have a specific process for reporting through the university, but instead seems aimed at students to instruct them on options if they have just been sexually assaulted. For instance, the policy recommends that the individual go to a safe place, call the local sexual assault centre, or contact campus security based on the level of threat. It also provides some information on potential options for reporting, but again, there is no specific process mapped out in the protocol itself. The protocol notes that the university may investigate and report assaults to local law enforcement when guided by the law and that the university aims to support members who experience sexual violence by working with community agencies and providing resources, accommodations for alternative living and working arrangements, and academic accommodations if appropriate. It also suggests follow up resources including the HRO, counselling services, department of residences, and health services. Although the protocol highlights that the university cannot compel someone to bring criminal charges against a

perpetrator, it does comment that the university can proceed with an investigation without a complainant's approval. Since it is possible for more than one policy to address an incident of sexual violence, the protocol clarifies that disciplinary procedures for students fall under the Student Code of Conduct and Residence Community Guiding Principles whereas for faculty and staff the procedures used would be the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy.

One of the most confusing things I found in trying to assess this protocol was that there are no formal procedures or processes included in it. Instead it provides a list of potential resources for a person who has been sexually assaulted, references to potential routes for reporting, and reinforces the university's stance on confidentiality. Nevertheless, it also notes that the university can undertake an investigation without consent of the complainant. Certainly, one of the strengths of this protocol is that it highlights resources available for students and staff. In addition, it is the first time at Turnhill University that policy or procedures on sexual violence define consent, coercion, sexual assault, and the term survivor. By including these definitions, I believe it demonstrates a shift in university culture, to recognize the complexity of consent in sexual interactions. Without recognizing these terms in their protocol, and highlighting that consent is a voluntary agreement that can be withdrawn at any time, and that silence should not be construed as consent, a university could be seen as unintentionally exacerbating victim blaming and failing to provide a clear understanding of sexual violence. While the inclusion of these definitions are small steps, they also demonstrate potential shifts in campus climate. Overall, this protocol provided definitions of important concepts and highlighted some resources for complainants and survivors. However, it did not resolve any of the procedural issues highlighted as problematic in the earlier policy, and based on my interviews it was rarely used by staff or students.

I turn now to the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy (RWLEP) which has been in place from the early 2000s to the present. The university passed the RWLEP in order to deal with complaints of discrimination, harassment and/or bullying, and to make provision for support services and training to encourage a respectful work and learning environment. In issues of discrimination, bullying and general harassment the policy applies to students, staff, faculty, and visitors of the university community, but when there is an incident of sexual violence, the use of the policy depends on the status of the complainant and respondent. For instance, if the complainant is a student and the respondent is a staff or faculty member then the RWLEP is used. However, if the complainant is a student and so is the respondent, the Student Code of Conduct or the Residence Community Guiding Principles are used. The aim of the RWLEP was to develop and support a culture that values diversity and inclusion where prejudice, discrimination, harassment and bullying are not tolerated. While not providing a specific job description for the equity advisor staff, it does outline the role of the HRO which includes: support, guidance, advice and providing a "listening ear" to complainants including options for resolving the problem, assisting parties in informally resolving matters, appointing an investigation team, assisting with supervisory responsibilities in the resolution of human rights concerns, and providing referrals for complainants. Then the policy outlines the three stages of complaints: personal resolution, informal resolution, and formal resolution. Regardless of the stage, complaints have to be initiated within 6 months. Furthermore, a complaint can be withdrawn at any stage although the university may continue to act on the complaint to comply with legal obligations. Personal resolutions are the initial contact with the HRO office where the complainant could just request to speak with someone from the HRO office, ask for advice about an issue they have, or other informal forms of advice that does not need to include both parties.

The informal resolution process includes the use of alternative dispute resolution. If there is a resolution from the informal resolution process, the HRO sends written communication to both parties about the agreement. None of the information in the informal stage is put in the complainant's or respondent's student or personnel file. The formal resolution stage begins when a complainant submits a formal complaint to the HRO. The HRO then decides whether or not to proceed. If the complaint proceeds the respondent is notified within ten working days of receiving the formal complaint with the details of the complaint. Both parties are offered relevant support services and interim measures are considered and provided if required. The policy then outlines the differences in formal complaints. Complaints against a student go to security, residence and/or the Student Conduct and Activities Officer while complaints against a faculty or staff are directed through collective agreements, Human Resources, Health, and Safety policies. The RWLEP adjudicates formal complaints through an internal investigation team with three volunteers sought out by the HRO and short-listed by a committee. The process of the investigation team is to be completed within 8 weeks where the Chair of the investigation team has prepared a draft report detailing: allegations, grounds in the policy, responses of respondent/complainant, and their recommendation (case be closed, settlement reached without disciplinary action, procedure initiated resulting in disciplinary action against respondent, procedure initiated in disciplinary action against complainant).

One of my central observations about the RWLEP is that it has not actually been implemented in the ways one would assume based on reading the policy. As the Sexual Assault Protocol lacked any procedures and I had no way of knowing how the Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures were put into practice, the RWLEP was my first opportunity to examine the difference between policy and practice. For instance, as a result of my participation in the Sexual

Violence Prevention Committee I heard that the internal investigation team in the RWLEP had not actually been operative – at least during the last year that Sarah had been working in the HRO. Instead the university paid for external investigators to develop formal reports – a process that appears nowhere in the policy. Also, the RWLEP does not clearly outline when an incident of sexual violence would be categorized under this policy versus the Student Code of Conduct or the Residence Community Guiding Principles. According to my conversations with Sarah it depends on the "hat" that the complainant and respondent are wearing at the time of the incident and this is determined by HRO. Thus, it became clear to me mid-way through my research process that it is not possible to assess policy simply by reading the documents or interviewing staff. Further, the procedures associated with this policy are implemented differently especially when a person occupies multiple roles, e.g. as a student and staff member. Continuing on this theme, while the RWLEP says the HRO reports directly to the President, the HRO currently reports through the Board of Governors. It is not clear when these changes in the reporting structure were initiated and I was not able to ask Sarah as I had already completed my interviews when I realized this inconsistency. It is also worth noting that the RWLEP reinforces the gender binary by using him/her language. Lastly, the RWLEP was to be revised in three years but has not actually been revised in eight years. All of these observations reinforce my conclusion that there has been a serious lack of commitment to monitoring and updating policies and procedures, which has resulted in significant differences between policy and practice, and the policies themselves becoming unclear, and outdated.

Finally, I turn to evaluating the Student Code of Conduct, which, as we have seen, is relevant to assessing the handling of sexual violence cases when the respondent is a student or when complainant and respondent are both students. The Student Code of Conduct has been in

place from the mid-2000s to the present and begins by highlighting that the university is

responsible for making provisions for disciplining students if their conduct jeopardizes academic

and non-academic programs and activities that can affect the health, safety, rights or property of

university members or visitors. The purpose of The Student Code of Conduct is to identify

guidelines for appropriate behaviour of university students, identify behaviour classified as non-

academic student misconduct with procedures to address it, and to have procedures for

responding to students-at-risk behaviour. The scope of the code applies to students on and off

campus when they are acting as a delegate or representative of the university or a student group.

Under some situations where a student is not of legal age there may be limitations to the code.

The code mentions that the university does not monitor sites like Facebook or Twitter but since

they are public forums, if content is brought to the attention of the university that breaches

university policy it is subject to investigation. Next the code provides an overview of offenses

which include: recording, gambling, disruptive behaviour, verbal abuse, physical abuse,

threatening behaviour, inciting violence, harassment, unauthorized entry/presence, damage and

destruction of property, false charges, misconduct related to the use of alcohol or drugs, hazing,

theft, bringing weapons onto university property or a university activity, failure to comply, and

abuse of the disciplinary system. The code then outlines the process and procedures for

addressing student misconduct. If the student breaches Residence Community Guiding Principles

the incident is handled through the residence disciplinary procedures and sanctions. If there is

only minor misconduct it will be addressed in the department where it occurred unless resolution

cannot be achieved, and minor infractions are repeated or university officials believe the

infraction is more serious, in which case it is the jurisdiction of the Manager of Student Affairs.

Other offenses also are directed to the Manager of Student Affairs and need to be filed within ten

days of the incident. The Manager of Student Affairs can then dismiss the matter, interview the student, or refer the matter to the University Discipline Panel. The code then outlines potential appeals processes and based on the type of misconduct there are also outlines for sanctions.

There is then a separate section in the Student Code of Conduct on the process and procedures for responding to students-at risk. There is a Students-at-Risk team, which provides response and support to the student-at-risk. The code breaks down responses in three categories: level 1 threat (outcomes: support/referral, campus probation, or a residence behaviour contract), level 2 threat (outcomes: level 1 outcomes, referral of the case to non-academic discipline process and/or immediate involuntary leave), and level 3 threat (outcomes: level one and two outcomes, and/or immediate involuntary withdrawal from the university). The code also outlines the procedure for a student returning to campus from voluntary or involuntary leave or withdrawal. Similar to the previous process, students-at-risk can appeal a decision at any level. In addition, interim measures for either classification of student can include restrictions on a student's movement on campus, non-association/no contact directives, and suspension of student privileges.

One of the challenges I encountered in evaluating the Student Code of Conduct and other policies or procedures was my lack of access to information about how this code was used in practice. For instance, the code outlines that there is a Student-At-Risk team and their roles in supporting/disciplining students but it does not include any clear information about how confidentiality works with/in the team, and when or if students are notified that they are considered a "student-at-risk." One of my student participants did touch on these questions in her interview. Mary told me they were required to sign a behavioural contract to agree not to engage in any self-harming behaviors, but never referred to the Student Code of Conduct, or being

classified as a student-at-risk, or any contact with the Student-At-Risk team. Instead they

explained to me that, in their experience, information is often shared with others without a

student's consent. For instance, if a student brings a concern about sexual violence to their don,

the don can then bring it to the head don, who brings it to a Residence Life Staff member, and

the information can then be brought to Campus Security all without notifying the student who

brought the initial concern until they find out they have a meeting with Campus Security and that

there are now several individuals aware of their personal experiences. I do understand that there

are times when contacting others can be necessary. However, one of the most serious concerns

that arose in my review of the policies and procedures was when I attempted to compare them to

the experiences of students. As will become clearer in my next chapter, which highlights student

interviews, it often seemed to me that students are not aware of being pushed through policy

processes or procedures, and as a result, they do not know their rights. Overall, I concluded that

it is very difficult to discern how policies and protocols are put into practice when the processes

are not transparent and students are not even aware that they exist. In addition, the policy that

arguably would have been used most often to deal with sexual violence by students against

students, does not even mention sexual violence as an issue that might require intervention.

Policy versus Practice

In my interviews with policy developers they also reflected on this confusion in the

implementation of policies and procedures. For example, Sarah, who at the time of our interview

was in the process of writing a new policy on sexual violence, explained that there have been

overlaps in multiple policies and procedures regarding sexual violence and these overlaps have

caused considerable confusion. Indeed, she noted that even in the new policy – a stand-alone

document on sexual violence – these overlaps continue. Instead, she is now aiming to "at least

spell it out in the policy when there are those overlaps" in order to provide more clarity. Part of

the reason why multiple policies may be used in a case of sexual violence is because there are

different procedures for a student than an employee (which can also change based on a person's

position in a union). In some instances, students are also employees at the university which

further complicates the process because the HRO must then decide which "hat" the complainant

or respondent is wearing at the time of the incident (as a student or employee). This can cloud

the lines between policy and practice because there are different avenues and procedures

regarding confidentiality, sanctions, and investigative processes, depending on the relevant

policy. Jade also described how the process can become confusing starting from a disclosure:

> If you are a faculty member that has handled a disclosure [of sexual assault] …
> with a university employee… you are to report back to the Associate Vice
> President of Human Resources. And so I think that perhaps there's some
> confusion around, well what does that mean? If the report goes to the Associate
> Vice President of Human Resources then who investigates that? Is that
> investigated under the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy? …
> And if you use the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy as the
> basis for the investigation as it existed while I worked there, the relationship
> between Human Resources and the Respectful Work and Learning Environment
> Policy is very clear in terms of confidentiality. No information goes to them
> [HR] until a finding of a report is done. If there has been a violation policy then
> it goes to Human Resources. … I think that maybe then there needs to be some
> work on what that process [of reporting and discipline] will be.

What I believe Jade was alluding to was that Human Resources and the HRO (who

operationalizes the RWLEP) are supposed to be two separate offices that cannot share

confidential information. Yet in this instance, when the faculty member has already reported a

disclosure to HR, HR is already aware of the situation before HRO would have gone through an

investigation and given HR the recommendation for discipline. Thus, there is a contradiction in

policies. On the one hand, they require a faculty to report to HR, while on the other they say HR

should not have confidential information that could go through a formal investigation under the RWLEP. Given these potentially contradictory situations that policy seems to inscribe, rather than clarify, it became clear to me that I was only beginning to grasp the degree to which policies and protocols are confusing. Although I may not be an expert on these policies, I found even Jade's simplification of policy issues to be very confusing and if even a policy developer cannot clearly and concisely explain to me the contradictory working of the universities policies and protocols, I worry that students affected by these policies will be in an even more difficult situation, and will be significantly deterred from reaching out to university officials if they cannot understand what will or could happen to them. Indeed, why would they risk it?

Overall then I found that the university lacked clear processes to follow when policies overlap, especially in relation to disclosure processes and the policy that might be used for many incidents of sexual violence. In addition, the Student Code of Conduct fails to mention sexual violence as an issue. It seems the mildest conclusion that can be reached is that the university's approach to handling the sexual violence as it affects students is at best confusing, and at worst that policies and protocols are unusable.

Power Dynamics

One of the other key reasons why policies at the university are so confusing is because policies and procedures to not address relations of power between students and faculty. This is particularly important in cases of sexual violence, as this form of violence is rooted in an abuse of power (Women's Directorate, 2013). Often a sense of entitlement or ownership based on gender, social position, age, or role in a relationship combined with issues related to race, class, and sexual orientation plays a role in people perceiving themselves as having a right to another

person's sexuality (Sexual Assault- Victim Service Worker Handbook, 2007, p. 22). Given the gendered power dynamics within post-secondary institutions, such as those between a graduate student and their faculty supervisor, it is important to create a "sexual [violence] policy that covers faculty, staff and students" (p. 9).

Looking back to the Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures at Turnhill University, there is a lot of focus on the respondent and complainant's supervisors as the responsible parties for mediation and discipline. However, nowhere in the policy does it mention the possibility that the complainant's supervisor might be accused as a respondent – for example, that a secretarial, research assistant or administrative staff might be sexually harassed by their boss – a situation that is arguably one of the most common in large organizational work environments. With the policy built around the assumption that that the supervisor will be a neutral party, the procedures embedded in policy may be doomed to fail. Although the RWLEP briefly mentions the issue of conflict of interest in relation to the selection of members of the Panel that would adjudicate formal complaints, the Sexual Assault Protocol and Student Code of Conduct do not. This lack of attention to conflicts of interest would certainly work to give more rights to certain respondents than others. This conclusion has been reinforced through informal conversations with university members where there seems to be a widely-shared assumption that faculty members, due to their strong collective agreement, have more protection and power when they are a respondent in a case of sexual violence brought by a staff or student. When a policy fails to imagine conflicts of interest, or consider and provide direction to mitigate the hierarchical and intersectional relations of power that arise when the respondent is the complainant's supervisor, a supervisor in a parallel department, or even the President – then the procedures embedded in it seem doomed to failure.

Although I am not reviewing the new policy on sexual violence and harassment passed by the Board of Trustees in 2016, I am glad to mention that there is some attention to these power dynamics in this new document. The new policy provides a chart which highlights who is the decision maker on sanctions based on when the respondent is: a student, an employee, a faculty member, an employee or faculty member and a student, the President, and a member of the Board of Trustees. As this is a new development I cannot speak to how it will be put into practice but it is definitely a step in the right direction.

Inconsistent Definitions

The theme of outdated policies and procedures was also addressed in my interview with Jade, who explained that since the university was one of the early adopters of a protocol and policy on sexual violence "it kind of fell off the radar in terms of keeping knowledge current." One of the ways that this became evident to me in my research was in my assessment of the definitions the university used to define sexual violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment. For instance, the Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures really, only had one definition, which was sexual harassment. This included, but was not limited to:

> (a) any unwanted attention of a sexually-oriented or gender-oriented nature directed at an individual or group by another individual or group of the same or opposite sex who knows (or aught reasonably to know) that this attention is unwanted, or
> (b) any implied or expressed promise of reward for complying with a sexually-oriented request or advance, or
> (c) any implied or expressed threat of reprisal for refusing to comply with an implied or expressed sexually-oriented request, or
> (d) any behaviour, verbal or physical, of a gender- or sexually-oriented nature that interferes with the academic or work environment of an individual group or creates an intimidating or hostile atmosphere.

The policy further elaborates that sexual harassment includes behaviour such as:

(a) suggestive or demeaning remarks, jokes or other types of verbal abuse of a
sexual or sexist nature directed at an individual or group, or
(b) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct of a sexual nature that
is unwelcome, or
(c) graphic or suggestive comments about an individual's dress or body, or
(d) leering, or
(e) the display in the workplace of pornographic objects or pictures, or
(f) unnecessary touching and/or offensive gestures, or
(g) compromising invitations, or
(h) unwanted requests for sexual favours, or
(i) sexual assault (an offence under the Criminal Code).

When comparing this definition of sexual harassment to other policies and protocols that define

sexual harassment, the first section of the definition is consistent with the RWLEP but it is not

consistent with the Student Code of Conduct or the Residence Community Guiding Principles

that each include a general definition of harassment, and then reference the RWLEP for follow

up. The more recent Sexual Assault Protocol provides a definition of sexual violence but does

not include any definitions of sexual harassment. Sarah also noted these difficulties with the lack

of consistency in definitions explaining that "the Sexual Response Protocol is pretty good with

the definitions because it's pretty recent, um, the Respectful Work and Learning Environment

Policy I think [has] definitions [that] are more than due for an update." For instance, only the

Sexual Assault Protocol provides definitions on consent and coercion. When there are no

consistent definitions for sexual harassment, sexual assault, or sexual violence, it only further

perpetuates the idea that sexual violence is not an issue. Indeed, this lack of definitional clarity

both reflects and produces effects. For, if something really matters, you take the time and care to

make sure it is addressed fully and properly.

Going forward, the inclusion of definitions of consent, sexual assault survivor, coercion

etc., in the Sexual Assault Protocol are definitely steps in the right direction to change the culture

on campus. As mentioned previously, the university has a new sexual harassment and violence

policy that does address some of the concerns and inconsistencies I have noted above. However,

it remains to be seen how the policy will work in practice, how differential relations of power

will be addressed and how updated definitions might affect how the university community

understands sexual violence. In this regard, Sarah stated that she:

> consulted with people at other universities just to determine what they were
> doing … because there's no real best practices out there unfortunately because
> everybody's just starting this. And if I look at, um, sexual violence policies
> before [the passage of Bill 132] at every university a lot of them are like not up
> to the standard that these ones will be. So everyone's just trying to figure it out
> so we're really borrowing from each other, other people's expertise and advice
> and things like that so I've reached out to a number of colleagues from other
> universities.

Thus, while many Southern Ontario Universities have had outdated policies, the passage

of Bill 132 has prompted significant changes. Nevertheless, legislation that requires a stand-

alone policy in Ontario universities but that does not mandate attention to the ways social

divisions such as race, gender, and class affect sexual violence will likely be inadequate.

Although each university is different, my research suggests that Turnhill University has not

addressed hierarchies in power. This became evident when analyzing policies and procedures

and finding that the relations of power between different categories of complainants and

respondents were not addressed, that there were outdated understandings of sexual violence, and

conflicting definitions between policies and protocols. All of Turnhill's policies assume that

everyone experiences sexual violence in the same ways and with similar rates and severity

regardless of their social location and identity. Yet there is considerable evidence that directly

contradicts this approach. For instance, according to the Canadian Federation of Students –

Ontario (2015), nine out of ten reported assaults in Canada are against women, Aboriginal

women are three times more likely to be victims of violence than non-Aboriginal women, and

women with disabilities are 83% more likely to experience some form of violence in their

lifetime. None of these policies addressed the structural and systemic violence that many women face, in particular Aboriginal and racialized women. Indeed, this context works against survivors through perpetuating victim blaming by using an individualized lens which fails to deal with the unequal risks faced by minoritized women who will face additional barriers in attempting to report complaints of sexual violence and are less likely to be believed when they do (Harrison & Lafreniere, 2015, p. 25).

Theme Three: Lack of Recording Keeping

Unfortunately, the lack of data due to poor record keeping has become one of the main themes of my research. While the literature suggests that most incidences of sexual violence are not reported, I believe my research demonstrates that there has been a failure of basic record keeping in monitoring incidences that are reported so that improvements might be made in policies and procedures. I argue that the university has demonstrated a lack of commitment to challenging sexual violence in its failure to ensure proper record keeping. Indeed, this failure indicates a lack of willingness to be accountable for the institutional handling of cases that are reported, to learn from past mistakes, and to continue to modify and update policies and procedures. In this section I will review the reasons for this conclusion.

First, any incidents of student-to-student sexual violence disclosed to staff go through the Student Code of Conduct. However, the office administering this code has kept no public record or statistics on cases/incidences of sexual violence; instead, a confidential report goes from the Manager, Student Affairs to the Vice Provost, Teaching and Learning. Consequently, I was unable to assess how many incidences have gone through any policy or protocols. After contacting the Manager, Student Affairs I was told that there are virtually no records before

September 2015, and that any information that exists is not made public. It is very difficult, therefore, to understand how the Student Code of Conduct worked in relation to other policies when there is no record of how many incidences were reported, or any other information that could illuminate how the code was used.

The HRO did keep records on cases dealt with through the RWLEP and these are available through annual reports from 2005 to 2016 (although a recent update of the HRO website removed annual reports from 2005-2009). Interestingly, the annual reports provided by the HRO from 2005-2009 include one section of formal resolutions that include the Residence Community Guiding Principles, and the University Discipline Panel (which is in the Student Code of Conduct). This could mean that cases of sexual violence that go through the Residence Community Guiding Principles or the Student Code of Conduct are recorded here, but again there are no specifics to confirm.

Next, I will provide an overview of some of the statistics in the annual reports to provide a better understanding how the university reports on its handling of incidences in practice. In 2005-2006, HRO reported that there were 13 formal reports regarding harassment, 53 incidents where staff worked with complainants to achieve personal resolutions and 38 cases of informal resolutions. Overall, 12.5% of complaints went through the formal resolution process. The HRO handles multiple types of discrimination, which include sex/gender, race/ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation/gender identity, other, and general harassment. However, this breakdown does not illuminate how many specific incidences of sexual violence are included in the 12.5% of formal resolution processes or how sexual violence would be categorized (as it could intersect between multiple categories). Harrison and Lafreniere (2015) argue that:

> Gendered violence has a disproportionate impact on women and members of
> minority social groups; however, it is important to keep in mind that the

> intersection of gender with other social identities, such as race, ethnicity, culture, language, ability, faith, age, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and gender identity, influences the causes and impacts of gendered violence (p. 21).

For instance, someone could be targeted not because they are a woman, but because they are an Aboriginal woman. So how would one decide on how to categorize an incident of sexual violence when it could be placed in the category of sex/gender or race/ethnicity?

The annual reports from 2005-2010 continued to report statistics using this same framework – hence, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the actual number of cases of sexual violence reported during this period. One theme that did emerge over this period, however, was that there was a slow decline in the percentage of formal complaints to 5% from 2009-2010. The annual reports in 2014-15 and 2015-16 are interesting since the trend of formal complaints continued consistently to decline and then in 2014-15 formal resolutions jumped from the previous year from 2.9% to 8% and then to 15% in 2014-15. Additionally, while reports from 2005-2013 indicate that the total complaints stayed roughly around 100 per year, in 2014-2015 the total number of complaints went to 74; and then to 54 total complaints in 2015-16. This means that the actual number of formal complaints did not really increase but the overall number of complaints that the office was receiving were much less. One of the obvious reasons I could see for this shift was the decreased staffing and resources available to the office during this period. There was only one employee in HRO in 2014; she left in 2015 and an employee in HR took over HRO responsibilities in addition to their own workload. Then a new employee was hired in 2016. Overall, these statistics lead me to the conclusion that it is impossible to assess the number of incidences of sexual violence handled through the HRO or the ways in which these were handled – through informal, personal, or formal attempts at resolution. It seems likely that

most were handled through informal processes. However, there is no way to assess how the policy was used in practice when informal processes are just that, informal.

Again, it is important to note that many students who are affected by sexual violence will not even reach out to university officials or use any official policies/procedures, which will become evident in the next chapter. Overall in a context where the HRO did not provide any data within their annual reports to allow the university to monitor the incidences of sexual violence or how they were handled, it is impossible to assess how these issues were dealt with in practice. However, it does seem clear that this context of opaque or insufficient record keeping was exacerbated by a steady decline in the number of staff and resources in the HRO. When staff are overwhelmed with unmanageable workloads and stuck in practices that are outdated, within an unworkable policy framework, this would likely have created a vicious cycle that was not interrupted until the province passed Bill 132 mandating new policies and a renewed commitment to staffing in human rights.

Overall this chapter was meant to provide a basis for understanding the policies and protocols the university has developed to handle sexual violence as this affects students. Three main themes emerged from reviewing these policies and from my interviews with policy developers: poor working conditions for staff within HRO, the confusing and/or outdated policies and protocols which provided a framework for their handling of complaints, and a lack of institutional record keeping. I started my analysis through a review of the political climate at the university in relation to sexual violence and then interviewed policy developers' to understand their point of view on their working conditions. I then provided an assessment of the policy framework that guided the university handling incidences of sexual violence, and found that these guidelines were confusing and/or outdated. I focused here on three related problems:

inconsistencies between policy versus practice, the ways differential relations of power affected

the implementation of policy, and shifting definitions of sexual violence. Lastly, I reviewed areas

where the university lacks proper record keeping on incidences of sexual violence and suggested

that this lack of documentation undermined any capacity for institutional memory, learning or

accountability in the area of sexual violence, particularly in a context of staff layoffs and

resignations in the HRO. The next chapter will provide a student point of view on how the

university handles sexual violence.

Chapter Five

Student Perspectives

In this chapter I analyze the main themes that emerged through interviewing students

who had been directly impacted by sexual violence while a student at Turnhill University or who

had a close family member or friend who was directly impacted by sexual violence while a

student there. The first theme that emerged from these interviews was that of 'empty policies'.

Within this section, I will address the Sexual Assault Protocol, the Respectful Work and

Learning Environment Policy, and then specifically address the undergraduate student union

procedures as described by one of my participants. Next, I will delve into the multilayered and

interconnected costs of being a survivor. Finally, I will provide an overview of the inconsistent

and disconnected services available for people who have been impacted by sexual violence. I

will focus on one interview, with Mary, as they had the most interactions with services on and

off campus. Based on my analysis in these three areas I will argue that substantive education or

training for all university community members on policies, procedures, and resources is

absolutely necessary to ensure that sexual violence policies are implemented in ways that address the needs of survivors. In addition, I suggest that without consistent support services and the regular integration of feedback from survivors in these areas, survivors will continue to mistrust university policies, practices, and support services.

Theme One: Empty Policies

At the time of the student participant interviews I had not found all the relevant policies or protocols that related to sexual violence, so the two main documents discussed were the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy and the Sexual Assault Protocol. Of the six student participants I interviewed, four students were sure that they had heard of either the policy or the protocol, and only two participants were aware or had read both. When asked how they heard of either document, in order of prevalence, the students either joined a sexual violence organization or group, joined the Sexual Violence Prevention Committee, had a friend use the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy, heard of the Sexual Assault Protocol through the recent media coverage, or was possibly handed the Sexual Assault Protocol.

In anticipation of participants not knowing the policy or protocol, I did bring copies of both documents to each interview to provide students with the opportunity to briefly review and evaluate them. Many students initially commented on the inaccessibility of these documents. Kayla shared their frustration on the lack of information provided to them as a student, "I've been sexually assaulted twice [with] a year between them and never once did I hear about any of these protocols." Michelle confirmed they also lacked information when they were assaulted, and explained that since it did not happen in residence they "didn't know what the rules or the system was. I didn't know what my options were in general." Although Michelle mentioned that they

later gained knowledge of both documents - the RWLEP through a friend using the policy and

the Sexual Assault Protocol by joining Turnhill University's committee on sexual violence

prevention. Nevertheless, neither student had access to that information at the time they were

assaulted. Adrienne provided an overall critique that reflected the general feedback from student

participants by stating:

> To me the policy can say anything. It's not really accessible for students. They
> don't know where it is, they don't know where to find it, they don't even know if
> there is one. So for one I would like to see policies like this, that have to do with
> mental health or harassment in any way, more publicized to the students.

Although I included other policies and protocols in my research, I want to highlight the

importance of Adrienne's analysis. As was demonstrated in the previous chapter, there are a

multitude of policies or procedures that students may use other than the RWLEP or Sexual

Assault Protocol. However, if students are not aware of those policies or procedures then they

cannot gain access to them, and it is impossible to assess if procedures are followed. In addition,

students are not aware of their rights, and may not be aware of resources or supports to contact.

Unfortunately, students may not even be aware that they are being pushed through the

procedures of a policy or protocol. For instance, at the time I interviewed Mary I was not aware

of how the Student Code of Conduct and Students-At-Risk procedures could relate to sexual

violence. Hence when Mary explained to me that they had to sign a behavioural contract because

they used cutting as a coping mechanism, I did not think to ask Mary about the Student Code of

Conduct. Mary also never mentioned any other policies or procedures outside of the RWLEP or

Sexual Assault Protocol during our interview, nor were they aware that they were classified as a

"student-at-risk". So, it is unclear if Mary really understood their rights. Indeed, it seems that

there was a lack of transparency regarding the proper protocol because the Student Code of

Conduct does not provide an in-depth description of the behaviour contract process. Overall,

student participants emphasized that policies and protocols were inaccessible; indeed, and they only really heard about these documents when they personally became involved in organizations, groups or committees formed to address sexual violence. As the policies were inaccessible, it is no surprise that many students labelled them as "empty."

In addition, at least one student mentioned that the policies seemed to be limited in scope so that they were not relevant to the actual situations faced by students. For example, Mary attempted to go through formal university channels but found "the policies don't cover what happens" when a student is being stalked or threatened. This failure of policy to include one of the most common manifestations of sexual violence certainly led to a sense of skepticism. The phrase 'empty policies' was coined as it describes the idea that the existing policy was not supporting or serving students in need. More specifically, Mary described how they asked for help from the university's campus security because another student was stalking them, trying to get into their classes, and telling professors horrible things about them. Unfortunately, Mary was told that unless there was proof of threats or stalking on campus, there was nothing that could be done. Although it is not a procedure under any policies I have reviewed, Mary explained that the department they were registered in had lists of people who should not be in courses or projects together. Here the departments stepped in when policy was obviously failing a student like Mary, in order to ensure they would not have to work with the person who was stalking them in the future. Without consistent supports for students and when departments resort to informal processes for protecting survivors, it is unlikely that students will trust policies, procedures, or the officials in HRO or Campus Security. This illustrates why students characterize the policies that are available as empty.

For those who did have prior knowledge of the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy (RWLEP) and Sexual Assault Protocol or took time to review the documents during the interview, many students commented on the failures in implementation. Adrienne, for example, recalled when there was a widely publicized case of sexual violence, it was clear to anyone who read the media reports that "there weren't clear processes in responding to a report of sexual assault." Due to privacy legislation, there is only so much that can be known about this case. Nevertheless, when the survivor released a statement on their experience that argued that there was a lack of administrative policy and accountability in their case, many student interviewees who read the statement could only agree that this also mirrored their experiences.

Mary noted that information and implementation were connected: "it's one thing to make these policies, but if they're not implemented correctly and there's no training for staff on how to implement them, they're pointless. At that point, they're just empty policies." Although a new Sexual Violence and Harassment policy was passed by the university in 2016, Mary's argument about the importance of proper implementation is still relevant today. Indeed, not only do students need to have easy access to the policies and procedures, but so do those who implement them like staff and faculty. For instance, a faculty member who receives a disclosure from a student and promises not to tell anyone anything, may now be obligated through the new Sexual Assault Protocol to disclose the assault. That same faculty member also may not have much experience with disclosures and may not be aware of which supports or resources to provide to the student. Without proper education or training, human resources, and financial resource commitment, even the best policies or procedures are doomed to fail. Universities must be proactive to ensure that all members of the university community know that policies or

procedures exist, what resources are available, and what to say when responding to a disclosure of sexual violence.

Undergraduate Student Union Procedures

Throughout the interviews, many students mentioned the lack of discipline for people who commit sexual violence. This sentiment did not change when analyzing feedback about the undergraduate student union. One of my interviewees, Michelle, had been involved with the undergraduate student government for several years, and highlighted an impression that was echoed by other students, namely that: "several student union executives… have sexually harassed or sexually assaulted someone else that worked in the office and the female survivors have always been paid off." Unfortunately, this is not the only allegation of a serious lack of discipline for those who committed sexual violence in the undergraduate student union.

Another student participant, Stephanie, informed me that during the time they worked for the student union there were specific union procedures for sexual harassment – procedures that should have been used when she was assaulted. Unfortunately, the union procedures that Stephanie referred to were never made available to me - although I searched online and requested them from staff in the undergraduate student union office. While I do not believe that any policies or procedures would be purposefully hidden it seems that there was no effort to identify problems or mistakes from past years. This situation highlights the lack of transparency at multiple levels of the university when it comes to sexual violence policies and procedures. When there is no effort to acknowledge or assess previous cases of sexual violence the university misses and opportunity to learn from the past and ensure previous mistakes are not repeated. Interestingly, Stephanie who worked in the undergraduate student union at the time of our

interview had never heard of the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy or Sexual

Assault Protocol. As a result, Stephanie used the student union procedures to attempt to gain

support when she was assaulted. The union procedures seemed appropriate, as both Stephanie

and the person who sexually harassed them, Ben, were undergraduate student union members.

Stephanie considered themselves "lucky" to be a part of the student union, to be familiar with the

Ethics Committee and have connections to Human Resources in the student union. However,

despite this insider knowledge, Stephanie believed her report was mishandled. The day after the

incident, Stephanie filed an ethics complaint with the knowledge that Ben had other allegations

against them. Then Stephanie received a letter from the Ethics Committee, which she brought to

our interview, which said there was not enough "information to be considered substantial."

Despite the fact that Stephanie was familiar with the union processes, they still had to research

specific by-laws cited in the letter from the Ethics Committee – a process that contributed to their

frustration in navigating the formal complaint. Stephanie followed up with Human Resources in

person, an approach that seemed important as Ben was sending Stephanie many messages over

social media. However, even after Human Resources told Ben to cease communication with

Stephanie she continued to receive messages – and there were no consequences for Ben when he

continued to harass her. Stephanie also heard from a friend on the Ethics Committee that another

union member had seen the entire incident and had told her friend, but the friend said he did not

want to be involved. Eventually, it became clear that the Ethics Committee was unwilling to act

due to 'insufficient information.' Human Resources was unwilling to follow-up on Ben's

continued harassment, and those who had seen the incident did not want to get involved. In

frustration, Stephanie withdrew from the process. It is telling that Stephanie was the first person

to get as far as they did in the complaint process. Nevertheless, the failures of the student union

to treat her complaint as credible, follow-up on harassment, and the unwillingness of others to get involved, ensured that her complaint 'went away' – like all the others before it.

When reflecting on their experience, Stephanie told me: "I knew about the Ethics Committee, I knew about going to Human Resources, I knew to talk to my Professor [about accommodations], but what about those who don't? And the thing is, even with me knowing all of this, I got nothing out of it." Even though I do not have a record of the procedures the undergraduate student union would have used and this is one example, Stephanie's experience highlights how difficult it is to ensure any discipline for the person who commits sexual violence, even when they have multiple complaints against them. Stephanie's experience is not inconsistent with the larger criminal justice systems handling of sexual violence. As Johnson (2012) notes, there are over 460,000 sexual assaults in Canada every year that go through the criminal justice systems and for every 1000 sexual assaults committed, only 33 are reported to the police, and only three incidences lead to a conviction. Indeed, it should come to no surprise that many affected by sexual violence are afraid to come forward knowing the likely "success" rate.

When students do not have information on the existence of policies or procedures, and are not aware of their rights they are significantly disadvantaged and have even less access to resources on campus for support. When students are unaware they are being pushed through a process or do not know about the restrictions of confidentiality, these can overshadow accountability. Stephanie's experience highlighted the lack of discipline that can occur even when the person who committed sexual violence is known to have had multiple complaints against them. Overall then, I suggest that the lack of information about policies and resources, the failure to implement best practices, and the consequent lack of discipline for perpetrators all

make it no surprise that many participants described "empty policies" at multiple levels throughout the university.

Theme Two: Cost of Being a Survivor

After interviewing student participants and reviewing all of the transcripts, I came to the conclusion that a second key theme was the costs of sexual violence to the students. Here I mean not only the immediate costs, but the long lasting and interconnected emotional, mental, physical, and monetary costs of sexual violence.

As mentioned previously, there was a public case of sexual violence at Turnhill University when I was recruiting and interviewing student participants. As a result, I included a question asking students for their initial reaction to the news. Most of my participants talked about being overwhelmed or triggered. Adrienne, who was involved in a student led sexual violence prevention group and had been to university committee meetings on sexual violence prevention said:

> After all of this media attention about sexual violence … it's been really hard the past month basically because it's been an everyday thing. Everyday there's new articles coming out, there's new interviews, there's new meetings, new emails, like it's really overwhelming … like always saying that I'm a survivor to people … the reactions that I've heard [are] really troubling.

Even friends or colleagues contributed to triggering survivors. For instance, Kayla explained that her friends commented on the case of the survivor who went to the press saying: "I even had some friends who were like "Oh no it's her fault she shouldn't have even been there. She probably has daddy issues." And that affected me so much because [they knew] … what I went through." In Mary's experience:

> When it came out I think there were a lot of people at the university asking survivors, how are you feeling? Is it triggering? It's like of course it's triggering

> because everybody all of a sudden is talking about sexual violence and you know
> it's something that we spend so much time trying not to think about or trying to
> process and when everybody else is talking about it all the time … it kind of starts
> to consume everything.

Many survivors felt they could not escape or find alternative spaces without having to think about sexual violence. For instance, Michelle explained the impact of comments on social media: "Whether it was on Facebook, or social media … [people were] saying things like "She shouldn't have gone back there" or "She should've known."" Thus, there are long term emotional costs to being a survivor when incidences of sexual violence become public as well as widespread victim blaming in the informal responses by many on campus.

However, separate and prior to that incident going public, participants also had to deal with the emotional costs of first responses to their disclosures. Often, first responses inquired about details or minimized the situation. For instance, Mary told a friend about her assault and responses included: "Well what were you raped or something? Or did he just slap your ass?" The initial minimizing of the incident led Mary to share some general details, which resulted in their friends expressing shock and attempting to distance themselves by saying they did not really need to know. These first responses to Mary's experience illustrate just how common it is for responders to ask for details that were not necessary to support Mary and minimize their experience by assuming that sexual violence is trivial, or when they realize the depth of violence that has occurred, simply turn away. Similarly, Kayla contacted the local police about their experience of assault off-campus and received a response of "Oh that's all that happened?"

Marc, who was the only participant that did not experience sexual violence, commented on education on campus and said:

> If no one has gone through it or [doesn't] know someone or has been through it,
> then people would just brush it off. I mean that's kind of what happened to me. I

didn't really take it seriously until I saw … how it affected someone so much.

I think that Marc's comment speaks to the responses that survivors receive which typically minimize or 'brush off' disclosures. This impulse can be seen in the ingrained belief that people, who identify as women, are generally held responsible for violence against them. Frequently, they are told their clothes are "too revealing" or not to drink "too much" at a party, and in general they must be the "gatekeepers" of any type of sexual activity. When the most common cultural messages are chalk-full of victim blaming, stereotypes, and misinformation such as "boys will be boys" this exempts those who commit sexual violence from taking responsibility and minimizes the violence itself. When Marc found out a close friend had experienced sexual violence and saw how it drastically affected their life, they suddenly began to develop a different understanding. The intent of this analysis is not to excuse first responders, who often are friends or family members, but instead to demonstrate how important education and training is to make sure that survivors are supported. While victim blaming does not only target women, the majority of sexual violence survivors are women.

In the context of widely accepted cultural messages that normalize victim blaming and minimize the impact of sexual violence it is no surprise that these messages are then internalized by those people most affected. For example, Adrienne mentioned a friend who experienced sexual violence while a student at the university:

> [She is] still in contact with her rapist and I think she feels like she has to be sometimes and I think she puts on a certain face for this person even though they have repeatedly assaulted her. And it's difficult because I think she sort of convinced herself that she deserves it through the lack of support, through the lack of resources and not really being able to talk about it.

Similarly, Michelle shared their internal struggle with blaming themselves because there were times they thought if they "didn't really stop it I must have wanted it." Later Michelle also told

me that they had accommodated rape culture by paying to go on the pill in case they experienced sexual violence again - ultimately putting more of the onus on themselves.

Other monetary costs survivors mentioned were the costs of missing appointments with counselling or health services, with each missed appointment costing $20 to $50. Mary explained that those still in abusive relationships might miss appointments because it becomes clear to them at the last minute that leaving the abusive situation puts them in more danger than simply staying. Other participants mentioned having to pay tuition because they could not drop out of classes by the deadline as their experience and mental health concerns did not fit within the university timetable. A couple of participants also recalled friends who left the institution as a result of the lack of mental health and survivor supports. Such a decision has significant financial implications, as survivors who move to another university will need to negotiate the transfer of credits – often a difficult process as previous credits may not be transferable and/or the student may not finish a degree after paying tuition. As racialized, poor and Aboriginal women are more likely to experience sexual violence they will also suffer disproportionately when universities do not make opportunities for support, accommodations and policy resolutions accessible. This perpetuates a pattern of conditions that block students' academic success, and make them vulnerable to a cycle of poverty and continued vulnerability to violence. Thus, those who are already financially disadvantaged and minoritized on the basis of gender, race and colonization are particularly likely to pay the 'costs' of survivorship, and be negatively affected by 'empty policies.'

Mental health concerns and financial costs often intersected for those I interviewed. For instance, Michelle explained their experience of sexual violence as:

> [Affecting] my school, which has also affected my mental health. I haven't been able to get certain opportunities or do certain research … because I don't have the grades because there are days I can't get out of bed in the morning.

Kayla also shared their struggles with attending classes due to mental health struggles, which intensified after their experience of sexual violence. For Kayla:

> what happened was Christmas Eve so I had the whole Christmas break to try to deal with it and then coming back to school … I had severe social anxiety- I left school because I couldn't be around people. I was always very afraid.

Thus the 'costs of survivorhood' can include students being excluded from opportunities such as scholarships, awards, or bursaries because they cannot meet the grade average required due to their mental health struggles, making it less likely that they can successfully complete their education.

Lastly, there are physical costs of survivorhood that range from the injuries incurred from the incident of sexual violence (bruises, cracked ribs, etc.) to self-harm (heavy drinking, cutting as a coping mechanism, etc.). For example, when Mary went to health services because of a cracked rib, sustained in a sexual assault, they explained that "it took three weeks for a nurse to actually be like "okay this is not just a bruise, you can't breathe" … and not being able to get it X-rayed [before] because they said it was probably just stress." When survivor's feel their injuries from sexual assault are minimized or left untreated, and there are few other supports, it is not uncommon for many to turn to other coping mechanisms. Marc explained that he noticed his friend would "drink a little too much … and they're just scared of things happening so it's hard for them to have fun." Similarly, Adrienne had a friend who experienced sexual violence, and reflected that:

> Her eating become not the same, she drank a lot. And I think that wasn't something she ever talked about and we never talked about it to this day, but since she's been a big drinker. … I know she stopped going to class for a while and

certain things she just failed because she didn't really have the support.

When first responders are not well trained (staff, faculty, students, etc.), survivors are often left alone to deal with the fallout, including monetary costs for not cancelling appointments on time, mental health impacts that interfere with academic success, and the physical costs survivors encounter. It seems clear, then, that the university needs to take a more proactive approach to supporting survivors because the cost of being a survivor is too high. Until student and survivor feedback is valued and integrated into policies, practices and support services, students will pay the cost of being a survivor, and will mistrust university staff and disengage with institutional protocols because they believe these only further harm them.

Theme Three: Inconsistent and Disconnected Services

I asked participants about the following on campus services: Campus Security, Student Health Services, Counselling Services, the Human Rights Office, and the Department of Residences and, off campus: the student sexual violence center (SSVC), the local Sexual Violence Centre, and the local police. Not all participants were aware of these services so I will focus on those mentioned most often, the SSVC and Counselling Services. Then, I will present Mary's experience, which highlights concerns regarding the local Sexual Violence Centre and other services. While participants mostly had negative feedback, it is important to note that this service infrastructure is still necessary but must be more responsive to survivors who use their services.

My interviewees mentioned the student sexual violence center (SSVC) often as it is one of the main services specifically related to sexual violence. The center provides services for students and the university community on sexual violence, which includes 24/hour text line,

24/hour email support, phone, court and peer support, advocacy, accompaniments, and financial and practical assistance. I categorized it as an off-campus service as the center is located off campus. Students had a mixed review of the location as it is on a main street downtown at a considerable distance from most of the campus. While this location could benefit students who are not on the main campus regularly, it also poses obvious problems with accessibility for the majority of its intended target population. However, this was not the only problem with access: the center does not have any hours of operation listed so it is unclear how students would know when to 'drop by.' Furthermore, the main entry is highly visible from the street, and consequently some participants said they did not feel comfortable using the space as they felt they could be "outed" if they were seen entering - especially when the doors are usually locked. Adrienne mentioned that the downtown location could also be a detriment to first year students who are not familiar with the area. As she noted "I would much rather stay on campus to get help versus sort of going out into a place you don't really know."

The center does have a 24/7 texting line which is beneficial to those in need of support. However, Mary explains the limits of that service:

> It's sometimes difficult to convey what is actually going on for me, if I get to a point that I needed to go to support I'm not the best at talking so sometimes over text I could be giving one word answers and people either think its passive aggressive or I'm just not that upset.

So even with the option of texting, Mary still found there were barriers to obtaining the support she needed. This led to her assessing the text support from the USVC as "very dismissive."

Michelle, who had volunteered with the center and had used the texting line, said:

> If I had not heard back a moment sooner I don't know what would've happened. … Like knowing that … volunteers [are told to] respond immediately or … within five minutes and [instead] waiting like that half an hour at sometimes [for a response].

Interviewees also noted that the space itself was not safe as a male staff person from a related organization lived on-site. Thus, the lack of professional standards regarding hours, use of the space by staff from a related organization, and limited and inconsistent services were all areas of concern. Overall interviewees said they did not trust with those who managed the space. Despite this critique, most interviewees who took part in the training and volunteer aspects of the center had very positive comments about the training. Therefore, while this student-run center was very important in supporting survivors, there were real concerns about accessibility, response times, and the ability to build trusting relationships with those who manage the space.

The other service used most frequently by participants was the university run Counselling Services. Sadly, this service was both was one of the most well known and the most often critiqued. Counselling Services aim to reach university students experiencing personal and social difficulties on an individual basis, although they also offer some group programs. To make an appointment a student can visit the office during their office hours and make a call from a phone in the office, or call from their own phone during office hours. The service also advertises an extension for students who are in crisis so that an appointment can be booked immediately. The Missed Appointment Policy currently states that Counselling Services needs to receive 24 hours' notice of a cancellation or there is a $20 fee that must be paid before another appointment can be scheduled.

> Reflecting on their experience with Counselling Services, Michelle stated that:
>
> Quality-wise it's kind of a mix. … If you're new they see you within the first five days, but then after that, it's like weeks. … They don't have a lot of emergency hours either…it's not like very well rounded I don't think. But once I found a counsellor that was really good, she has been really helpful. The issue right now is I don't get to see her enough.

Although Michelle was lucky to find a good counsellor, a friend of theirs in the student refugee program saw a counsellor about:

> the cultural difference[s], the extra time that it takes to finish homework, all this kind of stuff and the counsellor pretty much said "Why don't you get a girlfriend, maybe that'll make you feel better." … It was the same counsellor that … one of my friends who came out as trans … saw and … that counsellor was just like "Well like you did drop a bomb on your family so what can you expect?

These comments clearly fail to consider the actual challenges facing newcomer students and underestimate the ways Trans youth also face serious risks when 'coming out' to family. Crucially, students are not offered any choices in the counselors they are assigned and they do not have access to a list of counsellors with their areas of training or interest. Consequently, students have inconsistent experiences based on who they are matched with. Stephanie also mentioned that a friend of theirs was seeing a counselling and the counsellor left the position without notifying them. Not only is opening up to a counsellor hard enough, but not knowing when or if they might leave can further harm those in need of the service. I suggest that improvements in counselling services would result from providing students with access to more sessions, options to pick which counsellor they want to meet with, counsellors hired on long-term contracts, and more highly trained counsellors who are culturally competent and can work with refugee students, LGBTQ2+ students, etc.

Finally, I wanted to provide a more substantive analysis of Mary's experience, a student who used cutting as a coping method to help deal with the aftermath of sexual violence. Although their narrative connects the multiple costs of being a survivor highlighted above, this excerpt provides an in-depth look into the problems with services on and off campus. Reflecting on her time living in residence Mary said:

> I was really good at being careful and… safety, but one time [I] accidently cut too deep. [So I went] to my friend down the hall… "I'm really bleeding. Help I need

to go to Health Services can you come with me?" and then later realizing I could have been evicted for that because I was exposing my behaviour to others… I ended up having to sign a thing [with the Department of Residence] if you don't go to Health Services, if you cut - or if you are thinking of suicide - then you can be evicted. It says you have to go to the hospital if you are considering suicide. It's like yeah if I'm considering suicide I'm not going to be like "oh, time to go to the hospital."

As I briefly mentioned previously, it appears that Mary had been put through the

processes for a student-at-risk under the Student Code of Conduct as they had to sign a

behavioural contract, yet Mary never mentioned knowing of this process during our

interview. Although Mary was clear about their responsibilities such as "do not cut or

you could be evicted" they clearly felt unsupported.

Mary explained:

It took me like six months to get into [the local sexual assault centre for counselling]. I'd started going there and then got into a really abusive relationship and instead of it actually being supportive, it became an issue because… if you miss three appointments you're out, which… [felt] like this threat. I had to miss appointments not because I wanted to miss them but because I couldn't manage or my partner was [monitoring me]. The counsellor I was seeing knew how to deal with it [sexual assault] if it was one time. Whereas for me I can't even count…

Unfortunately, even services such as the local sexual assault centre did not seem

to be equipped to support survivors, like Mary, who had been sexually violated many

times. Mary also explained that:

When I started university [I was] assaulted in the most extreme sense and then repeatedly assaulted by a partner in the fall … and I remember my counsellor not knowing what to do with a domestic violence issue, the best she could do was give me forms… of other resources. There was no where for me to go.
The [temporary housing program] doesn't really offer counselling services its more is just stay there [and] don't kill yourself…. My experience… is that there are a lot of fragmented services… If you are somebody who has had PTSD which so many people do after repeated assaults then there's no resource that really encompasses that. So it kind of feels like playing ping pong…
The big thing is that [the university] requires documentation and not all of these resources will offer it or the school won't accept it. So when I was in [temporary housing] after the suicide attempt I had professors say "you know it's not a

hospital documentation."

Mary's experience demonstrates how complex getting support can be for a survivor and really made it clear that the services they used both on campus and off were not in conversation with each other. Given this fragmented approach and inconsistent services, it is no surprise that later Mary told me that "I think I'm at a point where I don't know how many more ineffective services I can really handle."

Similar to Mary's struggles with accommodations and services, other participants described feeling defeated in trying to access useful services. For instance, Adrienne told me that:

> Those times when I'm actually in crisis I don't want to be worried that I won't get the help I need, do you know what I mean? Like I'm almost better off just dealing with it myself versus putting myself out there and expecting support and then not getting any.

Overall, this student feedback suggests that inadequate, poorly trained, inconsistent, and fragmented services and policies ensure that survivors are frequently isolated and forced to deal with their trauma alone. It was no surprise that students described policies as "empty" as most students were not aware of them until after they experienced an incident of sexual violence - so help was not there when they needed it. Given that there are so many costs of being a survivor, it seems crucial that the university provide more proactive support through education for first responders and changes in policy that would not further penalize survivors and block their academic success. In addition, it is crucial for the university to develop systems that allow student feedback in the regular evaluation process for university services so that students can receive supports that are more genuine. Overall, there is an urgent need for survivor oriented education and training for the whole university community and the development of more genuinely responsive, accessible and accountable policies, procedures, resources, and support

services. In each of these contexts, regular feedback from survivors is necessary to create a truly

survivor-centric approach.

Chapter Six

Concluding Overview and Recommendations

This thesis began from personal experience and activism. Although the process has taken

about three years, I believe the extra time I took to maintain my involvement in sexual violence

activist and committee work has benefited this research. Intersectional feminist theory provided

me with the lens to understand sexual violence and explore a range of university policy and

practices. Institutional ethnography assisted me in identifying institutional gaps and challenges

experienced by students in obtaining access to supports and services in relation to sexual

violence. This methodology provided the space to informally and organically follow leads,

contact others beyond my participants for information, and maintain my involvement in the

university's committees on sexual violence prevention and human rights, which ultimately

enabled me to have access to rich data. This research equipped me to answer the following

research questions:

1. What prevention, support, and education policies and procedures constitute Turnhill
   University's protocol regarding sexual violence on campus?
2. How has this protocol been developed? To what effect?
3. When Turnhill University's students experience sexual violence, do they involve
   university officials, policies and/or procedures? Why or why not?
4. How could Turnhill University's sexual violence protocols be improved to facilitate
   better outcomes for sexually violated students?

This chapter will provide an overview of limitations as well as how I answered these research

questions, with an emphasis on putting the perspectives of policy developers and students into

conversation and assessing their distinct and overlapping perspectives. Then, I will provide a list

of recommendations that I believe will directly respond to my original aim: how might Turnhill

University's sexual violence policies and protocols be more useful for students and more socially

just. Finally, I will address the limitations of this research and make suggestions for future

research.

Answering my Research Questions:

What prevention, support, and education policies and procedures constitute Turnhill University's protocol regarding sexual violence on campus?

One of the main challenges I encountered in relationship to this research question was simply

locating the policies and protocols relevant to sexual violence. Student interviewees also

highlighted that most students were not aware of any policies or procedures or of the

implications of these documents in practice. While the staff I interviewed did not comment on

the accessibility of these documents, they did note that the university I studied allocated

progressively fewer and fewer resources to implementing sexual violence policy and that staff

were frequently isolated and had few allies who would challenge cuts to services. In keeping

with students' assessment of policy as inaccessible, my research revealed that it was virtually

impossible to keep track of how or whether policies or protocols were implemented in the area of

sexual violence as there were no consistent statistics. This lack of record keeping, which became

another main theme, makes it practically impossible to tell if these policies and protocols worked

well. My research suggests that there were minimal resources put into sexual violence prevention

and education, and that institutional efforts in this area decreased and then ended during the

period 2008-2015. Students highlighted that support for survivors who reported to staff through

existing policies was, at best inconsistent, and at worst inaccessible. Overall, students had very

little knowledge of their rights, and spoke about multiple instances when sexual violence policies

were inaccessible, inconsistently implemented, or not helpful while staff reflected on the lack of resources and feelings of isolation. Therefore, I would argue that Turnhill University's protocol regarding sexual violence on campus is unsatisfactory, and that the universities approach to dealing with sexual violence has been reactionary.

How has this protocol been developed? To what effect?

Although my second research question may not seem directly addressed in previous chapters, the overview of the university's political climate (provided on p.29 -32) begins to demonstrate the reactive process through which the university's protocol is usually developed. As with my difficulty answering the first research question, a lack of record keeping made it tricky for me to discern how the protocol had been developed. On the basis of my three years of research at Turnhill University it seems that protocol has been developed in response to multiple public crises and incidences of violent, harassing or discriminatory behaviour (such as racism and sexual violence) or most recently, by legislation. For example, the changes to the university's most recent protocol on sexual violence were only developed as a result of provincial legislation. Changes and recommendations to other policies and procedures related to human rights are being reviewed by a university task force that began due to a widely publicized incident of sexual violence.

What effect has this reactionary development of protocols had on students and staff? Throughout my interviews with students, many expressed their mistrust of university officials, such as senior administration, for not being accountable to discipline perpetrators of sexual violence. This critique was also evident in the student and faculty protest in relation to the university mishandling of a case of sexual violence. For staff, it seems the university practice of

only engaging in policy development when there was a crisis was demoralizing and may have

had an impact on staff resignations.

When Turnhill University's students experience sexual violence, do they involve university officials, policies and/or procedures? Why or why not?

For the purpose of this research, relevant university officials were usually: the HRO,

Campus Security, and Residence Staff, as these were the staff listed in policies and protocols as

points for contact on campus. When asking students if they either involved or would involve

university officials, most students said they would not seek the help of university officials. In the

case of Mary, university officials such as Campus Security were involved even when she did not

ask for them to be. In other cases, many students were not aware of the Respectful Work and

Learning Environment Policy or the Sexual Assault Protocol and hence did not know how to use

them, who to ask, or where the relevant offices were located (especially HRO). Some of the

reasons for this disconnect include a general mistrust of university officials (or "the university"),

lack of knowledge about who to go to for help, and/or lack of knowledge on policy or procedure.

Even for those who did feel confident to use policy or procedure, such as Stephanie who went

through the undergraduate student union procedures, those experiences were so dissatisfactory

that they withdrew and would not want to go that route again.

When I expanded the definition of university officials to include supports such as

Personal Counselling or the SSVC (although off campus), students were more likely to seek their

assistance but had other problems. As mentioned in chapter 5, one of the main themes I found

was inconsistent and/or disconnected supports and services. While sexual violence supports and

services are vital in helping a survivor cope, many student participants shared their feelings of

defeat and isolation because they had tried to get help, but felt they did not get appropriate

supports and then felt forced to deal with their trauma alone. The costs of being a survivor are already overwhelming, including shame, embarrassment, financial and mental health costs, combined with a lack of knowledge of policies or procedures, and mistrust of "the university." Consequently, it was no surprise that many students said they would not reach out to university officials or use university policies.

How could Turnhill University's sexual violence protocols be improved to facilitate better outcomes for sexually violated students?

To answer my final research question, I have developed a list of recommendations related to each theme: working conditions, outdated and/or confusing policies and protocols, lack of record keeping, empty policies, cost of being a survivor, and inconsistent and disconnected services.

Working Conditions

One of the first themes I found in this study was the poor working conditions of those working in the Human Rights office. One of the participants, Jade, left the institution in part because of the lack of funding and resources to the office.

Recommendation 1: Monitor staff workload to avoid burnout.

Recommendation 2: Increase funding and resources to the Human Rights Office.

Considering the amount of work that these offices do, such as: training, education, policy development, and support, it is important for every institution to check in with their own Human Rights office (or the equivalent team) to ensure that the workload for these employees is manageable and if not, then provide the funding and resources necessary to fulfill those duties.

Outdated and/or Confusing Policies and Protocols

Both policy developers recognized how the policies and protocols could be confusing, outdated, and internally contradictory. For instance, the Respectful Work and Learning Environment Policy was to be revised after three years and still has not been updated eight years later. With the large gaps in policy revision, there are also inconsistencies between policy and practice; for example, the RWLEP mentions an internal committee for adjudicating disputes but this was not in place the year Sarah worked in the HRO, and there were inconsistencies and problems with definitions relating to sexual violence between different policies. Most notably, the Student Code of Conduct does not mention sexual violence, an oversight that would certainly make it unlikely that students would consider laying complaints through this process.

Recommendation 3: Ensure policies and procedures are regularly updated with university community input.

While I recognize that policy developers have a large workload and not enough time, my recommendation to increase funding and resources to the office should help with ensuring that policies and procedures are regularly updated. While some inconsistencies may be inevitable, at least an acknowledgement of these tensions would be more useful. Not only do policies and procedures need to be updated, but input from the university community is vital. Without incorporating this feedback, students, and community members will continue to mistrust the university.

Lack of Record Keeping

This research highlighted my repeated frustration with a lack of record keeping – including a seeming void of institutional memory to providing information on the development

of policy and virtually no information on how these policies and procedures were implemented

specifically in the area of sexual violence. As mentioned in chapter four, most incidences of

sexual violence are not reported to any authority, including university officials and police. This

context – which is unlikely to change – means it is particularly vital to maintain consistent

records of how sexual violence is dealt with through policies and procedures as the failure to

produce basic record keeping blocks opportunities to monitor and ensure policy is safe and

helpful for survivors. My research highlights that prior to the legislative oversight provided by

Bill 132; there were no requirements to maintain proper records of policies or protocols or to

evaluate whether these processes were safe and helpful for students. This has been a real

disservice to those who attempt to use them.

Recommendation 4: Ensure consistent and public record keeping for all human rights

related policies and procedures. This must include a transparent record regarding policy

development, student use of policies, including the number of formal and informal reports,

and the services that students use in relationship to these reports (accommodations,

counselling, informal mediation, formal reports, etc.).

Although my research focused on sexual violence, I believe that consistent record keeping for all

human rights related policies and procedures is necessary. While some aspects of record keeping

would have to consider confidentiality, a clear record of how policies and procedures are

implemented is critical to move towards more proactive policy in the future and to evaluating

whether those policies are useful for students.

Empty Policies

Many students shared their opinion that university policies and procedures are "empty."

The root of this criticism I believe can be found in the reality that most students were unaware that any policies existed. As Mary argued, information about the existence of policies and their implementation were connected. She stated "if [policies are] not implemented correctly and there's no training for staff on how to implement them, they're pointless. At that point, they're just empty policies."

Recommendation 5: Have training and education on sexual violence related policies and procedures for all students, staff, and faculty (in their capacity as a survivor and/or first responder).

By properly training students, staff, and faculty on policy, the university community can better understand their rights and responsibilities as well as information on supports and services. This training could comprehensively contribute to meaningful social change if it is conceptualized using intersectional feminist theory as sexual violence can be better understood and addressed by recognizing that processes and protocols that are not accessible do not affect everyone in the same ways. When universities have 'empty policies' students who identify as women, LGBTQ2+, Aboriginal, a person of colour, a person with a disability, or someone from a low socio-economic status, will likely be more vulnerable than others. In addition, sexual violence supports and services should ensure that counsellors are culturally literate regarding the context faced by marginalized students, and those who have experienced multiple instances of sexual violence.

Cost of Being a Survivor

In interviewing students, it became clear very quickly that the costs of being a survivor were too high. Both the immediate costs, and the long lasting and interconnected emotional,

mental, physical, and monetary costs of being a survivor of sexual violence impact students learning process and ability to succeed at university and in their future careers.

Recommendation 6: Eliminate fees such as the Missed Appointment Policy where Counselling Services needs to receive 24 hours' notice of a cancellation or there is a $20 fee that has to be paid before another appointment can be scheduled.

While there are other recommendations that will help reduce the cost survivors pay (which include more resources to the HRO and appropriate training), the financial costs of cancelling appointments provides an example of how practices can help ensure that survivors can still gain access to the supports they need. More broadly, this research points to the merit of university campuses taking forward opportunities beyond these small charges to better accommodate the much larger financial costs many survivors face such as waving tuition costs for students who miss the drop out date as a result of sexual violence.

Inconsistent and Disconnected Services

My research with students indicates they do not trust most existing services and they lack information about sexual violence resources because of the fragmented service network. These problems hinder students getting the support they want and need.

Recommendation 7: Have the university build better communication and connections between services so that survivors can get access to accommodations and better supports.

For example, one of the ways in which the university can better support students through protocol is to ensure that if a student has gone to an organization that does not have a system to provide students with a form for missing class (because they are dealing with the aftermath of sexual violence) that the university create that system. While policies and procedures are already

online, I would suggest including a robust list of services and supports for survivors that provide a brief overview and contact information. It should not take more time to procure documentation than receiving services.

Overall, I believe these preliminary recommendations are necessary first steps to ensure that Turnhill University's sexual violence policies and protocols might become more useful for students and more socially just. I hope they might also be relevant for other Ontario universities.

Limitations and Further Research

As with all research, there are limitations as well as opportunities for future research. For the current study, limitations focused on issues of scope and record keeping. Regarding scope, I would have liked to address how Turnhill University handles sexual violence towards any university community member, as not only students are affected. Unfortunately, that would have been too much to take on for my first major study, thus I restricted my focus to a small sample of students and policy developers. Secondly, record keeping was a limitation in my research. Although I did my best to research the implementation of policy or protocol at the university, it is unfortunately impossible to know for sure. Nevertheless, my interviews provided rich data to draw from.

While I believe this research provides recommendations that would support the move toward better sexual violence policies and protocols, more research will be necessary to track the implementation of Bill 132 in order to assess whether these changes actually result in policies that are more useful for students. While the absence of institutional record keeping suggests a limit in the conclusions drawn through my research, the beginning of new legislation on sexual violence also opens up opportunities for more detailed assessments in the future. More

specifically, I suggest that future researchers embrace institutional ethnography and the notion of intertextuality in post-secondary institutions to explore whether, and in what ways institutions are accountable for ensuring policy and protocol is up to the standards of legislation. In particular, it would be useful to explore whether new policies are more useful and socially just for students. I believe interviews with both policy developers and students are crucial to evaluate these questions. In addition, I would also suggest future researchers thoroughly explore and evaluate supports and services on campus as these are crucial in understanding how an institution handles sexual violence.

Overall the reactive, inconsistent, and inaccessible state of sexual violence policies suggest there has been a lack of institutional commitment to ensuring that these procedures are genuinely helpful to those who use them. This situation mirrors the normalization of sexual violence in Canadian society where, despite the recent sensational media reports, universities are rarely responding in ways endorsed by those who survive sexual violence. I hope that future researchers can benefit from looking at the analysis included in this research and will use it to further examine and encourage proactive work on sexual violence that benefits survivors.

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[i] Reference would divulge study location and consequently is being withheld.

[ii] Reference would divulge study location and consequently is being withheld.

[iii] Exact wording would divulge study location and consequently is being withheld.