

2019

## Evaluating Gendered Responses to Title IX Changes on College Campuses

Catarina E. Kaltenhauser  
*University of Central Florida*

 Part of the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)  
Find similar works at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis>  
University of Central Florida Libraries <http://library.ucf.edu>

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the UCF Theses and Dissertations at STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Undergraduate Theses by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact [STARS@ucf.edu](mailto:STARS@ucf.edu).

---

### Recommended Citation

Kaltenhauser, Catarina E., "Evaluating Gendered Responses to Title IX Changes on College Campuses" (2019). *Honors Undergraduate Theses*. 589.  
<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/honorsthesis/589>

EVALUATING GENDERED RESPONSES TO PROPOSED TITLE IX  
CHANGES ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

by

CATARINA KALTENHAUSER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the Honors in the Major Program in Criminal Justice  
in the College of Community Innovation and Education  
and in the Burnett Honors College  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

## Abstract

On college campuses, Title IX is used to prevent sexual assault. As sexual assault is experienced predominately by women, this research seeks to examine a relationship between gender and opinions on the Title IX changes of 2017, which rescinded protections for victims of sexual assault. To answer this, a thematic content analysis was conducted on online news article comment forums. The results indicated that men were more likely to support changes to Title IX guidelines, and women were more likely to oppose these changes. Drawing on these differences, administrators on college campuses can be prepared for new programming and new policies can be informed from the public opinion.

## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....</b>	<b>4</b>
SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVALENCE OVER TIME .....	4
HISTORY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT AND THE #MeToo MOVEMENT .....	6
SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUS AND WHILE AT WORK .....	11
<b>TITLE IX .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>GENDERED NATURE OF RESPONSES TO SEXUAL ASSAULT .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>CURRENT STUDY .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>27</b>
DATA AND SAMPLING .....	27
CODING AND ANALYTIC RESPONSE .....	28
<b>RESULTS.....</b>	<b>30</b>
IN FAVOR OF TITLE IX CHANGES.....	35
<i>Theme #1</i> .....	35
<i>Theme #2</i> .....	37
<i>Theme #3</i> .....	38
<i>Theme #4</i> .....	38
<i>Theme #5</i> .....	39
IN OPPOSITION TO TITLE IX CHANGES.....	40
<i>Theme #1</i> .....	40
<i>Theme #2</i> .....	41
<i>Theme #3</i> .....	42
NEUTRAL TO TITLE IX CHANGES.....	43
GENDERED DIFFERENCES IN RESPONSES TO TITLE IX CHANGES .....	43
<b>DISCUSSION &amp; CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>REFERENCES .....</b>	<b>58</b>

## List of Figures

### Figure

1. Description of New York Times Comment Selection	31
2. Description of The Washington Post Comment Section	32
3. Description of The Wall Street Journal Comment Section	33
4. Description of ABC News Comment Section	34
5. Total Percentage of Opinions (N = 120) on Title IX Changes	35
6. Gender Distribution for Comments in Opposition of Title IX Changes (N = 43)	44
7. Gender Distribution for Comments in Favor of Title IX Changes (N = 73)	45
8. Theme Differences on Title IX Changes Within Genders (N = 120)	46

## Introduction

Sexual assault has been—and remains—one of the most significant public health issues in modern day society that disproportionately affects women (García-Moreno et. al., 2013; National Crime Victimization Survey [NCVS], 2018). As sexual assault was, and still is, incredibly widespread and prominent (Gross, Winslett, Roberts, & Gohm, 2006), the United States government issued a formal law governing how federally funded institutions must address—and prevent—instances of sexual assault and gender discrimination from occurring in their presence, whether in the classroom, on the field, or in the workplace (United States Department of Education, 2018). This law came to be known as Title IX. As this law specifically applied to gender discrimination, many men reacted negatively to the introduction of Title IX. As such, the NCAA, which was majority male at this time, wrote that Title IX was the end of collegiate sports (Scott, 1975) and *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* ran editorials about how awful Title IX was (Mink, 2012). Indeed, it is noted that the strongest opposition to Title IX came from the male athletics lobby (Mink, 2012).

Although Title IX faced tremendous backlash from the NCAA and other social groups, it is still a landmark piece of legislation that maintains its relevancy today. The protections provided through Title IX have been updated twice since 2010—one update in 2011 was progressive and encouraged victims to come forward, as it extended many rights to victims including the necessity for a prompt investigation and a standard of evidence that allowed for easier reporting (Loschiavo & Waller, 2017). The second and most recent update of 2017 stripped many rights and protections that victims of sexual assault should be afforded, such as raising the standards of evidence and removing the promptness of investigation (Loschiavo & Waller, 2017). Historically, there have

been strong public reactions to gender equality legislation—including the women’s suffrage movement in the early 1900’s (Lange, 2015) and the passage of Title IX in 1972. Therefore, it is plausible that the proposed Title IX changes will ignite both positive and negative social reactions from organizations (i.e., advocacy groups, survivors, citizens, and even alleged perpetrators). Citizen reactions to the proposed changes are very important for Title IX administrators and organizations. In fact, garnishing feedback from citizens on the benefits, drawbacks, and implications of these changes will help organizations to prepare for any potential ramifications as a result of these changes.

To fully understand any reactions of individuals to these changes, it is important to evaluate the gendered aspect of sexual assault and harassment, as reactions may be in part influenced by gender differences in empathy towards victims. Indeed, it has been reported that women are more likely to empathize with victims of sexual assault than men, and men are more likely to empathize with the perpetrator committing the sexual assault (Smith & Frieze, 2003; Osman, 2011). Men are also more likely to blame the victim than the perpetrator in cases of sexual assault (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Additionally, women who have experienced sexual assault themselves—which is approximately 25% of the female population (Schwartz, 1991; Gross et. al., 2006; Hanson, 2016)—are more likely to empathize with victims of sexual assault than those who have not experienced it firsthand (Dietz, Blackwell, Daley, & Bentley, 1982; Barnett et. al., 1998).

Gendered responses are necessary to study because women are primarily victims (Sinozich & Langton, 2014), and men are primarily offenders in cases of sexual assault—roughly 90% of all sexual assault perpetrators are male (Black et. al., 2011). Even across non-offenders, one in three men said they would rape a woman if they knew they would not be caught (Stotzer & MacCartney,

2016). The gendered reactions to the changes of Title IX can provide critical insight as to the perceived threats that supporters of the new guidelines may see. In doing so, institutions upholding Title IX will be better prepared to serve and protect victims of sexual assault.

This research aims to explore the potential benefits and drawbacks of the changes to Title IX policy, with specific focus on how the responses to these implications vary by gender. To explore these aims, I will rely on a thematic content analysis of the comments on the first online article published on Title IX changes in four national news sources: *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *ABC News*. These are four of the most circulated online news sources in America (Mitchell & Rosensteil, 2011). The analysis will involve qualitatively coding the comments on Title IX articles and determining if and how the benefits and drawbacks proposed by readers vary by gender. Findings from this research will help in understanding how these changes are perceived across the general American public, as well as understanding how individuals perceive this crime against their own—or the opposite—gender. This study proposes the following hypotheses: 1) women are more likely to oppose the changes to Title IX and 2) men are more likely to support the changes to Title IX.

## **Review of Literature**

### **Sexual Assault Prevalence Over Time**

Sexual assault is an umbrella term used to define many behaviors experienced in varying degrees. This can range from minor incidences such as sexual harassment—defined as any unwanted sexual advances, repeatedly making suggestive comments, any request for sexual favors, or repeated pressure to go on a date (Adapted from: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission)—to sexual assault—defined as “oral, anal, or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object, without the other party's consent or capacity to provide consent” (F.S. Title XLVI § 794.005). Sexual assault can also be defined as rape. Sexual assault can occur between strangers, acquaintances, and even in relationships and within marriages. When occurring within the context of a relationship, it is referred to as intimate partner violence [IPV]—defined as any physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or financial abuse perpetrated by a spouse, ex-spouse, current partner, former partner, or anyone with a previous romantic or sexual relationship (Adapted from: World Health Organization, 2012; National Institute of Justice, 2017). Definitions of sexual assault vary from state to state, but it generally includes any indecent sexual behavior toward another individual. The definition of sexual assault is important for contextualizing its history and prevalence within the United States.

Though sexual assault has become a pressing topic as of recently, its historical roots are very important when conceptualizing the topic. Sexual assault has pervaded throughout cultures and time, a never-ending cycle that viciously strips victims of their human rights. Kanin (1957), surveyed more than 250 college men and women and reported that one in four women in college

experienced attempted rapes. Since the 1950's, women have gained relatively equal access to opportunities, yet the incidence of sexual assault has not changed at all. Throughout 20 years of research spanning from the 1950's to the late 1970's, Kanin and associates (Kanin, 1957; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Kanin & Parcell, 1977) reported that still one in four women in college reported their dates forced them to have sexual intercourse. Over a decade later in 1984, Rapaport and Burkhart reported that over 15% of college men recognized that they had forced a woman to have sex with them against her will. Although these studies took place well over 50 years ago, the statistics surrounding sexual assault remain unchanged.

The National Crime Victimization Survey [NCVS, 2018] reports that about one in seven individuals experience sexual assault—an estimate that is lower than many other reported statistics. However, the Department of Justice contextualizes their estimate by recognizing that, estimates of rape or sexual assault from the NCVS have typically been lower than estimates derived from other federal and private surveys. However, the NCVS methodology and definitions of rape or sexual assault differ from many of these surveys in important ways that contribute to the variation in estimates of the prevalence and incidence of these victimizations (p. 20).

In fact, multiple recent studies report similar statistics in that one in four women are assaulted before they graduate college (Schwartz, 1991; Gross et. al., 2006; Hanson, 2016). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), there are currently 11.2 million females attending colleges and universities across the country, accounting for over 55% of all enrolled students. Pairing the 11.2 million females in college with a national estimate reporting that 81% of women experience a form of sexual harassment and 27% of women experience rape

(Stop Street Harassment, 2018), estimates of harassment and rape on college campuses alone could be as high as 9.1 million and 3.1 million, respectively. Despite this, nearly 90% of colleges in the United States reported zero rapes on their campuses in 2015 (American Association of University Women, 2015). It is evident that there is a clear disconnect between the number of college students experiencing assault and the universities reporting of such.

### **History of Sexual Assault and the #MeToo Movement**

Historically, sexually assaulting an individual was not defined as criminal—in fact, British common law held that a man had “the right to sex” within the contract of marriage (Hart, 2014). Indeed, the Chief Justice of the King’s Bench Sir Matthew Hale (1736) said, “But the husband cannot be guilty of a rape committed by himself upon his lawful wife, for by their mutual matrimonial consent and contract the wife hath given up herself in this kind unto her husband which she cannot retract” (p. 629). This view was also supported by the Bible; First Corinthians 7:3-5 states that wives owe their husbands a conjugal debt and the husbands control their wives’ bodies. Also, in early America, it was incredibly common for white, land owning males to rape their black, female slaves (Davis, 1991). Courts in the 1800’s ruled that husbands could rape their wives without facing consequences (R v Clarence (1889) 22 QB 23). Even as recent as the 1950’s, the United States upheld R v Clarence; R v Miller [1954] 2 Q.B. 282 held that a husband could not be guilty of rape, as marriage was unlimited consent for sexual relations.

Because of the historical foundation within the United States related to sexual assault, in the 1960’s and earlier, women were met with blame and suspicion after reporting sexual assault, which is why there were so few reports prior to this time period (Cohen, 2015a). In the 1970’s however, the tides began to shift in relations to women’s rights, rape, and feminism. The women’s

rights movement began in the 1970's, and the Equal Rights Act was passed shortly after, making it illegal to discriminate upon the basis of gender (Bergeron, 2015). These movements and acts were important for female involvement, but it did not cover the entirety of the issue—equal rights, equal opportunity, and equal treatment. As such, until 1993, it was legal in the United States to rape one's spouse (Bennice & Resick, 2003). Following the criminalization of spousal rape, prominent U.S. politicians fought against this law. In fact, Senator Richard Black (R-VA) voted against the criminalization of spousal rape during his time in the state legislature (2002). His vote was indicative of a societal issue that pervades through every class of individuals.

It is the historical context of sexual assault that is important when examining the impacts of such on modern society. As it has been ingrained in society that sexual assault is normal, shifting from this school of thought has proven difficult for those stuck in the past. In one illustration, Michael Cohen, former attorney for President Trump, has made incorrect and damaging statements surrounding rape. In an interview concerning sexual assault accusations against President Trump, Cohen said, "You cannot rape your spouse. And there's very clear case law," despite the clear case law stating it is illegal (2015b). These influential individuals hold more power than most citizens, and the damaging things they say could harm victims of assault everywhere.

As sexual assault was commonplace, reporting and receiving positive support were not the norm. Even in modern times, women as victims face harsher societal reactions than men as victims. A survey by Andrews, Brewin, & Rose (2003) of 157 violent crime victims reported that women experience more negative reactions from family, friends, and police than men do. Though studies confirm that sexual assault is one of the most distressing events to experience (Kessler et. al., 1995), many victims remain silent and never formally report their sexual assault (Rape, Abuse,

and Incest National Network [RAINN], 2016). Walsh et. al. (2010) found that victims of sexual assault are reluctant to use reporting services as they feel “they would not be believed and that they would be blamed for what had happened to them” (p. 135). This reason, along with others such as feeling shameful and embarrassed, fearing retaliation, believing it was a personal problem, and fearing that police would not do anything have been reported by other studies as well as reasons to not formally report sexual assault (Binder, 1981; Regan & Kelly, 2003; Allen, 2007; Department of Justice, 2013; RAINN, 2016). Indeed, sexual assault is the single most underreported crime (Rennison, 2002) and has been reported as one of the fastest growing crimes (Department of Justice, 1976). Many victims report that they do not seek formal support services like the police, medical professionals, and mental health counselors (Starzynski, Ullman, Filipas, & Townsend, 2005; Branch, Richards, & Dretsch, 2013). Even friends can dissuade victims from reporting to support services (Ahrens, 2006). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission reports that 25-85% of women experience harassment while at work, yet their agency has only received, on average since 2011, 10,000 complaints a year (Malo, 2017). These 10,000 complaints pale in comparison to the 75 million women who are employed in the United States (DeWolf, 2017). On the low end of 25% of women experiencing harassment in the workplace, there would be nearly 19 million complaints. On the high end of 85% of women experiencing harassment in the workplace, there would be an astounding 64 million instances. Both of these numbers illustrate the disconnect between individuals experiencing harassment and the number of which are reported.

An even larger number of assaults go unreported. The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (1975) reports that for every one rape reported to police, three to ten rapes are unreported. Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski (1987) discovered that self-report figures are more

accurate than statistics reported by agencies, as many victims have a multitude of reasons as to why they do not report. While these studies are dated, the precedent that has been set is that these numbers have not changed—reports estimate that 80% of sexual assaults go unreported (NCVS, 2018). Victims of sexual assault and harassment are hesitant to report their victimization. Even with Title IX, social movements, and increasing support, there is little liability for the actions of the perpetrators. Langer (2017) reports that 95% of the men who had harassed their co-workers went unpunished. With historical expectations to not report and negative responses from those closest to the victim, as well as the societal responses from the institutions in which victims interact with, victims are left to navigate a difficult situation almost entirely on their own.

The #MeToo movement, which officially began in 2006, yet drastically expanded within the last several years, has become an incredible support system for victims to discuss their stories of assault and harassment. This movement became a catalyst for discussions on sexual assault and support for victims. Actress Alyssa Milano initiated the conversation when she posted on Twitter, asking women to simply say a “#MeToo” if they had ever been sexually harassed or assaulted (2017). Following this, women across the world were coming forward and sharing their stories of assault and abuse—saying “#MeToo” to indicate that they too had been assaulted. The movement was more than a hashtag and a marketing campaign; it expanded and became a tool to allow victims to feel comfortable, receive support, and learn about their options and resources. The #MeToo website includes links to victim service centers located within any zip code, as well as an emergency window exit, which automatically redirects the website to a clear Google search—a necessary safety feature designed for women seeking help while still living with their abusers.

With support and resources available to victims, the reporting of sexual assault has become more prevalent and more socially acceptable.

Though sexual assault has been pervasive throughout history, mass media has drawn public attention to high profile celebrity sexual assault cases. This mass attention began in 2014, referencing the rumors of drugging and abuse surrounding actor and comedian Bill Cosby that had been circulating around Hollywood for years. More than 60 women came forward with their stories of Cosby drugging and sexually assaulting them (Mallenbaum, Ryan, & Puente, 2018). Then, in late 2015, Pennsylvania Police arrested Cosby for the sexual assault of *one* woman. He has since been convicted and is currently serving his sentence. Nearly two years after the Cosby arrest, Hollywood executive and producer Harvey Weinstein was in the media, with dozens of women coming forward and describing—in detail—their assault by his hands. Moniuszko and Kelly (2017) report that, in total, 87 women came forward and shared their stories of assault from Weinstein. These women shared their stories of how Weinstein used his position of power to force them into sexual acts with the threat of their career on the line.

Though historically, there has not been a large public response to these crimes, there has been a shift as of recently. The public accusations of Bill Cosby and Harvey Weinstein brought forth a new era—the era of support, more social acceptance, and victim assistance. Since 2016—when the first major news stories about the scope of sexual assault broke—the number of reports of sexual assault have increased (NCVS, 2018). On a national level, the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network [RAINN] experienced an increase of 10% in calls to their hotline in 2016—coinciding with the #MeToo movement (2016). Across the country, reports of rape also increased.

Paquette (2016) discovered that cities such as Washington D.C, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles saw an increase of 11%, 9%, and 12% respectively, and a shocking 19% rise was seen in Houston.

Reports of rape in New York were up 22% (N = 1,795) in 2018 compared to 250 reports in 2017, in part because the #MeToo movement inspired victims to come forward and tell their stories (Morales, 2019). In fact, Bill de Blasio, Mayor of New York City, said that, “A historic underreporting is finally being addressed . . . I think the #MeToo movement is part of it” (2019). As a result of the movement, many of the reports of sexual assault actually occurred in prior years. Of the 1,795 total rapes reported in 2018, over 400 were assaults that took place in previous years. Indeed, the NCVS (2018) found delays in reporting, citing a 17% increase in reports of sexual assault from 2016 to 2017. These numbers suggest that more women felt comfortable coming forward about their assault because of the societal response shifting to include support and validity for women everywhere.

### **Sexual Assault on Campus and While at Work**

Women ages 16 through 19 are at the highest risk of sexual assault victimization (Department of Justice, 1997). This group is closely followed by women between 20 and 24 years old—who experience the second highest risk of sexual assault victimization (BJS, 1984; National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2011). Other publications have grouped these age ranges together, and report that individuals between ages 18 through 24 are at the highest risk of sexual assault victimization (Sinozich & Langton, 2014). These age ranges directly coincide with attending college and college-aged students. Kimble, Neacsiu, Flack, & Horner (2008) report that students in their first semester in college are at a higher risk of sexual assault. They attribute this to “more socializing, less work, more free time, and heavier drinking” (p. 336). The risk of sexual

assault for women who identify as sexual minorities—bisexual, lesbian, and transgender women—are at an even greater risk for sexual assault in college compared to heterosexual females (Krebs et. al., 2016; Hanson, 2016).

Across college campuses, sexual assault is a common fear shared by women everywhere. The Department of Justice (2016) highlights that one of every four undergraduate college women will be assaulted before they walk across the stage for their graduation. Even with one in every four women being assaulted, the number of reports received by campus police and administrators are incredibly low. The American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU] estimates that 95% of assaults on college campuses go unreported (Ito, 2010). Moreover, a 2016 study by Krebs et. al. found that in their survey across nine public institutions, only 4.3% of sexual battery incidents and 12.5% of rape incidents were reported by the victim to any official. Indeed, these estimates were supported by several independent studies, citing that only 5% of rapes on college campuses are reported (Warshaw, 1988; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000).

At times, those who do report often do not receive the justice they deserve. Ito (2010) found that punishments for perpetrators are weak in comparison to the victimization experiences. These punishments commonly include sending an apology letter to the victim, writing a research paper on the consequences of sexual assault, attending seminars on assault, or suspension. According to a year-long investigation by Lombardi and Jones (2009) on behalf of the Center for Public Integrity, on-campus perpetrators “often face little to no punishment from school judicial systems, while their victim's lives are frequently turned upside down” (p. 9).

Sexual assault comes with a wide variety of consequences for the victim as well. Many victims experience depression (Ellis, Atkeson, & Calhoun, 1981; Burnam et. al., 1988; Weiss,

Longhurst, & Mazure, 1999; Krahe & Berger, 2017) and anxiety (Frank & Anderson, 1987; Stein et.al., 2004; Cogle et. al., 2010). More than half of individuals who are sexually assaulted experience post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD] (Kilpatrick, Edmunds, & Seymour, 1992; Creamer, Burgess, & McFarlane, 2001; Au et. al., 2013), and many individuals experience alcohol abuse (Miranda et. al., 2002). Sexually abused women are 16% more likely to give birth to a low-birth-weight child (García-Moreno et. al., 2013), and 33% more likely to contemplate suicide (Kilpatrick, Edmunds, & Seymour, 1992; Bryan, Mcnaughton-Cassill, Osman, & Hernandez, 2013). The risk of contracting HIV and AIDS after sexual assault is increased as well (Allers & Benjack, 1991). Those assaulted are two times more likely to have an abortion in the future, and two times more likely to experience depression (García-Moreno et. al., 2013). Victims of sexual assault in college also experience a drop in their GPAs, with some dropping below a 2.5 GPA in the semester of and the semester following a sexual assault (Jordan, Combs, & Smith, 2014). These consequences are not solely for students, however. The institutions that implement Title IX also face consequences in sexual assault cases, particularly financial consequences. McCollister, French, and Yang (2010) discovered that one single sexual assault costs \$240,776 in 2008—with current inflation rates, this is estimated at \$282,461 in 2019 (Calculated using: United States Bureau of Labor Statistics). This figure includes medical attention, mental health care, property loss, and lost wages.

Female students are at an increased risk of sexual assault on campus, and many students work while attending school. Indeed, Hexter, reporting for the American Council on Education (1990), revealed that over 62% of students were employed while attending college. More recent studies have not only confirmed this, but have shown that college students are working at an even

higher amount than previously—current data suggests around 80% to 85% of students work (Planty et. al., 2009; Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, 2018). Working students may also be subjected to sexual assault and harassment in the workplace, making any environment potentially dangerous for college women. In fact, Zillman (2017) reports that 30% of women have experienced harassing and abusive behavior from their male coworkers, and 25% have experienced it from their male superiors—who have influence over the careers of the women they harass. In another illustration, Langer (2017), reporting for *ABC News-Washington Post* as part of a national randomized survey, discovered that 33 million women in the United States have been sexually harassed and 14 million have been sexually assaulted while in the workplace. The same study found 54% of working women have been victimized due to “unwanted and inappropriate sexual advances.” Unfortunately, this is a reality that many women face in the workplace. With many students also entering the workforce during their college years, they can face elevated risks of sexual assault and sexual harassment while at school and while at work.

## **Title IX**

Given the prevalence of gender discrimination historically, Congress sought to remedy this pervasive issue. In doing so, many new laws and legislation had to be enforced for any real change to occur. Brought forth by Congresswoman Patsy Mink and Senator Birch Bayh in 1971, Title IX was signed on June 23, 1972 and enacted into law on July 1, 1972 as part of the Educational Amendments. This amendment reads, “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” (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688).

This amendment states that no persons, particularly women, will be subjected to exclusion, harassment, or inequality due to their gender in any federally funded programming. The public perception of the focus of Title IX when originally passed in the 1970’s was for equal opportunity for women in collegiate athletics in response to the strong gender discrimination in the NCAA (Sandler, 2007). However, Title IX transcended more than athletics—it attempted to provide women an equal opportunity for involvement in programming around the country. It included several other key areas, including equal access to higher education, career education, access to math and science, education for pregnant and parenting students, equal employment, and standardized testing (NCAA, 2014). When this amendment passed, there was controversy surrounding the implementation—especially from the National College Athletic Association [NCAA]. Michael Scott, a lawyer representing the NCAA, said in an interview, “This may well signal the end of intercollegiate athletic programs as we have known them in recent decades” (1975). During the 1970’s, male athletics dominated schooling systems, while women’s programs

suffered (Bell, 2016). When Title IX passed, it came with the provision that all athletics must be integrated by 1978—giving institutions over five years to integrate their programs (34 C.F.R. 106.41(d)), yet there was universal non-compliance across the country in 1992—nearly 20 years after the passage of Title IX (NCAA, 1992). Though Title IX was a huge success for women’s equality, it was simply the beginning of an even longer battle.

Through the 1980’s, politicians in Congress fought the integration of Title IX and sought to weaken it (Galles, 2017). In a regressive decision, the Supreme Court ruled that Title IX only included fully funded federal institutions, and not institutions receiving smaller, general federal funding (*Grove City College v. Bell*, 465 U.S. 555 (1984)). Congress saw this as regressive and sought to remedy it immediately. In 1986, Congress passed the Civil Rights Remedies Equalization Act [CRREA] and in 1987, they passed the Civil Rights Restoration Act [CRRA]—these bills ensured that any and all programs receiving federal funding must abide by Title IX, essentially cutting out any loopholes that institutions were attempting to bypass. President Nixon vetoed both of these bills, but Congress still passed them, thus making it law (Galles, 2017). Following this, more progressive decisions were made. The Clery Act was signed in 1990 by President Bush, which requires all college campuses to disclose the number of crimes committed on-and-off-campus yearly (RAINN). *Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools*, 503 U.S. 60 (1992) ruled that victims of discrimination and sexual harassment can sue for monetary damages, and it made the distinction that harassment is a form of discrimination. The Violence Against Women Act [VAWA], brought forth by Senator Joe Biden, was signed into law in 1994 by President Clinton, addressing issues such as sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence (Modi, Palmer, & Armstrong, 2014). The provisions of VAWA must be updated and approved every five years,

otherwise they lapse and no longer apply. Most recently updated in 2013, VAWA extended protections for Native American women, immigrants, the LGBTQ+ community, and college students (National Network to End Domestic Violence, 2019). The reauthorization of VAWA for 2019 through 2024 passed in the House and is currently awaiting to be heard by Senate (Nadler, 2019).

The public perception of Title IX has shifted over time and still maintained relevancy in society. Currently, the public perception of the focus of Title IX is sexual assault on college campuses. As sexual assault has become a pressing issue, many victims now use Title IX as a way to ensure their rights and seek help. Title IX in public schools extends from Kindergarten through Higher Education—for both students and employees, and it includes protections for work discrimination, equality in athletics, women’s integration to math and science programs, and sexual harassment and assault.

In 2011, former President Barack Obama reignited the conversation surrounding sexual assault when the Office for Civil Rights, led by Russlynn Ali, penned a letter titled “Dear Colleague.” In this letter, United States Department of Education and Office for Civil Rights outlined the guidelines for all federal, public institutions—many of which include the investigation of Title IX complaints within college campuses. The Dear Colleague letter included the following provisions: promptness of investigation, necessity for a safe campus, necessity for resources available to students, the necessity for a police investigation, and the standard of evidence that is used. The first provision in the 2011 Dear Colleague letter included the guideline that all institutions must have “prompt, thorough, and impartial” inquiries into complaints. This promptness standard requires that all investigations take place no later than 90 days after the

alleged assault. The second provision outlined included the necessity for a safe campus after investigations occur. This means that, even if there is no discipline for the accused, it is the school's responsibility to ensure a safe and non-hostile environment for the complainant. This is important due to the fact that so few respondents are actually disciplined, whether that be by the institution or the criminal justice system. Indeed, for every 1,000 rapes, only 230 are reported to police, only nine will be brought to a prosecutor, and only five will result in a felony sentencing (RAINN, 2016). By this provision on campus safety for the complainant, it ensures that even if a victim does not receive justice through punitive measures, they are still guaranteed safety on their campus. The third provision outlined in the letter noted that all schools must have—and make students aware of—resources they can use to report any Title IX complaints. While 98% of students had seen sexual violence information and resources on campus, these students had incredibly limited knowledge of the resources available to them (McMahon & Stepleton, 2018). For college students, learning about resources is important, especially as most assaults occur within the first two semesters at a university (RAINN, 2016). During this time, students are new to campus and are unfamiliar about the available resources to them (Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2015). By providing this guideline, new students would be made aware of the resources on their campus if they need to make a Title IX complaint. It would also encourage victims to utilize resources available on campus, as 97% of victims of sexual assault do not use the resources available to them on campus (Walsh et. al., 2010). Only 70% of campus police departments have a staff member responsible for victim response and assistance, which can be even the more reason to not report sexual violence (RAINN, 2016). The fourth provision in the letter outlined the differences between a Title IX investigation and an official police investigation. It made the distinction that a Title IX

investigation still may be necessary even within the presence of a police investigation. This provision also stated that all federally funded institutions have a responsibility to process any and all Title IX complaints, regardless if the incident occurred on- or off-campus. The last—and perhaps most important—provision was the standard of evidence to be used. This suggested using the preponderance of the evidence, meaning it is more likely than not that an incident occurred. This standard can be determined by 51% of the evidence leaning in favor of the complainant. Following the 2011 letter, many institutions had questions about the implementation of the policies outlined, and the Department of Education and Office for Civil Rights penned a follow-up letter in 2014. This letter included a question and answer in which institutions could submit questions for the White House to answer. The new letter included answers to questions surrounding the school's obligation to respond, the protections that extend through Title IX, procedural requirements, employee responsibility, confidentiality, investigations and remedies, and Title IX education. The follow-up question and answer in 2014 provided much needed guidance and answers for institutions upholding Title IX.

Six years had passed since the most recent Dear Colleague letter when President Trump had been sworn into office. With the new administration, the new Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos penned a new Dear Colleague letter. In late 2017, Secretary DeVos released the new guidelines to update the implementation of Title IX. The 2017 Dear Colleague letter rescinded every single protection and provision established by former President Obama and the Department of Education in the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter and 2014 question and answer. All statements of policy and guidance were withdrawn due to “improper pressure upon universities to adopt procedures that do not afford fundamental fairness” (Open Letter from Members of the Penn Law

School Faculty, 2015). For example, the standard of evidence was changed from preponderance of the evidence to clear and convincing evidence. Preponderance of the evidence is the standard used in finding liability for civil cases (Leubsdorf, 2016), and clear and convincing evidence is the standard used in finding guilt for criminal cases (Sherwin, 2002). As such, the clear and convincing evidence in favor of the complainant must be “highly and substantially more likely to be true than untrue” (Colorado v. New Mexico, 467 U.S. 310 (1984)). This provision can discourage victims of sexual assault from reporting, as even cases with the most evidence do not result in proper justice being served. Brock Turner, for example, was a student athlete at Stanford University. He was discovered by two credible witnesses as he raped an unconscious woman behind a dumpster. He fled, the witnesses caught him, the victim took a rape kit immediately after receiving medical attention, and the evidence was more than clear and convincing. The standard precedent for sentencing this crime—*stare decisis*—is 14 years in prison in the state of California (Anderson & Svrluga, 2016), yet Turner received a sentence of 6 months—and was released after 3 months for “good behavior” (Grinberg & Shoichet, 2016). Even in this case with substantial evidence and witnesses, there was still no justice served for the victim whose life was changed forever. This case had all the necessary requirements for justice to be served, yet the judge tasked with ensuring that failed to do so.

Even within the Department of Education, some have argued that there is bias to the disenfranchisement of women’s rights (Dooley, Weinstein, & McGraw, 2017). Upon Secretary DeVos’s decision to modify the Dear Colleague letter, she met with the National Coalition for Men [NCFM]—a group dedicated to “ending harmful discrimination and stereotypes against boys and men” (NCFM, 2018). This group also underwent international controversy when they began

publicly outing women whose sexual assault cases were dismissed, attacking the women online and labeling them as “false accusers” (Scheinman, 2014). The current president of NCFM, Harry Crouch, has even said that the wage gap is non-existent—citing that if women truly were paid less than men, then companies would hire more women, as women are less expensive (2014). Crouch has also stated that in cases of violence against women at the hands of men, it is the woman who has enticed the violence, and therefore the woman is the perpetrator, even if she is a victim (Scheinman, 2014) Given the strong view of this organization, some have argued that Secretary DeVos’ connection with NCFM partly influenced the current Title IX guidelines, favoring the accused over the victim, thus discouraging past and future victims from reporting their assaults (Keisling, 2017; Clark, 2017; Green, 2017).

Secretary DeVos was not the only influential person underplaying the seriousness of sexual assault. Candice Jackson, the current Head of the Office for Civil Rights within the Department of Education under Betsy DeVos, said in an interview about Title IX, “Rather, the accusations—90% of them—fall into the category of ‘we were both drunk,’ ‘we broke up, and six months later I found myself under a Title IX investigation because she just decided that our last sleeping together was not quite right’” (2017). This statement is wildly misleading, as the Uniform Crime Report, published by the FBI, indicates that roughly 8% of reports are false (1997). This has been supported by independent studies as well, citing that only 2%-8% of rape reports are false (Grace, Lloyd, & Smith, 1992; Kelly, Lovett, & Regan, 2005; Heenan & Murray, 2007; Lonsway, Archambault, & Lisak, 2009; Lisak, Gardinier, Nicksa, & Cote, 2010; Lonsway & Archambault, 2012; Spohn, White, & Tellis, 2014). United States Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith has stated, “These allegations, 99% of the time, are just absolutely fabricated” (2018). As illustrated through Jackson’s and Hyde-

Smith's statements, the reality that sexual assault *is* a pervasive issue is undermined. Jackson later rescinded her words, saying she acted "flippant" and all sexual assault cases are important. Senator Hyde-Smith upheld her view and never remanded her words.

The volatile verbal remarks on sexual assault does not stop there, however. President Donald Trump, who has been accused of sexual misconduct by 23 different women (Relman, 2019), has even weighed in on what he thinks of sexual assault victims. In a highly publicized interview, President Trump said, "It is a very scary time for young men in America, where you can be guilty of something you may not be guilty of" (2018). Indeed, President Trump has also stated that if a sexual assault truly was bad, then the victim would have reported it (2018). Though studies have confirmed that the overwhelming majority of sexual assault reports are true, President Trump undermines that entire reality by focusing on the impact that men are facing currently, and not the problem that women have faced for decades.

Collectively, it is the aforementioned remarks by individuals in positions of power that signal to others that the topic of sexual assault has not been—and will not be—taken seriously. When actors of power begin to downplay the seriousness of a topic, negative repercussions may follow for society as a whole as well. For example, individuals may blame the victim rather than the perpetrator (Gracia, 2014). In fact, it has been documented that counselor trainees, law enforcement officers (Campbell & Johnson, 1997; Du Mont, Miller, & Myhr, 2003), and clergy workers (Sheldon & Parent, 2002) are more likely to accept that the victim is lying about their rape than support them (Kassing & Prieto, 2003; Page, 2010). As individuals may be more likely to support perpetrators of sexual assault, it is important to evaluate if and to what degree varying levels of support are influenced by gender.

## **Gendered Nature of Responses to Sexual Assault**

Recognizing the historical context of women's rights, sexual assault, and Title IX changes, it is important to contextualize why men and women may view these issues differently. Indeed, there are some rationales that would foreshadow gendered differences in response to sexual assault and sexual assault legislation.

First, men may be more likely to cast blame on the victim. In fact, it has been reported by several studies that men are more likely to attribute blame to the women in cases of sexual assault that go to trial (Calhoun, Selby, & Warring, 1976; Thornton, Robbins, & Johnson, 1981; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Other studies have found that men are more likely to blame the victim for initiating the situation which led to the assault, while women are more likely to attribute it to being in the wrong place at the wrong time (Selby, Calhoun, & Brock, 1977). Perceptions of guilt may influence how individuals view sexual assault and corresponding legislation.

Second, gender may influence levels of empathy. Notably, women are more empathetic than men, regardless of circumstance considered (Hoffman, 1977; Davis, 1980; Macaskill, Maltby, & Day, 2002; Toussaint & Webb, 2005; Baez et. al., 2017). The aforementioned studies have reported that there is a statistically significant difference between men and women in terms of empathy. Related to sexual assault, some researchers have found that there is a gender bias in empathy for sexual assault survivors and perpetrators between men and women (Smith & Frieze, 2003). As women show more empathy, they may be more likely to understand the plight of a victim of sexual assault and empathize with them, rather than with the perpetrator.

Third, sexual assault is a gendered experience. Roughly one in four women experience sexual assault (Schwartz, 1991; Gross et. al., 2006; Hanson, 2016), compared to men's

victimization of one in 71 (Black et. al., 2011). This disproportionate figure illustrates that the experience of sexual assault is more common throughout the entire female gender. Because women are most likely to experience sexual assault, it is understandable that these shared experiences may influence their views of sexual assault and any legislation surrounding it. This sentiment aligns with research suggesting that individuals who possess shared experiences are more likely to empathize than those who do not have the shared experience (Hodges et. al., 2009).

Fourth, men may react differently to women's advancements in society. Men's historical responses to legislation involving equal rights for women have been harsh—as mentioned earlier, the women's suffrage movement was met with opposition by men (Lange, 2015) and many male lobbyists reacted poorly to the introduction of Title IX (Mink, 2012). Former President Nixon even vetoed several bills that extended the protections of Title IX (Galles, 2017). Collectively, men and women may experience differential reactions to changes in legislation affecting women's rights.

## Current Study

The National Coalition for Men supported all of the Title IX changes under Betsy DeVos (Dooley et. al., 2017), while the Women’s Law Project adamantly opposed these changes (2019). This is not to say that all men support the rolling back of Title IX protections—women still support this as well, and specific responses are not confined to solely one gender. It is also not to say that all women will oppose the new Title IX protections. However, as women are more often and more frequently victimized by sexual assault and sexual harassment (Sinozich & Langton, 2014), they are more likely to have a favorable view of victims, rather than the accused (Smith & Frieze, 2003). Men, on the other hand, are more often perpetrators of sexual assault, accounting for over 90% of all sexual assault cases (Black et. al., 2011).

Given the potential for men and women to respond differently to accusations of sexual assault, harassment, and legislation surrounding this topic, this study will be examining if there is a relationship between responses to the proposed Title IX policy changes and the gender of the individual responding. In doing so, I will rely on a thematic content analysis to evaluate the comments on the first article published by *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, and *ABC News* on the Title IX changes. The comments will be coded by content (i.e., in support or opposition of Title IX changes) and also by gender to explore the gendered nature of responses to the proposed Title IX changes. There is significant literature—spanning across decades—on men speaking more frequently and for longer periods of time over women in verbal conversations (Strodtbeck & Mann, 1956; Soskin & John, 1963; Bernard, 1972; Spender, 1979; Edelsky & Adams, 1990; Holmes, 1992; Holmes, 2013; Nittrouer et. al., 2017), and this phenomenon may extend through online media platforms as well.

Understanding any gendered differences is vital to solving the systemic issue of sexual assault and sexual harassment. This is the first step in exposing how men and women differently react to changes in legislation surrounding sexual assault. It is important to have feedback from both men and women, as each gender provides a unique perspective based on their experiences. This unique perspective may allow other individuals to see this subject from a different viewpoint. The content of these comments may shed valuable insight on how—and why—responses to sexual assault are gendered. Sexual assault is an incredibly sensitive topic, and it is important for conversations to be had on controversial topics. Because of the sensitivity of this topic, using publicly available comments provides an easily accessible means to examine how individuals are responding. With this ease of access, it allows for an anonymous form of analysis, rather than relying on personal interviews, which may have bias as individuals may not feel comfortable sharing their opinions face to face with others that have opposite views.

Evaluating the gendered nature of responses to Title IX changes will help organizations to fully understand how this divisive issue affects both men and women. Once this issue is understood, then policy administrators can prepare for any reaction from citizens who are affected by the change. This preparation is important as it will help the administrators implement the changes while providing programs and services that can address specific concerns provided by both genders. Collectively, this research will be beneficial for the future implementation of policy changes, as the analysis will showcase how individuals may respond to these changes, and their responses can help to guide policy changes for the groups most affected by the Title IX protections.

## Methodology

### Data and Sampling

The data for this current study involved user-generated comments. These comments are publicly accessible online on newspaper articles published in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *ABC News*. These news sources were chosen as they are some of the most circulated online national news sources (Mitchell & Rosensteil, 2011), they provide a comment section where readers can share their opinions, and they also showcase minimal media bias. Media Bias Fact Check, a publicly accessible website to view bias of news sources, ranked *The New York Times*, *ABC News*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal* as center news sources—though *The New York Times*, *ABC News*, and *The Washington Post* report left-center, and *The Wall Street Journal* reports right-center. This means that these sources report with minimal to no bias. Many news sources were immediately disqualified from inclusion in this study, as they did not include a comment section. As this study relies on publicly available comments on news articles, these sources would not yield the necessary data. I aim to evaluate reactions to the breaking news of the Title IX changes; therefore, the sampling frame includes the first article published on the Title IX changes across each of the aforementioned news platforms. As such, the sample involves four articles, each from a different news source. Each of these articles contains over 200 comments, with some containing over 500 comments. Being sensitive to the amount of time and effort needed to qualitatively code each comment, this study is limited to the first 30 substantive comments in each article. Any comments without substance have been discarded (i.e., one-word responses, responses that do not make any sense, responses

not related to the discussion). Replies to comments are not included in this study, only original comments. Collectively, this analysis includes 120 original comments across four news sources.

### **Coding and Analytic Response**

Because the data used for this study was qualitative, a thematic content analysis was conducted (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). In conducting the analysis, I was concerned with two main outcomes: 1) the content of the comment and 2) the gender of the commenter. Regarding comment content, the responses were coded into two different categories: 1) in support of the new Title IX guidelines and 2) in opposition of the new Title IX guidelines. Potential comments in support of Title IX changes includes content such as false accusations, due process, men's rights, disapproval of school's investigations, and generally positive attitudes. Potential comments in opposition to the new Title IX changes may include content such as regressive policy, discouraging victims to come forward, and generally negative responses. Individuals may make more than one argument in their comments. If a comment had multiple clear and identifiable arguments, all arguments were included in the analysis. For example, a comment may discuss both due process for the accused and thoughts on schools staying out of sexual assault cases. This comment was coded in both categories individually. There is a possibility that some of the comments may not fall in to either category as their content is more neutral. If this case arises, the neutral comments will be coded into a third category and included in this evaluation. When exploring the gender of the commenter, individuals will be coded in to male or female groups, based on their chosen screen name. Commenters can use any name on their individual accounts, so only accounts with identifiable names as the users will be kept for the analysis. Accounts with unidentifiable names who identify their own gender in the content of the comment (i.e. I am a woman, man, mother, father, etc.) will

be included in the final analysis. For unisex names, I will rely on data collected from the Social Security Administration between 1930-2015. This source contains over 95,000 names and the probability of said name being male or female. If the name is disproportionately associated with a gender—measured by 60% or more individuals within one gender—they will be assigned to that specific group. For example, if a commenter were named Terri, I will research the frequency of Terri in males and females using this database and using the comment if the name was in 60% or more of one group. I will be coding and analyzing this data using Microsoft Excel.

## Results

Across the four articles analyzed, 193 comments were originally identified. After analyzing the comments for content and the author's gender, 73 comments were excluded, resulting in 120 comments kept for analysis. The comments excluded consisted of content not related to the article, single-worded responses, and unidentifiable screen names. The amount of comments excluded varied from article to article—between 20% of comments being excluded to over 50% being excluded. This produced 30 usable comments across each one of the four news articles. For unisex names, only Leslie and Mackenzie required verification for their assigned gender group. Of the 120 total comments that were analyzed, there were more men ( $n = 81$ ) than women ( $n = 39$ ), outnumbering women by a margin of two to one. This is consistent with earlier studies mentioned, in which results showed that men talked more often than women in verbal conversations (Strodtbeck & Mann, 1956; Soskin & John, 1963; Bernard, 1972; Spender, 1979; Edelsky & Adams, 1990; Holmes, 1992; Holmes, 2013; Nittrouer et. al., 2017). This has extended from verbal conversation to online conversation. In this current study, men commented more frequently than women did. Indeed, in *The Wall Street Journal* article used, men outnumbered women in the comment section by a margin of four to one. This was the widest margin of difference between men and women—other articles used in this analysis had a margin of two to one or smaller. The subsequent sections and figures explain and illustrate the distribution of total comments analyzed for each article, along with the split by opinion and gender.

*The New York Times* article analysis included 41 comments, 11 of which were excluded. Of the 11 excluded, more were excluded for an unidentifiable screen name ( $n = 8$ ) than were excluded for their comment content ( $n = 3$ ). Within the comments kept for analysis, 15 were in

favor, 12 were opposed, and three were neutral. The figure below illustrates the distribution of comments across opinion and gender for *The New York Times*.

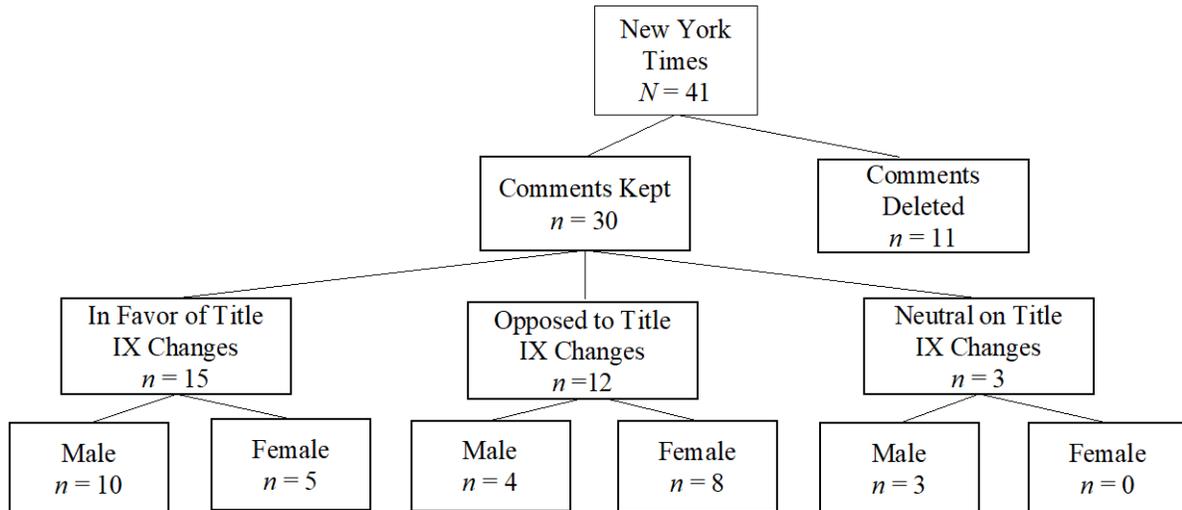


Figure 1. Description of New York Times Comment Selection

*The Washington Post* article analysis included 61 comments, 31 of which were excluded. Of the 31 excluded, nearly 90% ( $n = 27$ ) were excluded due to an unidentifiable screen name. Four were excluded due to their comment content. Within the comments kept for analysis, 14 were in favor, 15 were opposed, and one was neutral. Figure 2 below shows the distribution of comments across opinion and gender for *The Washington Post*.

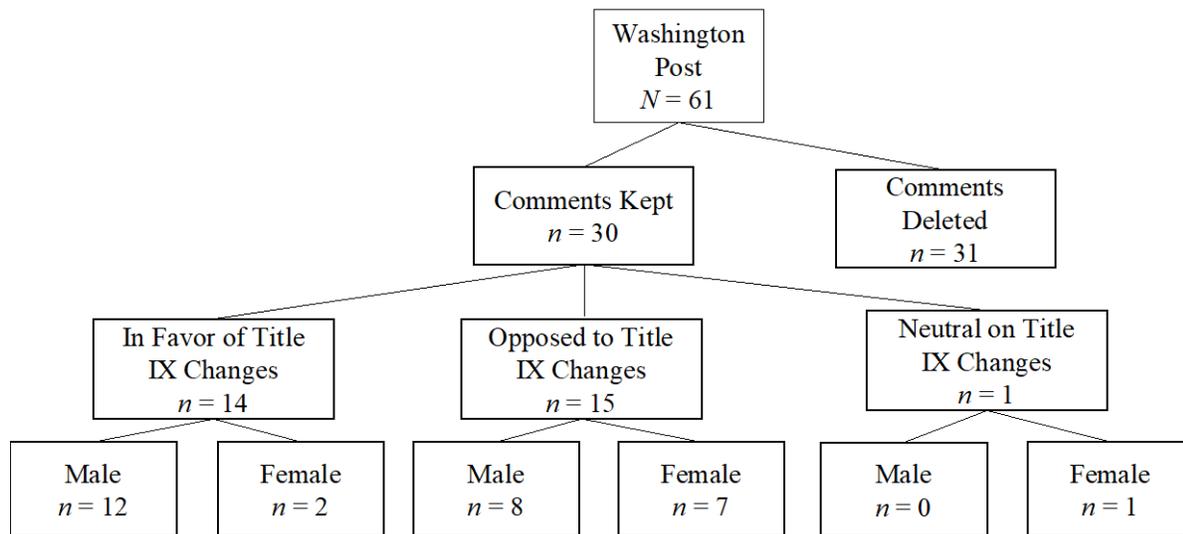


Figure 2. Description of The Washington Post Comment Section

*The Wall Street Journal* article analysis included 40 comments, 10 of which were excluded. Of the 10 excluded, 90% were excluded due to their comment content ( $n = 9$ ) and only one was excluded for an unidentifiable screen name. Within the comments kept for analysis, 27 were in favor and three were opposed. Figure 3 below shows the distribution of comments across opinion and gender for *The Wall Street Journal*.

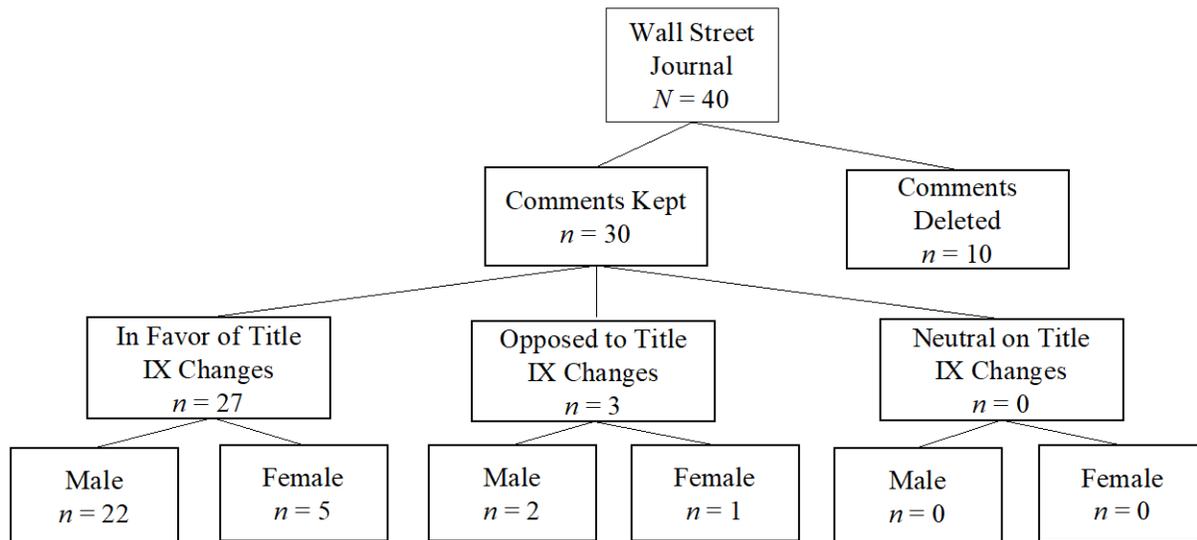


Figure 3. Description of The Wall Street Journal Comment Section

The *ABC News* article analysis included 51 comments, 21 of which were excluded. Of the 21 excluded, two-thirds ( $n = 14$ ) were excluded due to their unidentifiable screen name, and the remainder ( $n = 7$ ) were excluded due to their comment content. Within the comments kept for analysis, 17 were in favor and 13 were opposed. Figure 4 below shows the distribution of comments across opinion and gender for *ABC News*.

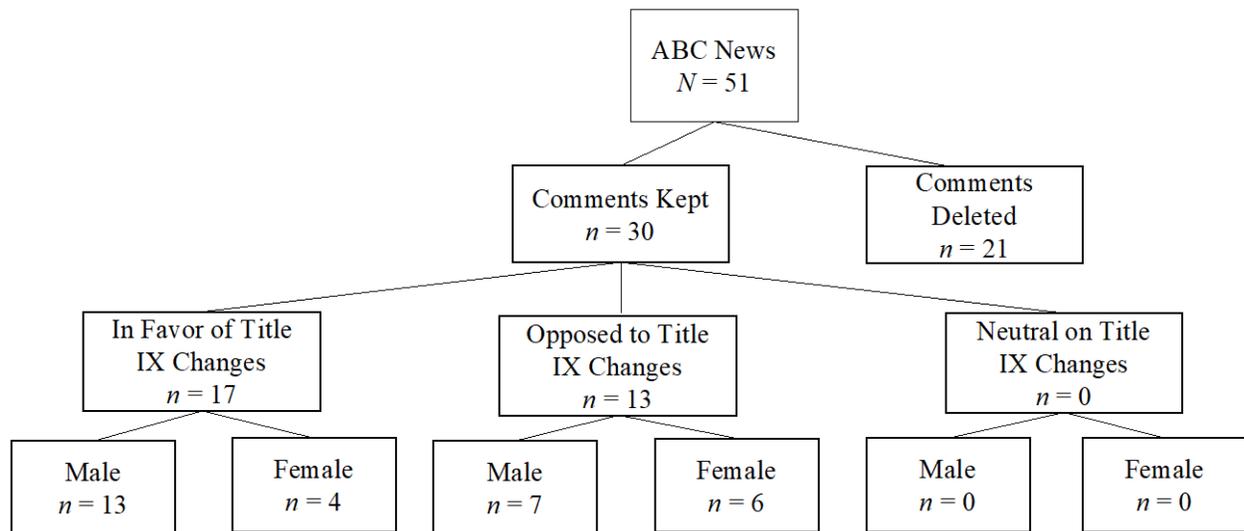


Figure 4. Description of ABC News Comment Section

Of the 120 comments used, 73 comments were in favor of the Title IX changes and 43 comments were opposed to the Title IX changes. Several comments were neither in favor nor in opposition of the new Title IX changes. These comments ( $n = 4$ ) became a part of a third category—neutral. The subsequent sections will discuss the themes that emerged in favor of the Title IX changes, the themes that emerged in opposition of the Title IX changes, and the themes that emerged as neutral to the Title IX changes, as well as gender differences discovered. Figure 5 below illustrates the overall representation of opinions on the changes to Title IX.

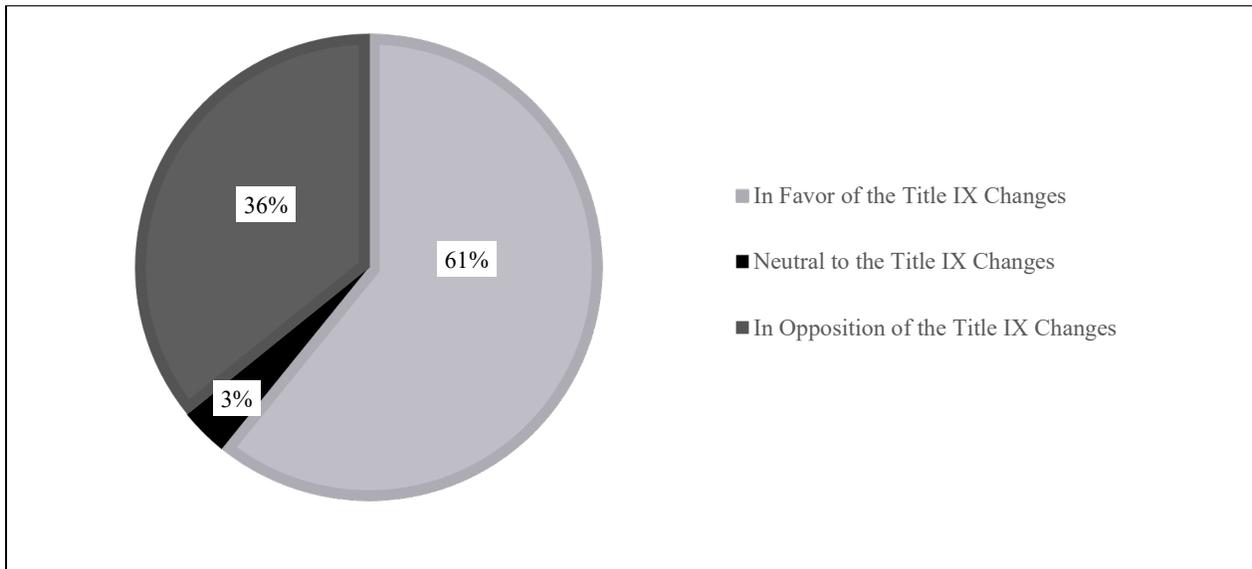


Figure 5. Total Percentage of Opinions ( $N = 120$ ) on Title IX Changes

### **In Favor of Title IX Changes**

The total number of comments found in favor of the Title IX changes implemented by Secretary DeVos was a little over 60% of the sample size. For the comments in favor of the changes to Title IX ( $n = 73$ ), a total of five separate themes emerged: universities should stay out of sexual assault investigations, due process for the accused, innocent men are falsely accused of sexual assault, happy with Secretary DeVos or President Trump, and anger toward former President Obama and the Title IX changes implemented during his administration. These themes and corresponding comments are discussed below.

**Theme #1—Schools should stay out of sexual assault investigations.** For those in favor of Title IX changes, a large number favored it for the limit it put on universities to investigate sexual assault reports ( $n = 41$ ). As the new guidelines rescinded all previous guidelines, schools no longer have an obligation to promptly investigate Title IX reports, disseminate information and resources, and many commenters in support of the Title IX changes were happy with the scope

being limited; Andrew commented, “Hallelujah! This was long overdue.” These Title IX changes rescinded all previous guidelines, which had expanded the institution’s role in sexual assault investigations. With a limited scope of investigations, many believed that the changes implemented by Secretary DeVos are a “great step in the right direction” (Chris).

Within this theme, some people want to completely get rid of the university investigation into sexual assault cases, even going as far as abolishing Title IX completely, as Chris wrote, “#AbolishTitleIX.” Several commenters noted that the United States has a criminal justice system, and all Title IX complaints should be reported to police immediately, rather than to the institutions upholding Title IX. For example, John stated, “We have a well-established criminal justice system in the US . . . Why in the world should colleges have a separate one?” Others noted that it was out of the bounds of the university to make decisions on criminal cases as illustrated by Keith, who said, “I’m curious as to why the criminal act of rape is being decided by colleges and not law enforcement.” Bob’s argument aligned with this as well, as he stated, “One thing I have never quite understood is why rapes are not reported directly to the police.” Some mentioned how the title IX changes properly placed universities back into their rightful bounds—having limited authority over criminal cases. Jennifer noted, “Colleges and universities should have never been in the investigation & prosecution business in the first place.” Julie stated, “All universities should be compelled to call the police when a student, male or female reports a sexual assault,” and Lee-Ann added, “Better yet, let the police take care of crimes.”

All of these arguments have the same core message—that these individuals express their favor of the changes as it limits the scope of investigations, and these individuals believe that Title IX investigations should not be handled by institutions. By Secretary DeVos rescinding all

previous Title IX guidelines established in the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter, institutions now have a limited scope in their investigation processes.

**Theme #2—Due process for the accused has increased.** Other individuals in favor of the Title IX changes supported it as they believe that it is giving due process to the accused individual. Secretary DeVos changed the standard of evidence that is to be used in Title IX investigations, and commenters believe that this change is fair to the accused individuals. Many individuals ( $n = 18$ ) supported it for this reason and believed that it was restoring every individual's right to due process. For example, Christina commented, "Everyone is allowed due process. That is what it means to live in a free country". Others noted that the changes re-align university standards with court processes that support men's right to due process. Sally added, "[Secretary DeVos] is following what the courts are continuing to hold; you men's due process are being ignored." A self-identified male expressed his support to the Title IX changes by stating, "My wife and I have two daughters in college. Of course, we want them to be safe. But that has to be done while preserving everyone's rights, including the rights of the accused. Once we start taking away due process, no one will be safe."

Some individuals voice their anger with feminists and liberals, stating that they are on a "crusade against men, and white men in particular, propagated by the left, it is a virtual certainty that due process will be tossed in the trash in favor of the so-called victims" (Eric). Commenters also noted that due process is a neutral right—not affiliated with either side. As mentioned by Gary "What world are we in where demanding evidence and due process is supposedly right wing?" The central argument made within this theme held the belief that the Title IX changes enacted by Secretary DeVos expands the right to due process for individuals accused of sexual assault.

**Theme #3—Innocent men are falsely accused of sexual assault.** Other individuals ( $n = 18$ ) supported the Title IX changes as they believe that these changes would lead to a decrease in false rape reports because too many innocent men are being accused of sexual assault. Keith commented, “I do understand that some crimes fall through the cracks but what about the wrongly accused? Is 10% of falsely accused men acceptable? Many believed that women are lying about sexual assault reports—Frank commented, “Females often go to internet sites to ask if they have been raped. And, participants there always convince them they have,”—and this leads to innocent men being accused and convicted. Ysbeth wrote, “Now you have to provide a little more proof before destroying someone's life.” The consequences for these false accusations, commenters note, can have long term effects. For example, Robert stated, “The case of Kwadwo Bonsu illustrates [false accusations against innocent men] clearly. This man's life was ruined because of a claim that contained no allegations of sexual assault, or of any other crime, whatsoever.” Other commenters noted that innocent men were falsely accused under the previous Title IX guidelines, and Secretary DeVos’s changes will prevent this from happening in the future. Clyde and David, respectively, noted, “Under the Obama era guidance an innocent man accused of sexual assault on campus better worry because the odds are stacked against him,” and, “Using "preponderance" makes it easier to convict guilty rapists but also causes more innocent people to be falsely convicted.” Many of the comments within this theme held the core belief that the new Title IX changes will reduce the amount of innocent men that are falsely accused of sexual assault.

**Theme #4—Happy with DeVos/Trump.** Similar to the previous theme, this theme was mentioned less often and more of a secondary theme, but some individuals ( $n = 8$ ) supported the Title IX changes as they are strong proponents of President Trump and Secretary DeVos. Some

were in favor of the current administration because it undid much of the prior administrations policies. Mark states, “Trump's election continues to repair America from the ravages and oppression of the Obama administration.” This argument held true for George, who agreed, ““DeVos says Obama-era approach does a ‘disservice to everyone involved’”. I could not agree more. Thank you, Ms. DeVos!” Other commenters were excited about the changes because they strongly believed in DeVos’s character and being. Dale commented his support of the Title IX changes as he believed, “Betsy DeVos is a strong, intelligent, independent woman who better typifies womanhood than every gender studies, disinformation, radical, alt-Left, Progressive, community organizing activist . . . every mis-educated, radical, alt-Left, Progressive "feminist" combined into one conglomeration of delusional male hate bigotry.” The central belief within this theme was a support of the current Presidential administration and the changes being implemented, often paired with anger and frustration toward the previous Title IX changes or Presidential administration. This theme closely relates to the theme discussed in the next section.

**Theme #5—Frustration with Obama.** Several individuals cited their support for the Title IX changes through their opposition to Obama’s original provisions to Title IX ( $n = 16$ ). This theme was similar to the previous theme of approval of Secretary DeVos, yet was more focused on the past Title IX changes, and not the current change. For example, Andrew said, “I fully support the action today. The previous guidance was draconian and was extremely unjust.” Additional comments within this theme produced similar responses related to the radical nature of the prior administration—“Did anybody have any idea the extent of Obama's effort to radically change America to a Soviet style of government? I doubt most people knew. When you look at the sum of the parts though—that is exactly what the Communist Obama was doing” (Kenneth); “Get

the lefties out of power and keep them out” (Danny). These responses held the central theme and belief that the Title IX changes under former President Obama were wrong, too radical, and the rescinding of those guidelines is a correct change.

### **In Opposition to Title IX Changes**

Though less than individuals in favor of the changes, individuals opposed to the changes were 36% of the total ( $n = 43$ ). Within this opposition, many commenters voiced several prominent themes. These themes were relatively equal in their prevalence. Three total themes emerged: supporting victims of sexual assault, anger with Secretary DeVos or President Trump, or belief that perpetrators of sexual violence will go free. Of those in opposition to the new Title IX changes, slightly more of them are women ( $n = 22$ ) than are men ( $n = 21$ ).

**Theme #1—Supporting survivors of sexual assault.** The first theme in opposition to the Title IX changes was supporting survivors of sexual assault. Commenters who focused on this theme ( $n = 18$ ) were concerned with the potential harmful implications that the changes may have on past and future victims of sexual assault. These implications included the belief that victims of sexual assault will be less inclined to report their assault, as they may not feel supported. For example, Emily stated, “If someone rapes you and the man said you were "asking for it", you will have to prove yourself innocent of those accusations.” Other individuals noted that the changes to Title IX can make proving sexual assault difficult. Alusna stated, “So now it’s okay to sexually assault and even rape women on campus. "Preponderance of evidence" implying an annotated video of the assault is required.” Other arguments pointed out that if these individuals had daughters, they would be against these changes. Meg stated, “I pray that none of these critics of the Obama policies ever have a daughter who is assaulted on campus. Betsy DeVos won't seem as

much of a heroine then.” Some believed that this was a clear indication that men do not concern themselves with women’s rights. A self-identified female stated, “It is clear that men do not take any of this seriously.” Victims of sexual assault themselves commented their opposition to these Title IX changes, stating, “I am a victim of rape and do not trust our legal system and other victims understandably do not as well. Why put yourself through ANOTHER victimization going to the authorities and trusting a legal system which proves it is not a justice system and is weighted on the side of assailants?” (Barb). The central belief of this theme was that the Title IX changes will affect victims of sexual assault in many ways and can have long term impacts on their lives.

**Theme #2—Anger with DeVos/Trump.** The second theme in opposition to the Title IX changes was anger toward Secretary DeVos or President Trump. Within this theme, individuals expressed their emotions toward both DeVos and Trump. These comments ( $n = 28$ ) referenced DeVos’ experience in her current position and the accusations of sexual assault toward Trump. Many individuals believed that Secretary DeVos is not qualified for her position. Individuals believe that DeVos does not represent the values of modern America. Alina commented, “This is a disgusting move by a woman raised in an extreme-right bubble far removed from modern society.” Other commenters pointed out her limited knowledge of what her job entails, as Raymont commented, “The preponderance of evidence suggests [Secretary DeVos] barely made it through the senate confirmations because she was unqualified for this job. It shows.” Other individuals believed that DeVos is dangerous in the Education Department. Kay commented, “What a destructive joke that woman is.” Some individuals argued against both Secretary DeVos and President Trump. The arguments made against Trump mainly referenced the accusations of sexual assault surrounding him. For example, Jill commented, “Of course, the disgusting president who

is himself guilty of sexual assault would dismantle protections and guidance.” Other individuals noted, “Totally expected from the Trump administration especially considering the way our President respects women” (Sarah), and, “Why am I not surprised? Our Kitty Grabber in Chief would highly endorse this action” (Beverly). Individuals also framed their arguments with anger toward the entire administration and party as a whole. Linda wrote, “How much farther will this administration take us back into the dark ages?” Others voiced their opinion against the entire administration and worried about the consequences that the changes may have on women. Rodney commented, “Every woman and every man that has a wife, daughter or mother should vote against [Republicans] that want to enable more campus rapes.” The central argument made within this theme was anger toward Secretary DeVos and President Trump.

**Theme #3—Belief that perpetrators of sexual violence will be free.** The third theme in opposition to the Title IX changes was the belief that perpetrators of sexual violence will now be able to run freely on college campuses. These comments were less frequent than the previous themes, but some individuals ( $n = 6$ ) still mentioned this concern in their comments. This theme was commonly seen alongside the theme of supporting survivors of sexual assault, as the two themes are closely connected. For example, John commented, “My oldest daughter started university this fall. The Trump administration wants to make sure if she is sexually assaulted on campus that her attackers walk away free.” Other individuals state that perpetrators will walk free because no one will believe the victim coming forward. Emily stated, “The man's defense would be, "look at how she dresses--she was just asking for it. It wasn't my fault.”” The central argument within this theme was the belief that the Title IX changes would lead to less convictions of perpetrators of sexual assault.

### **Neutral to Title IX Changes**

Because this topic is a very polarizing issue, the neutral comments were relatively rare, and as such, no overwhelmingly prevalent themes were present in the content of the comments. There were four total neutral comments, and a three-fourths of these comments ( $n = 3$ ) were made by men. These comments pointed out that sexual assault is a brutal crime, and it definitely needs to be addressed as it is “difficult to establish or prove” (Paul). Some individuals noted that the root cause of sexual assault must be addressed. The sole woman who felt neutral, Iris, commented, “We need to address the cause of so much campus assault . . . we are at fault for . . . not teaching our kids what sex, consent and consequences are.” There was no clear favor or opposition within these comments. These comments address the severity of sexual assault and the problems associated with reporting.

### **Gendered Differences in Responses to Title IX Changes**

The purpose of the exploratory analysis was to dissect and analyze the themes that emerged in response to the proposed Title IX changes. A total of three categories were identified—in favor, in opposition, and neutral. Within the favor category, five separate themes emerged: universities should stay out of sexual assault investigations, due process for the accused, innocent men are falsely accused of sexual assault, happy with Secretary DeVos or President Trump, and anger toward former President Obama and the Title IX changes implemented during his administration. Within the opposition category, three separate themes emerged: supporting victims of sexual assault, anger with Secretary DeVos or President Trump, or belief that perpetrators of sexual violence will go free. The secondary purpose of this study was to test if gender differences existed within the themes and categories, hypothesizing that 1) women will be more likely to oppose

Secretary DeVos's changes to Title IX and 2) men will be more likely to support Secretary DeVos's changes to Title IX.

Figure 6 below shows the distribution of those in opposition of the changes to Title IX in respect to their gender. Of those comments in opposition to the changes ( $n = 43$ ) slightly more of them are women ( $n = 22$ ) than are men ( $n = 21$ ). These findings support hypothesis #1 revealing that women are more likely to oppose the Title IX changes.

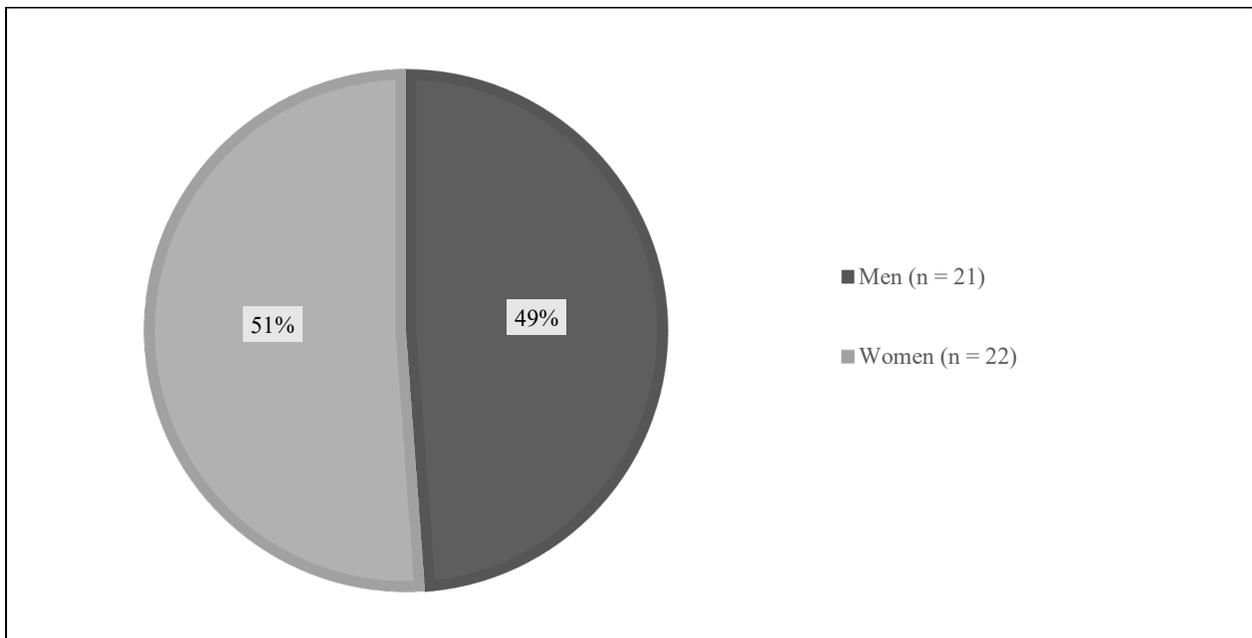


Figure 6. Gender Distribution for Comments in Opposition of Title IX Changes ( $N = 43$ )

Figure 7 below shows the unequal and gendered distribution of those in favor of the changes to Title IX. Across the 73 in favor comments, more men ( $n = 57$ ) than women ( $n = 16$ ) expressed their support. In fact, over 75% of those comments in support of the changes were written by men, in comparison to only 22% of the favorable comments written by women. These findings support hypothesis #2 revealing that men are more likely to support the Title IX changes.

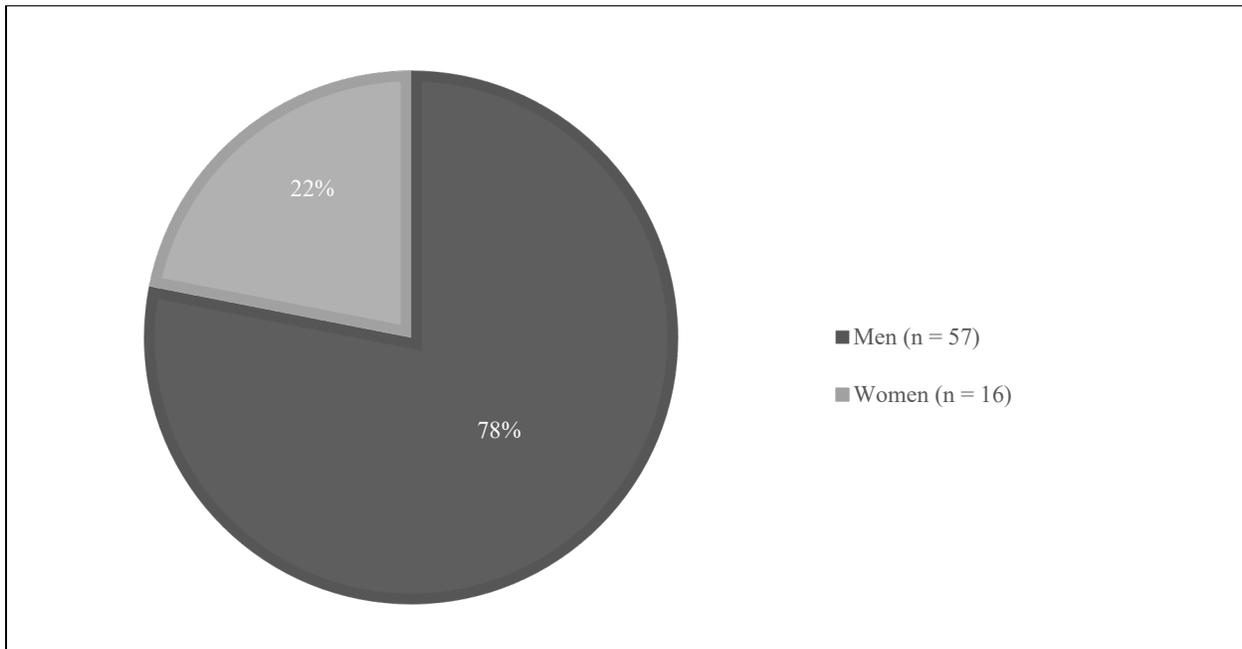


Figure 7. Gender Distribution for Comments in Favor of Title IX Changes (N = 73)

The above figures may be misleading when examining the relationship within opinions by gender. All previous figures examined gender differences within themes, rather than exploring any theme differences within gender. Because women made up 33% of the 120 comments analyzed, it is important to evaluate theme-based differences within gender. Figure 8 below illustrates the gender differences within each theme. The bars represent the number of respondents for each gender (i.e., 39 comments for women and 81 comments for men), while the callout boxes illustrate the percentage of the total within each gender, split by opinion. Based on this figure we see that of comments made by women, more than 56% of them were in opposition to the proposed Title IX changes. This percentage is compared to only 26% of men. Collectively, these findings and the within theme findings above, further demonstrate support for hypothesis #1—women are more likely than males to oppose the proposed Title IX changes. Further support for hypothesis #2 is found in Figure 8. Over 70% of men, compared to only 41% of women, commented in favor of

the changes. In summary, these findings showcase the clear differences between men’s opinions and women’s opinions on the Title IX changes.

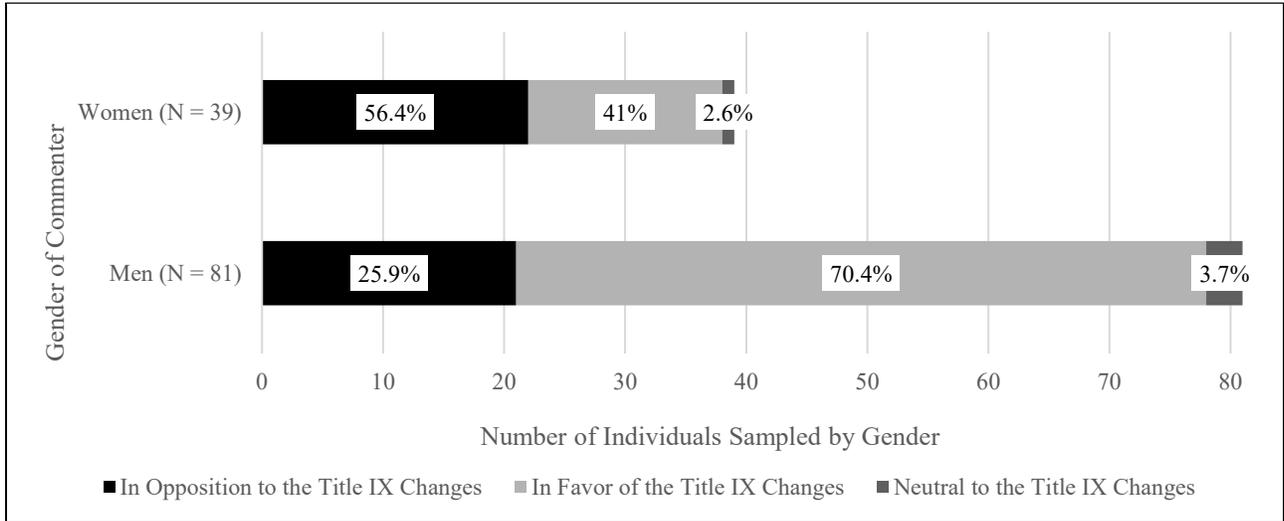


Figure 8. Theme Differences on Title IX Changes Within Genders (N = 120)

## Discussion & Conclusion

This research sought to examine a possible relationship between the gender of an individual and their opinion on the proposed changes to Title IX. After analyzing 120 comments across four national news sources, the majority of individuals were found in favor of the changes to Title IX. In respect to their gender, men were more likely to favor the changes and women were more likely to oppose the changes—both findings in support of my hypotheses. The subsequent sections will discuss the key findings, the implication from this study, and limitations and suggestions for future advancements within this line of inquiry.

The first key finding of this study is that over 60% of individuals included in the analysis were in favor of the Title IX changes ( $n = 73$ ). As stated previously, these individuals supported the changes to Title IX for many reasons, including support of the Presidential administration, anger with previous guidance, belief that universities should stay out of investigations, belief in the restoration of due process, and belief that innocent men are accused. Of the many themes, the most prevalent ( $n = 41$ ) was the belief that universities should stay out of sexual assault investigations. Because Title IX investigations are separate from police investigations and are not a criminal trial of any sort; these individuals believed that universities should not be involved with sexual assault and universities should not have any form of investigative power over these allegations.

Individuals in favor of the Title IX changes are highly contextualized by the representation of gender in the available comments. Men outnumbered women by a margin of at least two to one, and in some cases, a margin of four to one. The overrepresentation of men skewed the overall percentages of those in favor of the changes to Title IX. As illustrated from Figure 8 above, there

are stark differences between the percentage of men represented and the percentage of women represented throughout the study. Across men sampled for this study ( $n = 81$ ), over 70% ( $n = 57$ ) were found in favor of the Title IX changes, compared to 40% ( $n = 16$ ) of women. With the overall average of 60% in favor—it is evident that the sample size is skewed toward the overrepresentation of male opinions. As men were much more present in these online commenting forums, women’s opinions were not as prevalent, making the overall sample size more reflective of the male experience rather than the female experience.

This overwhelming support for the changes to Title IX may be accounted for by several factors. First, men are more likely to empathize with the perpetrator rather than the victim in cases of sexual assault (Smith & Frieze, 2003; Osman, 2011). Also, men are more often perpetrators of sexual assault (Black et. al., 2011). As the 2011 Dear Colleague letter extended many rights to victims, which are predominantly women, it is possible that men felt threatened by this change as they are more likely to empathize with and be perpetrators of sexual assault. Consequently, they are more likely to support rescinding those 2011 Dear Colleague protections. Second, men have been known to dominate the environments and social settings in which they exist. Men not only dominate verbal and online conversations (Strodtbeck & Mann, 1956; Soskin & John, 1963; Bernard, 1972; Spender, 1979; Edelsky & Adams, 1990; Holmes, 1992; Holmes, 2013; Nittrouer et. al., 2017), but they also dominate many other aspects of historical and modern life. Indeed, men are the preferred choice for journalists who are conducting interviews (Crettaz Von Roten, 2010). Across 193 countries, only three have an equal representation of men and women in their parliamentary positions (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2019). The overrepresentation of men and underrepresentation of women has deep historical roots as societies have long been misogynistic,

even dating back to ancient Greek mythology (Holland, 2006). As such, the overdominance of men and their opinions in social circles drastically influenced the findings of this study. Third, men may support these changes because it lessens the threat of punishment should they act inappropriately. Though this is a controversial rationale, it has been shown that across non-criminal men, one of every three reported that they would rape a woman if they knew they would not be caught (Stotzer & MacCartney, 2016). With previous statistics demonstrating that only 5% of all rapes are reported to college staff (Warshaw, 1988; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), and only 0.5% of rape reports result in a conviction (RAINN, 2016), the reality is that a perpetrator is likely to evade apprehension and these changes only increase the probability of evasion. Fourth and finally, over 40% of women also supported the changes. This may be due to internalized sexism. Internalized sexism refers to women adhering to and enacting sexist and misogynistic traditions and behaviors (Adapted from: Bearman, Korobov, & Thorne, 2009). Some women felt that it was wrong to be a victim, and women should be more responsible. Sarah, for example, commented, "It's infantilizing to consider every inebriated young lady a "victim". Take some ownership of your agency girls." Many women, however, primarily commented their belief of how now women have to prove their allegations now, because universities always believed the victim. For example, Ysbeth commented, "Now you have to provide a little more proof before destroying someone's life." Often times, internalized sexism manifests itself as taking down other women in order to make oneself feel better (Goodwin, 2002; Underwood, 2003). It is possible that these women oppose the Title IX changes as they are adhering to sexist and misogynistic behaviors.

The second key finding of this study is that women were more likely to oppose the changes to Title IX than men. Across women sampled for this study ( $n = 39$ ), nearly 60% ( $n = 22$ ) were

found in opposition of the Title IX changes—relative to roughly 25% ( $n = 21$ ) of men ( $n = 81$ ). This overrepresentation of opposition to the Title IX changes attributed to women may be influenced by a number of factors. First, women have higher levels of empathy and are more likely to empathize with sexual assault survivors than men (Smith & Frieze, 2003; Osman, 2011). Women supporting sexual assault survivors was illustrated in several of the comments ( $n = 10$ ). In nearly half of the women's comments in opposition to Title IX changes, support for victims was prevalent in the argument. For example, Emily stated that now victims will be treated as the accused, rather than be protected. Second, these differences may also be attributed to the female experience with sexual assault. As shown in the literature review, women experience sexual assault at a rate of one in four (Schwartz, 1991; Gross et. al., 2006; Hanson, 2016) compared to the male experience of one in 71 (Black et. al., 2011). Several comments made by women in opposition of the changes often shared their story of being sexually assaulted, and their fear of reporting. For example, a self-identified female stated how after suffering sexual assault as a child and an adult in college, she does not believe that laws are in the interest of women. Another woman, Barb, stated that she too was a victim of sexual assault, did not trust the authorities with reports, and believed that the legal system is weighted in favor of the accused. In addition to women experiencing their own sexual assault, they also experience vicarious trauma through the sexual assault of others. Hand in hand with this, female psychotherapists and nurses of sexual assault victims reported high levels of vicarious trauma, more symptoms of PTSD, and a more negative view of the world (Schauben & Fraizer, 1995; Gates & Gillespie, 2008). Third, fear of crime may also be influencing the differences in opinion between genders. Sexual assault is the most feared crime for women ages 19-35 (Warr, 1985; Pain, 1997). Women also fear rape at a rate that is three

time that of men (Fisher & Sloan, 2003). It is understandable then that women would oppose changes that strip protections from victims, which are primarily women. Title IX has long been perceived as a women's protection bill, and any attack on it can appear as a personal attack against women.

Understanding these differences in responses by gender is important for institutions tasked with upholding Title IX and institutions within the community. As such, two overarching implications can be derived from this research, with each implication containing many practical policies or programs to effectively serve sexual assault victims and perpetrators.

First, gaining insight from both sides of this controversial change can aid in creating programming on the campuses and within institutions that enforce Title IX. For example, upon reviewing proposed changes to Title IX, Harvard, Boston University, and Brown University wrote letters to Secretary DeVos, reaffirming that her administration must work to protect victims of sexual assault and harassment, while also maintaining equality in all investigations (Herpich, 2019). However, it is unclear what policies and programs have been implemented at those universities post changes. Thankfully, universities can continue to build upon and expand their Title IX programming to ensure student protections. As such, this programming can be both proactive and reactive in nature. Proactive programming can include education about the student conduct process as students enter the university. This would involve speaking events for Title IX information and student conduct in freshman seminar classes, tabling with informational packets during university orientation sessions, and enrolling students in online courses to teach them about these processes. Also, students can be made aware of all available resources, learn about Title IX, and know their rights before enrolling in classes and beginning at a university. To do so, proactive

programming can also include workshops on consent and how to file Title IX reports. These workshops should be provided for both victims and perpetrators. Education for victims can include information about how to file different reports and resources for physical and emotional treatment following a victimization. Education for perpetrators can include information on the rights of all individuals in campus investigations. Reactive programming can involve preparation for potential backlash and side effects from these changes. As stated earlier, these changes in Title IX may lead to increase of sexual assaults on campus, as sexual assault could be viewed as more acceptable and policies surrounding its punishment more lenient. Universities can prepare for potential increase of this in a number of ways. First, mental health counselors for those affected by the changes must be staffed on campus and prepared to handle an increase of victims. Providing mental health counselors is important as rape is a violent crime—many victims suffer many consequences to their mental health after an assault (Au et. al., 2013; García-Moreno et. al., 2013; Krahe & Berger, 2017). Providing mental health care has proven to be an effective treatment of PTSD (Foa, 2001; Foa & Keane, 2008), as many victims experience post-traumatic stress following an assault (Creamer, Burgess, & McFarlane, 2001). Second, sensitivity and victim training for on-campus police departments should become a priority. As stated earlier, many police officers do not believe victims and can discourage them from reporting (Campbell & Johnson, 1997; Du Mont, Miller, & Myhr, 2003). By providing the proper training for officers of the law, this may lead to a more accurate number of reports of sexual assault, as well as victims being provided the correct resources and receiving the help they need. Third, larger availability of resources for victims is needed. As there may be an increase in reports of sexual assault and the number of victims seeking help, a larger staff to ensure assistance is needed. College students seeking out mental health

counselors on-campus is on the rise (Center for Collegiate Mental Health, 2018), and ensuring a large staff to meet the student needs is a necessity.

The second implication from this study is that university Title IX coordinators may need to expand their collaborative partnerships beyond the realms of the university to include local services and resources. A large majority of individuals believed that institutions should say out of Title IX investigations. Instead, they felt that police departments should be solely responsible for handling these cases. Police departments already handle reports of rape submitted directly to their departments, and individuals believe they should handle the reports of rape submitted to universities as well. As these changes affected the protections of individuals on campus, these victims may now report solely to the police, rather than the university. Consequently, police departments may experience an increase in reports and calls regarding sexual assaults. Police departments both on- and off-campus should be prepared for an increase in reports filed. Educating individuals that Title IX still exists and still extends many protections is an important component to ensure victims are supported and educated. Students may think that these changes may have dismantled all of the resources that were previously available, so these victims may seek out resources in other places off-campus. By partnering police departments, universities, and local service providers, an increased commitment to properly serve victims will be forged. A liaison position would be ideal to handle the needs of partnering with these different units as part of the larger collaboration. Services provided could be wraparound in nature—by reporting to the police, a victim can be provided a victim advocate in court cases, as well as a mental health counselor to navigate any trauma, and an extension on the classes that a victim may miss due to the assault (Amar & Gennaro, 2005). A seamless integration between police departments, universities, and

local service providers can provide more available resources to students, which can benefit individuals in many different ways. Those impacted by sexual assault will no longer have to deal with their trauma and navigate the criminal justice and reporting system alone. Wraparound services and agency collaborations are vital to ensuring the needs of the victims are properly met.

The implications mentioned above can provide guidance for what universities and institutions can do as changes are made to Title IX. Preliminary findings from this study are helpful and can be expanded for further research. Given this is the first study of its kind—and qualitative in nature with a small sample size—it is important for future studies to build upon the limitations of this current research to explore the impact that these changes may have for both the victim and the accused. Examining the number of Title IX reports filed on college campuses will be crucial for future studies. Additionally, conducting self-report surveys for individuals to report their victimization without feeling pressure or fear could show an accurate depiction of the number of assaults that take place on a college campus, compared to the number of reports.

A limitation that arose during this research was the overrepresentation of men and underrepresentation of women within the comments. Men were more likely to favor the Title IX changes than women, and the overrepresentation of men led to a larger quantity of the total population being in favor of the Title IX changes. Future studies exploring gendered differences can use a matched sampling strategy to ensure an equal distribution of both men and women. As this study is the first of its kind to explore these gendered differences within an online forum, a purposive sampling strategy was ideal. This limitation also goes hand in hand with the number of individuals included in this study. Each article included 30 usable comments kept for analysis, often excluding between 10 and 30 comments per article. While this is an appropriate sample size

for the purpose of this study, it can be further strengthened by including more comments from each article. Additionally, more news sources and online comment forums can be used for a larger representation of attitudes and opinions. This study only included four national news sources. For a more representative sample, future studies can include all online news sources which provide a comment section. Doing so would include a larger sample of opinions from news sources with different biases, allowing for more representation of all opinions.

The news source political lean was not analyzed, as the sources reported minimal to no bias. Exploring news source lean may be beneficial to future research as many themes emerged along the political aisle. By analyzing the lean of all news sources included in a future study, this could examine a possible relationship between news source bias and user opinions. In addition to the news source lean not being included in analysis, reply comments were also not included in analysis. This study was solely aimed at examining original responses to these changes, not responses to an original comment. Examining replies and including in analysis may prove difficult for future studies, as many individuals argued back and forth. Their comments were no longer educated and informed opinions but rather attacks on the other individual. Future studies can examine reply comments which do not contain personal attacks but rather intelligent responses and include this in analysis.

It is important to note that just because a comment was excluded does not mean the content or comment was unusable. The large majority of the excluded comments ( $n = 73$ ) were excluded because of their chosen screen name ( $n = 50$ ), not because of their comment content ( $n = 23$ ). The screen names excluded included several such as “Breadstick”, “Details”, “I Like Wine”, and “Cross-Country Runner”. The comment content was not inherently unusable—many were

intelligent and coherent responses to the changes. These comments could not be included in the final analysis as the gender of the individual was unidentifiable. As this study relied on the identifiable gender, these comments had to be excluded. Future studies looking to include responses from all users in an online forum can analyze the data without gender as a factor.

Separating responses by gender did assume the gender binary. It has been proven scientifically that more than two genders do exist (De Loof, 2018). For the purpose of this study, however, the gender binary was assumed to quantify the differences between responses related to the chosen screen name of the commenter. While this is a limitation, there are few ways around this to mitigate the instances of misgendering individuals. Future studies can be expanded to include in-person interviews to gauge the individual responses to the Title IX changes, and the individuals can state their preferred gender. This would reduce any potential misgendering of the individuals included.

This study solely looked at individual responses to the proposed Title IX changes across the country. While these changes have been announced, it often takes time for them to official be implemented. Future studies can examine the actual implementation of these changes and how they are being received by the individuals affected by the changes. This can be achieved by examining the number of reports of sexual assault to Title IX offices across the country and examining the role that Title IX played in the decision to report the assault.

These Title IX changes affect both individuals being victimized and also those accused of committing a crime. As such, this research was one of the first to examine the possible implications and side effects that these changes may have on all individuals. This achieved the goal of examining the differences in opinion to Title IX changes by gender. The importance of Title IX

and its role on college campuses will remain relevant over time as sexual assault has been relevant over time (Schwartz, 1991; Gross et. al., 2006; Hanson, 2016). Sexual assault is a pressing issue and must continue to be discussed. Title IX is a divisive topic—and it always has been (Mink, 2012). By beginning to examine the differences of opinions on Title IX, administrators can take in to account the real-life implications of these changes. Understanding the reasoning behind the differences in opinion is the first step to creating new programming on college campuses and institutions with Title IX that meets the needs of all individuals affected by Title IX, regardless if they are the victim or if they are the accused.

## References

- Ahrens, C. E. (2006). Being silenced: The impact of negative social reactions on the disclosure of rape. *Community Psychology*, 38: 263–274.
- Ali, R. (2011). Dear Colleague Letter. Washington, DC: United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Retrieved from <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201104.pdf>
- Allen, W. D. (2007). The Reporting and Underreporting of Rape. *Southern Economic Journal*, 73(3), 623-641. doi:10.2307/20111915
- Allers, C., & Benjack, K. (1991). Connections Between Childhood Abuse and HIV Infection. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 70(2), 309-313. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.1991.tb01602.x
- Amar, A.F., & Gennaro, S. (2005). Dating violence in college women: Associated physical injury, health care usage, and mental health symptoms. *Nursing Research* 54(4), 235-242.
- American Association of University Women. (2017, May 10). 89 Percent of Colleges Reported Zero Incidents of Rape in 2015. Retrieved February 25, 2019, from <https://www.aauw.org/article/clery-act-data-analysis-2017/>
- Anderson, N., & Svrluga, S. (2016, June 11). Prosecutors urged 'substantial prison term' in Stanford sexual assault case, records show. Retrieved March 1, 2019, from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2016/06/11/prosecutors-urged-substantial-prison-term-in-stanford-sexual-assault-case-records-show/?utm\\_term=.d34e61d0b93f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2016/06/11/prosecutors-urged-substantial-prison-term-in-stanford-sexual-assault-case-records-show/?utm_term=.d34e61d0b93f)

- Andrews, B., Brewin, C. R., & Rose, S. (2003). Gender, social support, and PTSD in victims of violent crime. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 16*(4), 421-427. doi:10.1023/a:1024478305142
- Au, T. M., Dickstein, B. D., Comer, J. S., Salters-Pedneault, K., & Litz, B. T. (2013). Co-occurring posttraumatic stress and depression symptoms after sexual assault: A latent profile analysis. *Journal of Affective Disorders, 149*(1-3), 209-216. doi:10.1016/j.jad.2013.01.026
- Baez, S., Flichtentrei, D., Prats, M., Mastandueno, R., García, A. M., Cetkovich, M., & Ibáñez, A. (2017). Men, women...who cares? A population-based study on sex differences and gender roles in empathy and moral cognition. *Plos One, 12*(6). doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0179336
- Bearman, S., Korobov, N., & Thorne, A. (2009). The Fabric of Internalized Sexism. *Journal of Intergrated Social Sciences*.
- Bell, R. C. (2016). A History of Women in Sport Prior to Title IX. *The Sport Journal, 20*. doi:10.17682/sportjournal
- Bennice, J. A., & Resick, P. A. (2003). Marital Rape. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 4*(3), 228-246. doi:10.1177/1524838003004003003
- Bernard, J. (1972). *The Sex Game*. New York: Atheneum.
- Bergeron, R. (2015, August 17). 'The Seventies': Feminism makes waves. Retrieved March 4, 2019, from <https://www.cnn.com/2015/07/22/living/the-seventies-feminism-womens-lib/index.html>
- Binder, R. L. (1981). Why women don't report sexual assault. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, 42*(11), 437-438.
- Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., Chen, J., & Stevens, M. R. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*

- (NISVS): 2010 summary report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Branch, K. A., Richards, T. N., & Dretsch, E. C. (2013). An exploratory analysis of college students' response and reporting behavior regarding intimate partner violence victimization and perpetration among their friends. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 28(18), 3386–3399. doi:10.1177=0886260513504494
- Brown president submits University response to proposed Title IX changes. (2019, January 29). Retrieved from <https://www.brown.edu/news/2019-01-29/titleix>
- Bryan, C. J., Mcnaughton-Cassill, M., Osman, A., & Hernandez, A. M. (2013). The Associations of Physical and Sexual Assault with Suicide Risk in Nonclinical Military and Undergraduate Samples. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 43(2), 223-234. doi:10.1111/sltb.12011
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1984). *Criminal victimization in the United States, 1982* (Publication No. NCJ-92820). Washington, DC: US. Department of Justice
- Burnam, M. A., Stein, J. A., Golding, J. M., Siegel, J. M., Sorenson, S. B., Forsythe, A. B., & Telles, C. A. (1988). Sexual assault and mental disorders in a community population. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 56(6), 843-850. doi:10.1037/0022-006x.56.6.843
- Calhoun, L, Selby, J. W, & Warring, L.J. (1976). Social perception of the victim's causal role in rape: An exploratory examination of four factors. *Human Relations*, 1976, 29, 517-526.
- Campbell, R., & Johnson, C. R. (1997). Police officers' perception of rape: Is there consistency between state laws and individual beliefs? *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12, 255-274.

- Center for Collegiate Mental Health. (2015). *2015 Annual Report* (Rep. No. STA 15-108). Pennsylvania State University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED572760).
- Clark, A. (2017). ABC News.
- Cohen, M. J. (2015, June 27). CBS This Morning.
- Cohen, S. (2015, October 07). The Book That Changed the Way We Talk About Rape. Retrieved March 4, 2019, from <http://time.com/4062637/against-our-will-40/>
- Center for Collegiate Mental Health. (2018, January). *2017 Annual Report* (Publication No. STA 18-166).
- Cogle, J. R., Timpano, K. R., Sachs-Ericsson, N., Keough, M. E., & Riccardi, C. J. (2010). Examining the unique relationships between anxiety disorders and childhood physical and sexual abuse in the National Comorbidity Survey-Replication. *Psychiatry Research, 177*(1-2), 150-155. doi:10.1016/j.psychres.2009.03.008
- CPI Inflation Calculator. (n.d.). United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Retrieved from [https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation\\_calculator.htm](https://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm)
- Creamer, M., Burgess, P., & McFarlane, A. C. (2001). Post-traumatic stress disorder: Findings from the Australian National Survey of Mental Health and Well-being. *Psychological Medicine, 31*(7), 1237-1247. doi:10.1017/s0033291701004287
- Crettaz Von Roten, F. (2010). Gender Differences in Scientists' Public Outreach and Engagement Activities. *Science Communication, 33*(1), 52-75. doi:10.1177/1075547010378658
- Davis, F. J. (1991). *Who is Black?: One Nation's Definition*. University Park, Pa: Pennsylvania State University Press. p. 38. ISBN 978-0-271-04463-7.

Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics. (1997) *Sex Offenses and Offenders*. Washington D.C.

Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Female Victims of Sexual Violence, 1994-2010 (2013). Washington D.C: Department of Justice.

De Loof, A. (2018). Only two sex forms but multiple gender variants: How to explain? *Communicative & Integrative Biology*, 11(1). doi:10.1080/19420889.2018.1427399

DeWolf, M. (2017, March 01). 12 Stats About Working Women. Retrieved from <https://blog.dol.gov/2017/03/01/12-stats-about-working-women>

Dooley, E., Weinstein, J., & McGraw, M. (2017, July 14). Betsy DeVos' meetings with 'men's rights' groups over campus sex assault policies spark controversy. Retrieved February 28, 2019, from <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/betsy-devos-meetings-mens-rights-groups-sex-assault/story?id=48611688>

Du Mont, J., Miller, K., & Myhr, T. L. (2003). The role of “real rape” and “real victim” stereotypes in the police reporting practices of sexually assaulted victims. *Violence Against Women*, 9, 466-496.

Edelsky, C., & Adams, K. (1990). Creating Inequality: Breaking the Rules in Debates. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 9(3), 171-190. doi:10.1177/0261927x9093001

Ellis, E. M., Atkeson, B. M., & Calhoun, K. S. (1981). An assessment of long-term reaction to rape. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 90(3), 263-266. doi:10.1037/0021-843x.90.3.263

First Corinthians. (1991). In *New Revised Standard Version*. Oxford University Press.

- Fisher, B. S., Cullen, F. T., & Turner, M. G. (2000). *The Sexual Victimization of College Women. Research Report*. (Rep. No. HE 033 712). Washington D.C.: Department of Justice. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED449712)
- Fisher, B. S., & Sloan, J. J. (2003). Unraveling the fear of victimization among college women: Is the “shadow of sexual assault hypothesis” supported? *Justice Quarterly*, 20(3), 633-659. doi:10.1080/07418820300095641
- Florida Legislator. (2019, January 17). Florida Statutes 2018. Retrieved from [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0794/Sections/0794.011.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=0700-0799/0794/Sections/0794.011.html)
- Foa, E. B. (2001). *Treating the Trauma of Rape: Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for PTSD*. New York, NY: Guilford Pubn.
- Foa, E., & Keane, T. (2008). *Effective Treatments for PTSD, Second Edition: Practice Guidelines from the International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies*. New York, NY: Guilford Publications.
- Frank, E., & Anderson, B. P. (1987). Psychiatric disorders in rape victims: Past psychiatric history and current symptomatology. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 28, 77-82. doi: 10.1016/0010-440X(87)90047-2
- Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools, 503 U.S. 60 (1992)
- Galles, K. M. (2017, June 30). Filling the Gaps: Women, Civil Rights, and Title IX. Retrieved March 5, 2019, from [https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human\\_rights\\_magazine\\_home/human\\_rights\\_vol31\\_2004/summer2004/irr\\_hr\\_summer04\\_gaps](https://www.americanbar.org/groups/crsj/publications/human_rights_magazine_home/human_rights_vol31_2004/summer2004/irr_hr_summer04_gaps)

- García-Moreno C., Pallitto, C., Devries, K., Stöckl, H., Watts, C., Abrahams, N., & Petzold, M. (2013). *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: Prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence*. Geneva: WHO Press.
- Gates, D. M., & Gillespie, G. L. (2008). Secondary Traumatic Stress in Nurses Who Care for Traumatized Women. *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic & Neonatal Nursing*, 37(2), 243-249. doi:10.1111/j.1552-6909.2008.00228.x
- Goodwin, M. H. (2002). Building power asymmetries in girls' interaction. *Discourse & Society*, 13, 715-730.
- Grace, S., Lloyd, C., & Smith, L. J. F. (1992). *Rape: From recording to conviction*. London: Home Office.
- Gracia, E. (2014). Intimate partner violence against women and victim-blaming attitudes among Europeans. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 92(5), 380-381. doi:10.2471/blt.13.131391
- Green, N. (2017). ABC News.
- Gross, A. M., Winslett, A., Roberts, M., & Gohm, C. L. (2006). An Examination of Sexual Violence Against College Women. *Violence Against Women*, 12(3), 288-300. doi:10.1177/1077801205277358
- Grove City College v. Bell, 465 U.S. 555 (1984).
- Hale, M. (1736). *Historia Placitorum Coronæ: The History of the Pleas of the Crown* (1st ed., Vol. 2). In the Savoy: Printed by E. and R. Nutt, and R. Gosling for F. Gyles.
- Hanson, B., Ph.D. (2016, September 26). *National Campus Safety Awareness Month: Changing the Institutional Response to Change the Statistics*. Retrieved from

<https://www.justice.gov/archives/ovw/blog/national-campus-safety-awareness-month-changing-institutional-response-change-statistics>

Hart, S. (2014, June 14). Rape, marriage, and rights. Retrieved March 13, 2019, from <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/5050/rape-marriage-and-rights/>

Heenan, M., & Murray, S. (2007). *Study of reported rapes in Victoria 2000-2003: Summary research report*. Melbourne: Office of Womens Policy, Department for Victorian Communities.

Herpich, N. (2019, January 25). State group, with Harvard input, responds to proposed Title IX changes. Retrieved from <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/01/state-group-with-harvard-input-responds-to-proposed-title-ix-changes/>

Hexter, H. (1990). *Students Who Work: A Profile* (Vol. 1, pp. 1-8, Issue brief No. 2). Washington D.C.: American Council on Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED381095)

Hodges, S. D., Kiel, K. J., Kramer, A. D., Veach, D., & Villanueva, B. R. (2009). Giving Birth to Empathy: The Effects of Similar Experience on Empathic Accuracy, Empathic Concern, and Perceived Empathy. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 36(3), 398-409. doi:10.1177/0146167209350326

Hoffman, M. L. (1977). Sex differences in empathy and related behaviors. *Psychological Bulletin*, 84(4), 712-722. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.84.4.712

Holland, J. (2006). *Misogyny: The World's Oldest Prejudice*. New York, NY: Carroll & Graf.

Holmes, J. (1992). Womens Talk in Public Contexts. *Discourse & Society*, 3(2), 131-150. doi:10.1177/0957926592003002001

- Holmes, J. (2013). *Women, men and politeness*. London: Routledge. doi:10.4324/9781315845722
- Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. (2018). The Value of Education. Retrieved February 26, 2019, from <https://www.us.hsbc.com/ValueofEducation/>
- Hyde-Smith, C. (2018, September 17). *Focal Point* [Radio broadcast]. In Focal Point. Jackson, Mississippi: American Family Radio.
- Inter-Parliamentary Union. (2019, February 1). Women in Parliaments: World Classification. Retrieved from <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>
- Ito, S. (2010, February 25). *New Report Shows 95% of Campus Rapes Go Unreported*. Retrieved from <https://www.aclu.org/blog/smart-justice/mass-incarceration/new-report-shows-95-campus-rapes-go-unreported>
- Jordan, C. E., Combs, J. L., & Smith, G. T. (2014). An Exploration of Sexual Victimization and Academic Performance Among College Women. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 15*(3), 191-200. doi:10.1177/1524838014520637
- Kanin, E. J. (1957). Male aggression in dating-courtship relations. *American Journal of Sociology, 63*, 197-204.
- Kanin, E. J., & Parcell, S. R. (1977). Sexual aggression: A second look at the offended female. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 6*, 67-76.
- Keisling, M. (2017). ABC News.
- Kelly, L., Lovett, J., & Regan, L. (2005). *A gap or a chasm?: Attrition in reported rape cases*. London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.

- Kessler, R., Sonnega, A., Bromet, E., Hughes, M., & Nelson, C. (1995). Posttraumatic stress disorder in the national comorbidity survey. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 52, 1048-1060.
- Kilpatrick, D. G., Edmunds, C. N., & Seymour, A. K. (1992). Rape in America: A report to the nation. Arlington, VA: National Victim Center
- Kimble, M., Neacsiu, A. D., Flack, W. F., & Horner, J. (2008). Risk of Unwanted Sex for College Women: Evidence for a Red Zone. *Journal of American College Health*, 57(3), 331-338. doi:10.3200/jach.57.3.331-338
- Kirkpatrick, C., & Kanin, E. J. (1957). Male sexual aggression on a university campus. *American Sociological Review*, 22, 52-58.
- Krahé, B., & Berger, A. (2017). Longitudinal pathways of sexual victimization, sexual self-esteem, and depression in women and men. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 9(2), 147-155. doi:10.1037/tra0000198
- Koss, M. P., Gidycz, C. A., & Wisniewski, N. (1987). The scope of rape: Incidence and prevalence of sexual aggression and victimization in a national sample of higher education students. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 55(2), 162-170. doi:10.1037//0022-006x.55.2.162
- Krebs, C., Lindquist, C., Berzofsky, M., Shook-Sa, B., & Peterson, K. (2016). *Campus Climate Survey Validation Study Final Technical Report* (Tech.). Washington D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Lange, A. (2015, Fall). Opposition to Suffrage. Retrieved March 27, 2019, from <http://www.crusadeforthethevote.org/naows-opposition>

- Langer, G. (2017, October 17). Unwanted sexual advances not just a Hollywood, Weinstein story, poll finds. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/unwanted-sexual-advances-hollywood-weinstein-story-poll/story?id=50521721>
- Law Enforcement Assistance Administration. (1975). *Criminal victimization surveys in 8 American cities* (Publication No. SD-NCS-C-5). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office
- Leubsdorf, J. (2016). Preponderance of the Evidence: Some History. *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 67(5), 1568-1619. doi:10.2139/ssrn.2466127
- Lisak, D., Gardinier, L., Nicksa, S. C., & Cote, A. M. (2010). False Allegations of Sexual Assault: An Analysis of Ten Years of Reported Cases. *Violence Against Women*, 16(12), 1318-1334. doi:10.1177/1077801210387747
- Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (1995). *Analyzing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Lombardi, K., & Jones, K. (2009, December 01). *Sexual Assault on Campus: A Frustrating Search for Justice* (G. Witkin, D. Donald, & P. Smith, Eds.) [Scholarly project]. In *Center for Public Integrity*. Retrieved February 27, 2019, from [https://cloudfront-files-1.publicintegrity.org/documents/pdfs/Sexual Assault on Campus.pdf](https://cloudfront-files-1.publicintegrity.org/documents/pdfs/Sexual%20Assault%20on%20Campus.pdf)
- Lonsway, K. A., Archambault, J., & Lisak, D. (2009). False reports: Moving beyond the issue to successfully investigate and prosecute non-stranger sexual assault. *The Voice*, 3(1), 1-11. Retrieved from the National District Attorneys Association: [http://www.ndaa.org/pdf/the\\_voice\\_vol\\_3\\_no\\_1\\_2009.pdf](http://www.ndaa.org/pdf/the_voice_vol_3_no_1_2009.pdf)

- Lonsway, K. A., & Archambault, J. (2012). The “Justice Gap” for Sexual Assault Cases. *Violence Against Women, 18*(2), 145-168. doi:10.1177/1077801212440017
- Loschiavo, C., & Waller, J. (2017). The preponderance of evidence standard: Use in higher education campus conduct processes. Association for Student Conduct Administration. Retrieved from <http://www.theasca.org/files/The%20Preponderance%20of%20Evidence%20Standard.pdf>
- Macaskill, A., Maltby, J., & Day, L. (2002). Forgiveness of Self and Others and Emotional Empathy. *The Journal of Social Psychology, 142*(5), 663-665. doi:10.1080/00224540209603925
- Mallenbaum, C., Ryan, P., & Puente, M. (2018, April 27). A complete list of the 60 Bill Cosby accusers and their reactions to his prison sentence. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/people/2018/04/27/bill-cosby-full-list-accusers/555144002/>
- Malo, S. (2017, November 10). Despite #MeToo, U.S. workers fear speaking out about sexual harassment. Retrieved from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-women-sexcrimes/despite-metoo-u-s-workers-fear-speaking-out-about-sexual-harassment-idUSKBN1DA0NY>
- McCluskey, M. (2018, October 23). Man Accused of Groping Woman on Flight: Trump 'Says It's OK'. Retrieved March 6, 2019, from <http://time.com/5431823/man-gropes-woman-on-flight/>

- McCollister, K. E., French, M. T., & Fang, H. (2010). The cost of crime to society: New crime-specific estimates for policy and program evaluation. *Drug and Alcohol Dependence, 108*(1-2), 98-109. doi:10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2009.12.002
- McMahon, S., & Stepleton, K. (2018). Undergraduate Exposure to Messages About Campus Sexual Assault: Awareness of Campus Resources. *Journal of College Student Development, 59*(1), 110-115. doi:10.1353/csd.2018.0008
- Media Bias Fact Check. (n.d.). Search and Learn the Bias of News Media. Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>
- Mink, W. (2012, June 22). Social Justice: A Feminist Policy Blog. Retrieved March 28, 2019, from <http://feministsocialjustice.blogspot.com/2012/06/happy-birthday-title-ix.html?m=1>.
- Miranda, R., Meyerson, L., Long, P., Marx, B., & Simpson, S. (2002). Sexual Assault and Alcohol Use: Exploring the Self-Medication Hypothesis. *Violence and Victims, 17*(2), 205-217. doi:10.1891/vivi.17.2.205.33650
- Mitchell, A., & Rosensteil, T. (2011, May 09). The Top 25 - Pew Research Center. Retrieved March 28, 2019, from <https://www.journalism.org/2011/05/09/top-25/>
- Modi, M. N., Palmer, S., & Armstrong, A. (2014). The Role of Violence Against Women Act in Addressing Intimate Partner Violence: A Public Health Issue. *Journal of Womens Health, 23*(3), 253-259. doi:10.1089/jwh.2013.4387
- Moniuszko, S. M., & Kelly, C. (2017, October 27). Harvey Weinstein scandal: A complete list of the 87 accusers. Retrieved from <https://www.usatoday.com/story/life/people/2017/10/27/weinstein-scandal-complete-list-accusers/804663001/>

- Morales, M. (2019, January 03). #MeToo cited as one reason rape reports increased 22% in New York. Retrieved from <https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2019/01/03/us/nypd-crime-stats-briefing/index.html>
- Nadler, J. (2019). *The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019* [Press release]. House Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives.
- National Center for Education Statistics, Digest of Education Statistics, 2017. (2018). Retrieved February 25, 2019, from [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17\\_303.10.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d17/tables/dt17_303.10.asp)
- National Network to End Domestic Violence. (2019). Violence Against Women Act. Retrieved from <https://nnedv.org/content/violence-against-women-act/>
- NCAA Gender-Equity Study: Summary of Results. (pp. 1-53, Rep.). (1992). Overland Park, KS: National Collegiate Athletic Association [NCAA]. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED345593)
- NCAA Title IX Frequently Asked Questions. (2014, January 27). Retrieved April 15, 2019, from <http://www.ncaa.org/about/resources/inclusion/title-ix-frequently-asked-questions#title>
- Nittrouer, C. L., Hebl, M. R., Ashburn-Nardo, L., Trump-Steele, R. C., Lane, D. M., & Valian, V. (2017). Gender disparities in colloquium speakers at top universities. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*(1), 104-108. doi:10.1073/pnas.1708414115
- Open Letter from Members of the Penn Law School Faculty. (Feb. 18, 2015), Sexual Assault Complaints: Protecting Complainants and the Accused Students at Universities. *Wall Street Journal*.

- Osman, S. L. (2011). Predicting Rape Empathy Based on Victim, Perpetrator, and Participant Gender, and History of Sexual Aggression. *Sex Roles, 64*(7-8), 506-515. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9919-7
- Pain, R. H. (1997). Social Geographies of Women's Fear of Crime. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 22*(3), 231-244. doi:10.1111/tran.1997.22.issue-3
- Planty, M., Hussar, W., Snyder, T., Kena, G., KewalRamani, A., Kemp, J., Bianco, K., Dinkes, R. (2009). *The Condition of Education 2009* (NCES 2009-081). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC.
- Paquette, D. (2016, February 02). Bill Cosby might have changed the way police investigate rape. *Washington Post*.
- Public Law No. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235 (June 23, 1972), codified at 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688
- R v Clarence [1889] 22 Q.B. 23
- R v Miller [1954] 2 Q.B. 282
- Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network [RAINN]. (2016). Campus Sexual Violence: Statistics. Retrieved from <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/campus-sexual-violence>
- Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network [RAINN]. (n.d.). Clery Act. Retrieved April 16, 2019, from <https://www.rainn.org/articles/clery-act>
- Regan, L., & Kelly, L. (2003). *Rape: Still a forgotten issue: Briefing document for strengthening the linkages - consolidating the European Network Project*. London: Child and Woman Abuse Studies Unit, London Metropolitan University Rape Crisis Network Europe.

- Relman, E. (2019, February 25). The 23 women who have accused Trump of sexual misconduct. Retrieved March 4, 2019, from <https://www.businessinsider.com/women-accused-trump-sexual-misconduct-list-2017-12>
- Rennison, C. M. (2002). Rape and sexual assault: Reporting to police and medical attention, 1992-2000 [NCJ 194530]. Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Schauben, L. J., & Frazier, P. A. (1995). Vicarious Trauma: The Effects on Female Counselors of Working with Sexual Violence Survivors. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 19(1), 49-64. doi:10.1111/j.1471-6402.1995.tb00278.x
- Scheinman, T. (2014, November 12). Silencing Women: Inside the National Coalition for Men. Retrieved from <https://psmag.com/news/silencing-women-inside-national-coalition-men-rape-sexual-assault-harry-crouch-94284>
- Schmidt, S. (2018, November 06). More than a dozen state lawmakers accused of sexual misconduct are running for office today. Will they win? Retrieved March 6, 2019, from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/more-than-a-dozen-state-lawmakers-accused-of-sexual-misconduct-are-running-for-office-today-will-they-win/2018/11/06/33d553f8-e166-11e8-b759-3d88a5ce9e19\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/more-than-a-dozen-state-lawmakers-accused-of-sexual-misconduct-are-running-for-office-today-will-they-win/2018/11/06/33d553f8-e166-11e8-b759-3d88a5ce9e19_story.html)
- Schwartz, I. L. (1991). Sexual violence against women: Prevalence, consequences, societal factors, and prevention. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 6, 363-373.
- Selby, J. W., Calhoun, L. G., & Brock, T. A. (1977). Sex Differences in the Social Perception of Rape Victims. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 3(3), 412-415. doi:10.1177/014616727700300310

- Sherwin, E. (2002). Clear and Convincing Evidence of Testamentary Intent: The Search for a Compromise Between Formality and Adjudicative Justice. *Cornell Law Faculty Publications*.
- Sinozich, S., & Langton, L. (2014). *Rape and Sexual Assault Victimization Among College-Age Females, 1995–2013* (Rep. No. NCJ 248471). Washington D.C.: United States Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Smith, C. A., & Frieze, I. H. (2003). Examining Rape Empathy From the Perspective of the Victim and the Assailant. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33*(3), 476-498. doi:10.1111/j.1559-1816.2003.tb01907.x
- Soskin, W., & John, V. (1963). The study of spontaneous talk. In R. G. Barker (Ed.), *The stream of behavior* (pp. 228-281). New York: Appleton-Century.
- Spender, D. (1979). Language and Sex Differences. *Osnabrücker Beiträge zur Sprachtheorie: Sprache und Geschlecht, 2*, 38-59.
- Spohn, C., White, C., & Tellis, K. (2014). Unfounding Sexual Assault: Examining the Decision to Unfound and Identifying False Reports. *Law & Society Review, 48*(1), 161-192. doi:10.1111/lasr.12060
- Starzynski, L. L., Ullman, S. E., Filipas, H. H., & Townsend, S. M. (2005). Correlates of women's sexual assault disclosure to informal and formal support sources. *Violence and Victims, 20*(4), 417–432. doi:10.1891=088667005780927593
- Stein, M. B., Lang, A. J., Laffaye, C., Satz, L. E., Lenox, R. J., & Dresselhaus, T. R. (2004). Relationship of sexual assault history to somatic symptoms and health anxiety in

- women. *General Hospital Psychiatry*, 26(3), 178-183. doi:10.1016/j.genhosppsy.2003.11.003
- Stotzer, R. L., & MacCartney, D. (2016). The Role of Institutional Factors on On-Campus Reported Rape Prevalence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 31(16), 2687-2707. doi:10.1177/0886260515580367
- Strodtbeck, F. L., & Mann, R. D. (1956). Sex Role Differentiation in Jury Deliberations. *Sociometry*, 19(1), 3. doi:10.2307/2786099
- Suarez, E., & Gadalla, T. M. (2010). Stop Blaming the Victim: A Meta-Analysis on Rape Myths. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(11), 2010-2035. doi:10.1177/0886260509354503
- Thornton, B., Robbins, M. A., & Johnson, J. A. (1981). Social Perception of the Rape Victims Culpability: The Influence of Respondents Personal-Environmental Causal Attribution Tendencies. *Human Relations*, 34(3), 225-237. doi:10.1177/001872678103400304
- Toussaint, L., & Webb, J. R. (2005). Gender Differences in the Relationship Between Empathy and Forgiveness. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(6), 673-685. doi:10.3200/socp.145.6.673-686
- Trump, D. J. "I Have No Doubt That, If the Attack on Dr. Ford Was as Bad as She Says, Charges Would Have Been Immediately Filed with Local Law Enforcement Authorities by Either Her or Her Loving Parents. I Ask That She Bring Those Filings Forward so That We Can Learn Date, Time, and Place!" *Twitter*, Twitter, 21 Sept. 2018, [twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1043126336473055235?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1043126336473055235&ref\\_url=http%3A%2F%2Ftime.com%2F5403230%2Fdonald-trump-tweets-sexual-assault-reporting%2F](https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1043126336473055235?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw%7Ctwcamp%5Etweetembed%7Ctwterm%5E1043126336473055235&ref_url=http%3A%2F%2Ftime.com%2F5403230%2Fdonald-trump-tweets-sexual-assault-reporting%2F).

- Trump, D. J. (2018, October 02). White House Interview.
- Underwood, M. (2003). *Social aggression among girls*. New York: Guilford Press.
- United States, Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey [NCVS]. (2018). *Criminal Victimization, 2017* (NCJ 252472). Washington D.C: Department of Justice.
- United States, Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. (2018, September 25). Title IX and Sex Discrimination. Retrieved March 28, 2019, from [https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix\\_dis.html](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html)
- United States, Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation (1976). *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.
- United States, Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigations. (1997). *Uniform Crime Report*. Washington D.C: Federal Bureau of Investigation.
- Yapp, E. J., & Quayle, E. (2018). A systematic review of the association between rape myth acceptance and male-on-female sexual violence. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 41*, 1-19. doi:10.1016/j.avb.2018.05.002
- Page, A. D. (2010). True Colors: Police Officers and Rape Myth Acceptance. *Feminist Criminology, 5*(4), 315-334. doi:10.1177/1557085110384108
- Walsh, W. A., Banyard, V. L., Moynihan, M. M., Ward, S., & Cohn, E. S. (2010). Disclosure and Service Use on a College Campus After an Unwanted Sexual Experience. *Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, 11*(2), 134-151. doi:10.1080/15299730903502912
- Warr, M. (1985). Fear of Rape among Urban Women. *Social Problems, 32*(3), 238-250. doi:10.2307/800684

Warshaw, R. (1988). *I never called it rape: The Ms. report on recognizing, fighting, and surviving date and acquaintance rape*. New York: Harper/Perennial.

Weiss, E. L., Longhurst, J. G., & Mazure, C. M. (1999). Childhood Sexual Abuse as a Risk Factor for Depression in Women: Psychosocial and Neurobiological Correlates. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 156(6), 816-828. doi:10.1176/ajp.156.6.816

Women's Law Project. (2019, February 13). Our Response to Proposed Title IX Changes... & Last Call to Comment. Retrieved March 15, 2019, from <https://www.womenslawproject.org/2019/02/13/our-response-to-proposed-title-ix-changes-last-call-to-comment/>