How Does Student Activism Drive Cultural Campus Change in the UK and US Regarding Sexual Violence on Campus?

Abstract
Using policy frameworks and author expertise to identify relevant literature, four academics and two student-activist-authors, critically review literature upon student activist responses to sexual violence on campus. We conclude, student activism is pivotal to campus cultural change. In the UK, we review how student activism challenges outdated policy; in the US, how this has elevated the issue to national policy agendas. We apply theoretical frameworks of policy windows, policy entrepreneurs, campus readiness models and embodied intersectional citizenship. This paper recommends universities work collaboratively with student activists, rather than viewing collaboration as a reputational risk. Further, we recommend developing Campus Community Readiness Models to include measures of collaboration. We contend, student activism can incur costs. Connecting activists online may help manage the transience of student activism. Collaboration and connection with and between student activists may represent a cultural shift toward sustainability stages of readiness characterised by community ownership.

Key words: Community ownership, cultural shift, embodied intersectional citizenship, policy entrepreneurs, sustainability.

Introduction

Sexual violence[1] on campus is a pervasive problem. Research estimates one in five women experience a completed or attempted sexual assault in the US during their college years (Krebs et al., 2007), a UK study found 42% of surveyed students experienced sexual assault (Revolt Sexual Assault, 2018). This current paper explores the role of student activism in shaping UK and US policy responses to campus sexual violence. Statistics and definitions regarding sexual violence are comparatively difficult within and between institutions and across countries with statistics used here, for example, using terms such as completed or attempted sexual assault; whilst others refer only to sexual assault. This begins to denote the spectrum of sexual violence and, in particular, that rates of reporting may be inaccurate for this and many other reasons such as fear of reporting. However, statistics do demonstrate a similarity in prevalence patterns across UK and US institutions; one reason for comparing these two countries. Additionally, the UK and US were chosen for comparative reasons as they have similar demographic contexts in many respects. Age and experience demographics are similar with universities in both countries having a majority young adult population, who have often moved away from home for the first time and who are exposed to and experience similar university traditions, social norms and stereotypes. This can underpin attitudes and behaviours underlying sexual violence and prevalence statistics which are similar in each country. Yet, despite these similarities, response to sexual violence on campus in the two countries has been in stark contrast, marginalised until recently by the UK

and with a much higher profile in the US from the 1970s onwards; another reason for choosing to compare the two countries.

To explore and compare the role of student activism within the two countries, two theoretical lenses are used. First, 'policy windows' (Kingdon, 1995: 1) explores 'an idea whose time has come' or an 'irresistible movement that sweeps over our politics and our society'. This current paper drives new understandings of policy response to sexual violence on campus, demonstrating student activists play powerful roles in contributing to the opening of policy windows and keeping them open. Second, Plested et al., (2006) consider how communities prepare for change in the 'Community Readiness Model' (CRM). This current paper drives the field forward offering further development recommendations for the Campus Community Readiness to Engage Measure (CCREM), specifically to include measures of community activism. Krause et al., (2017) draw attention to the lack of research on campus sexual violence and student activism. This current paper represents a step forward in highlighting student activists 'as agents of change' (Krause et al., 2017: 213). Consideration of the role of social media further establishes this current paper as unique by considering emerging platforms, which may give a durability to activism. The perspectives of two student-activist-authors[2], one from the UK and one from the US, are included throughout the paper to offer a further unique angle. Their perspectives draw attention to the potential struggles of activism as well as the gains.

Method of Literature Review

The literature was reviewed adapting Karger and Stoesz' (2008) policy framework. This encompassed consideration of policy goals and target, how policy affects relations between target and society, and next steps. The role of student activism, along with power, impact and relevance of policy further drove decisions over which policy to include in this review. Additionally guiding this was the expertise of the six authors, resulting in a critical review of a specific range of national and local policy driven by student activism.

Methodologically, this approach involved a systematic review of state and national policy regarding evolving policy guidance on how to respond to sexual violence on campuses in both the UK and US. In terms of research, there is a dearth of activism's impact upon sexual violence, identified by a scoping study undertaken for this paper. However, the available research literature that the research team was able to find was drawn upon. An extension of the traditional systematic literature review was undertaken for this paper in the form of an extended review (Victor, 2008). A first stage in any systematic review is to carry out a scoping study of the area, and this revealed that much of what is currently known about activism and sexual violence on

campus is reported by media outlets. Therefore, this paper makes an important contribution to knowledge in this arena by carrying out a 'quality appraisal of evidence' (Victor, 2008: 3) of media reporting of activism, a lesser accessed academic source of knowledge. This lends some validity, reliability and, credibility to this source; noting its relevance to stakeholders in this particular area of research. Due to limitations of word count this review did not directly address activism in relation to sexual misconduct by staff toward students, though this is an area we would identify to follow in future activism research (e.g. as Page et al., 2019).

The role of student activism and campus sexual violence

Sexual violence is one of the most underreported crimes (Kimble and Chettiar, 2018) and data 'is likely severely undercounting the number of reported incidents on campus' (Yung, 2015: 7). Universities in the UK and US are rethinking student codes of conduct and policies on how to respond to sexual violence on campus. Students have the power to shift the conversation and apply pressure so that institutions address these issues.

Equally, this can have a detrimental impact upon student experience where involvement in student activism can become consuming, leading to issues with attainment and progression, contributing to being ostracised by peers, or to campus leaders viewing activists as troublesome to campus life (Deacon, 2014, Sharma, 2016; Vagianos, 2019). Whitfield (2019: 2) clarifies difficulties of activism where, 'organizing is almost like another part-time job.' Mekuto (2019) draws attention to the personal costs of student activism, which can lead to psychological trauma. Chessum (2014), a former student activist, points to the issue of 'burnout' that activism can lead to. Linder (2018) considers the impact of feeling powerless to do anything about sexual violence, where you can become 'immobilised' as you begin to understand the injustices of systems, which perpetuate sexual violence. Whitford (2019) notes that one of the greatest obstacles of student activism is the rhythm of the student calendar. Universities may use this advantageously, implementing new policies whilst students are on leave, undoing previous progress.

UK and US policy are currently at different stages. For example in UK policy, sexual violence has more generally been marginalised (Phipps, 2010; Phipps and Smith, 2012), and less formal policy has developed. Key guidance has come from the Council of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP, 1994) now Universities UK (UUK). Commonly referred to as the Zellick Report (1994) this informed UK universities until recently, guiding universities toward a blanket prohibition on instigating internal proceedings regarding complaints of sexual misconduct. More recently, the UUK Report (2016) offered alternative guidance and universities are now

3

considering policy responses. Student activism has played a leading role demanding accountability from institutions of higher education (National Union of Students (NUS), 2010, 2013; Revolt Sexual Assault, 2018).

In the US, student activism has demanded more accountability by institutions in compliance with the Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Department of Justice (DOS), n.d.) to help protect students from discrimination. Students mobilised to raise awareness and confront administrative leadership for failing to provide adequate protections. A number of already existing policies were strengthened to protect students (e.g. The Clery Act and Title IX, White House Task Force (WHTF), (2014a). New guidance incorporated voices of student activists (e.g., The Not Alone Report (WHTF, 2014b) issued by the Obama administration). Individual states produced mandates and guidance to address campus sexual assault (e.g., New York's Enough is Enough law (New York State Senate, n.d.). Currently, federal guidance appears to be entering another stage that may reverse a number of recent policy gains. This current paper demonstrates student activism is increasingly important in this shifting landscape.

Theoretical frameworks

Policy windows can be unpredictable and activists are important as 'policy entrepreneurs' to create windows and keep them open. Kingdon (1995, 2010) explores the processes of policy agenda setting as driven by 'problems, policies and politics'. Problems may come to the fore through crisis, notable events, accumulation of knowledge, public acceptance, administrative change, economics, or perceived urgency. Kingdon (1995, 2010) discusses 'insiders' and 'outsiders' to policy decision making with insiders being those who have access to formal decision making. Amongst 'outsiders' are special interest groups who can 'form bridges' with those on the inside. Special interest groups have more impact if they are persistent, organised, cohesive and sustained in their approach. Policy entrepreneurs are key and are those willing to invest time, energy and resources. This paper contends that examples of grassroots policy entrepreneurs are student activists.

Policy windows connect with stages of readiness for change considered in the CCREM (Edwards et al., 2015: 214) developed recently by two authors[3] of this paper and which includes three stages of campus community readiness. The three stages of the CCREM are identified as denial, initiation and sustainability. These stages move through a lack of awareness, to some efforts to address, to high levels of community engagement and longstanding efforts to address sexual violence on campus. The CCREM works as a barometer for how campuses are moving forward through stages, from little engagement with the problem of sexual violence on campus,

4

to more comprehensive response and prevention efforts. In the current paper, we argue that student activists are key to moving campuses forward in stages of change by opening and helping to keep open policy windows and keeping campuses accountable for their levels of response or readiness to engage.

Additionally this current paper explores embodied and intersectional examples of activism. We consider why there is 'often an utter disconnect between policy' (Pillow, 2003: 147) and its target and how student activists can bridge this disconnect. Hines and Santos (2018) explore and compare policy in the UK and Portugal on trans* and non-binary activism and social movements. They draw attention to the construct of citizen as 'those who are able to participate publicly in decisions that affect their lives' (p. 37). They draw upon 'embodied citizenship' to explore how activism and social movements shift or maintain policy focus or act as a 'trigger platform' (p. 36). Linder (2018) and Marine and Trebisacci (2018: 650) discuss how intersections of race, gender, and identity influence the work of campus activists, 'activism is both informed by- and informs- participants' identities'.

Student activism in the UK: Student activists challenging and changing outdated policy

In 1993, the Donnellan case resulted in sexual violence on campus gaining a fleeting high profile in the UK. Donnellan, a male post-graduate from King's College, London was accused of rape by a female student. The case went to trial, acquitting Donnellan; the College later ordered to pay significant damages (Carter et al., 1997). The Donnellan case appeared as an isolated incident and this rarely maintains policy interest, equally the public climate was not conducive to cultural change regarding sexual violence. The UK popular press contributed to a particular public perception:

> Descriptions of campus 'mating games', promiscuity, 'fuck a fresher weeks' and drinking…conveyed to the world beyond the campus that students were significantly different. That they seemed to willingly engage in dangerous sexual games that sometimes went wrong (Carter et al., 1997: 16).

The reaction to the Donnellan case, in part, led to policy guidance, which prohibited universities in the UK from internal investigation. One year later, the CVCP (1994), published the 'Final Report of the Task Force on Student Disciplinary Procedures', commonly referred to as the Zellick Report, driving policy direction for the next twenty years:

In future no University should act as King's College had. Unless the victim is prepared to go to the police and thereafter proceed to court, Zellick argued, the University should take no action against the perpetrator (Carter et al., 1997: 17).

More recently, student activism has challenged Zellick, with the NUS calling into question its accuracy and legality (NUS, 2015). Unlike the US, which already had a substantial body of empirical evidence, (Koss et al., 1987; Warshaw, 1988; White and Koss, 1991), the NUS Report (2010) 'Hidden Marks', was the first UK nationwide research into campus sexual violence. The NUS is a powerful special interest group and galvanised activism. The NUS represents as both insider (in terms of the university) and outsider (in terms of government and formal decision-making power) (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). It has the capacity to act as a bridge between formal government decision makers, universities, the public and students. It has all the elements for successful coupling of problems, policies and politics (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). It is geographically dispersed and resource-equipped in terms of membership numbers, status and its ability to impact upon economics. The NUS began developing a quantifiable evidence basis through delivery of an online survey receiving 2058 responses from women students finding, '68 per cent have experienced some kind of verbal or non-verbal harassment in and around their institution' (NUS, 2010: 3). Social media enabled this survey to gather momentum and for its results to become more widely known. Olivia Bailey, the NUS National Women's Officer at the time who represents the qualities of Kingdon's (1995; 2010) policy entrepreneur (experience, advocacy and authority) said the Report was 'a wake-up call' and 'just the start of the work that the NUS Women's Campaign will be undertaking' (NUS, 2010; foreword).

In the UK and US, high profile cases of sexual violence on campus often push forward change through student activism (e.g. Donnellan, Ramey in the UK; Turner, Kinsman, Sulkowicz in the US) social media plays a strong part in this. However, this can be at high personal cost to those involved whose private experiences then become part of the public domain. They may find themselves reluctantly occupying the space of activism.

In 2011, Oxford post-graduate Elizabeth Ramey reported to her university, that a fellow male student assaulted them. The University followed Zellick guidance, and did not instigate internal procedures. Ramey reported the case to police, but the Criminal Prosecuting Service (CPS) did not proceed. Ramey complained to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) about the handling of the case. The OIA recommended the University amend or clarify their policy. They complied; amending it in consultation with students, representing institutional movement toward the CCREM stage of 'initiation' (Edwards et al., 2015; 2016). In 2015 Ramey

brought a legal case against University of Oxford to try to force further change to policy. The Judge dismissed Ramey's case; ruling university policy did not lead to indirect discrimination against women. In pursuing justice through activism Ramey has waived the right to anonymity leaving themselves open to public scrutiny and criticism, any future action will not directly benefit Ramey. Despite this, Ramey has displayed characteristics of Kingdon's (1995; 2010) policy entrepreneur in their persistent activism and this helped keep the matter on the policy agenda and contributed to a trigger platform for change. Hines and Santos (2018) 'point to the ways in which the material body is central to practices of governance; bodies are a means through which rights are attributed or withheld' (p. 50). Embodied citizenship found within student activists or policy entrepreneurs can help keep a problem on the policy and public agenda, rather than have it 'fade from view' (Kingdon, 1995: 104) but at some cost to the individual activist.

Single acts of activism would not be enough to keep a policy window open in the longer term. A further NUS Report (2013) 'That's What She Said', emerged. Forty women students took part in focus groups and interviews exploring 'lad culture'[4]. The report recommended the student movement should take further action and in 2014, the NUS Women's Campaign held a 'Lad Culture Summit'. This led to a 'National Lad Culture Strategy Team' who conducted a 'Lad Culture and Sexism Survey' of over 2000 men and women students. A 'Lad Culture Audit' was carried out which entailed analysis of university and student's unions policies and practices, resulting in the then Business Secretary for the UK, Sajid Javid, announcing the creation of a Taskforce to reduce violence against women and girls on university campuses (NUS, n.d.). This demonstrates a persistent, organised, cohesive and sustained student activist approach and a coupling of problems, policies and politics most likely to be conducive circumstances for a policy window (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). It also responded to a collation of quantifiable evidence and occurred at a time of societal change fuelled by movements such as #MeToo which led to a particular policy slant perspective (Kingdon, 1995, 2010) in contrast to the Donnellan case in the 1990s. It also represents some movement through key stages of the CCREM initiation stages of readiness (Edwards et al., 2015, 2016). For example, information about the issue became public, media exposure increased; bringing on board key leaders and influencers. The UUK established a Taskforce in 2015 and, unlike Zellick, which consulted only with university leaders; it sought the student voice, for example, Sorana Vieru, the then Vice President NUS, and Jess Lishak the former Womens' Officer, University of Manchester Students' Union. This further represents a stronger embodied intersectional approach (Hines and Santos, 2018; Pillow, 2003) tapping into the resources of special interest groups and policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). In April

2015, the Taskforce hosted a seminar attended by 80 delegates from more than 40 UK universities. The resultant Taskforce Report established an approach to prevention and response that included buy-in from leadership, institutional responses developed in partnership with students, fostering cultures of respect, and adopting clear standards for student conduct related to sexual violence. The specific recommendations, should they be implemented by a campus, would reflect a campus environment in the sustainability level of community readiness and mark clear progress from the denial stage that describes treatment of survivors in early cases in the UK. The UUK Taskforce recommendations represent the ways in which individual and collective student activism can operationalise through embodied citizenship (Hines and Santos, 2018; Pillow, 2003) and begin to establish authentic and legitimate grass roots change (Krause et al., 2017).

Student activism has resulted in raised awareness of sexual violence on campus and UUK Taskforce recommendations. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) now Office for Students (OFS) offered £2.45 million funding for 64 institutions for sexual violence prevention and safeguarding students. This commitment of funds represents a realisation from policy that this is an important problem and time has come for change. However, Kingdon (1995, 2010) notes that budgetary changes can both push and close down a policy window, so universities need to understand how to engage with student activists to capitalise upon and extend this policy window. Many of these projects offer training, various programs of prevention and other activity, and evaluation in some format and this represents movement toward the initiation stages of community readiness, but this is more sporadic and less formalised than would be suggestive of sustainability stages of CCREM (Edwards et al., 2015, 2016). Stages of CCREM are not without criticism and it is unlikely that institutions would move through them in such a staged way, with more likelihood that they will demonstrate some aspects of stages and not others, and that this is dynamic. However, currently, former HEFCE/OFS funding for this work in the UK has ended and universities must now continue with programs of change through internal investment of time and finance. Recently the OFS has committed to setting up a bank of resources from projects and, potentially, this highlights alignment with sustainability stages of CCREM. It will however require the role of student activists, special interest groups and policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 1995, 2010) to hold programs and universities to account for their future actions and provision to achieve this. UUK has produced a further report to explore changes from its Taskforce and one of its recommendations is that staff and students work together to support this issue (UUK, 2018). This signals a recognition that student involvement in the process of change is key, highlighting

the importance of recognising students as 'agents of change' (Krause, et.al. 2017: 211). However, universities need to recognise the issues student activists face in maintaining effective levels of student activism (Deacon, 2014; Mekuto, 2019; Sharma, 2016; Vagianos, 2019; Whitfield and Dustin, 2016) supporting rather than prohibiting their activities. Whilst student activists are pivotal to cultural change, universities need to undergo cultural change within the ways that the leadership engages with and supports student activism.

Student activism in the US: Student activists elevating the issue to the national policy agenda

Kingdon (1995, 2010) identifies the government as one of the key streams that comes together to facilitate policy development. Specifically, a change in administration and their priorities help to shape the policy agenda. The Obama administration identified the issue of campus sexual violence as a key area of interest, demonstrated through several initiatives. For example, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) issued landmark guidance on interpreting Title IX through the Dear Colleague Letter (DCL) in 2011 (US Department of Education (US DofE, 2011, 2015) that spurred a major shift in how campuses respond to sexual violence. Title IX, an element of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title 20 U.S.C. Sections 1681-1688), is not directly focused on addressing sexual violence, but it is focused on the prohibition of sex discrimination in schools and has since been interpreted as important to the issue of sexual violence. The DCL clearly stated that sexual violence contravenes Title IX policy, as it interferes with providing the required discrimination-free learning environment. In addition, the DCL provided specific and comprehensive guidance for universities and colleges related to education, prevention, and services. Currently, Title IX guidance is under review by Secretary DeVos and will likely shift again; the DCL was revoked by DeVos (Cox, 2018) thereby again highlighting the influence of the federal administration's values (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). However, many institutions are still using the DCL as a way to guide their efforts and student activism may be key in maintaining this.

In addition to the DCL, the Obama Administration formed the 'Task Force to Protect Students from Campus Sexual Assault' (WHTF, 2017) which issued a series of reports; most significantly, the 'Not Alone' Report (WHTF, 2014b) which issued strong guidance and benchmarks for colleges and universities. This included four main areas: 1) addressing the prevalence of campus sexual violence and campus climate; 2) prevention; 3) effective response; and 4) increasing transparency and improving enforcement. The basis for the Report was a series of listening sessions with key stakeholders around the country, including survivors and students. The information from 'Not Alone' was disseminated widely and in conjunction with the 'Office

on Violence Against Women in the Department of Justice' (US DofE, n.d.), students were invited to participate in webinars and other training opportunities to learn more about their role as leaders in addressing the issue on campus.

In conjunction with the Obama administration's efforts, student activists helped to drive the issue to the forefront of national policy agenda, playing the important role of policy entrepreneurs (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). One approach used by student activists across the country was engaging in visible protests over the way that universities and colleges mishandled complaints. A particularly creative example of protest in 2014 was a piece of endurance performance art by sexual assault survivor, Emma Sulkowicz, who carried a mattress on their back for an entire academic year. Sulkowicz reported an experience of sexual assault by another student at Columbia University, during the school hearing board process they were cleared. The mattress became a symbol of the emotional weight that Sulkowicz was forced to carry due to their perception of the school's mishandling of the case (Izadi, 2015). The project called 'Mattress Performance: (Carry that Weight)' (Smith, 2014) has been credited with having a major impact on the national conversation related to sexual violence. The impact upon individual activists is less clear. As with Ramey, in doing this activist work, Sulkowicz has waived their right to anonymity and Bauer-Wolf (2017: 2) notes that, 'eventually articles more sympathetic to the man Sulkowicz accused' emerged. Alexandra Brodsky, a civil rights lawyer and co-founder of the advocacy group Know Your IX, said conversations regarding sexual violence tend not to focus on the long term effects, 'survivors do "carry a weight," (Bauer-Wolf, 2017: 3) for example debt, public condemnation, psychological trauma, or a loss of privacy.

Media can play an important role in creating policy windows, especially by 'magnifying movements' (Kingdon, 1995: 60). In solidarity with Sulkowicz, subsequent protests, in which college students carried mattresses, occurred across the country (Svokos, 2014). Other protests, rallies, and marches organised by student activists and implemented at universities received increasing press coverage. For example, students organized a rally and sit-in at Dean of Students' office at Swarthmore to demand that the school review how it investigates reports of sexual violence under the Title IX (Vella, 2018; Wolfman-Arent, 2018). Vagianos (2019) draws attention to the costs of protests such as this to student activists, 'protesting on such a small campus can be an intimate and arduous job; one that comes with a price' (p. 1). One of the student activists involved said:

> She knows every member of the two fraternities she worked hard to disband. She also knows how each of those fellow students has perpetrated harm against someone she cares about in the three years she's been at Swarthmore (Vagianos, 2019: 2).

The following illustrates students' abilities to reject the denial stage demonstrated by many institutions of higher education and shift them to a stage of initiation (Edwards et al., 2015; 2016). In 2013, Andrea Pino and Annie Clark, students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, networked with survivor activists at other colleges. They educated themselves about their rights under Title IX, and submitted a complaint to the US Department of Education's OCR detailing the way their institution had violated federal law in its handling of their sexual assault cases (Mangan, 2018). An investigation by OCR determined the University committed violations of Title IX. Pino and Clark travelled around the country helping students file complaints, with their story detailed in the documentary film 'The Hunting Ground'. Between 2011- 2016, OCR reviewed more than 287 individual complaints of mishandling of sexual assault by students at universities around the country (Mangan, 2018). Screenings of The Hunting Ground took place in over 1,000 universities, high schools, government offices and community groups (Cole & Briggs, 2017). After seeing the film, U.S. Senators McCaskill and Gillibrand met Pino and Clark. They sponsored a Bill in the Senate, the 'Campus Accountability and Safety Act' (CASA), which would require universities identify confidential advisors to provide support to victims on campus, as well as provide standards for adjudicating cases on campus and conducting regular climate studies (Cole & Briggs, 2017). The CASA is currently under review by Congress as part of the reauthorization of the 'Higher Education Act' (Congress, 2017). Pino and Clark also created 'End Rape on Campus', an organisation led by student activists involved in monitoring current legislation and advocating for policy change.

Over recent years creation of other student-led activist organizations has occurred, e.g. 'Know your IX' (n.d.), founded in 2013, which aims to empower students to stop sexual violence. In 2013, 'Know your IX' (n.d.) collected over 100,000 signatures on a petition demanding a number of reforms to the way that Title IX was enforced on campus, which indicatively led to the move by OCR in 2014 to begin publishing a public list of universities under investigation for Title IX violations. Student activists from around the country rallied outside the US DofE to deliver the petition to the Under Secretary in 2013, who delivered it to Secretary Duncan (Grasgreen, 2013). Duncan later recognised the organisation as helping to highlight the problem and influencing the Department's approach.

Another non-profit organization founded by a survivor of campus sexual assault, turned lawyer-activist, Laura Dunn, is SurvJustice, an organization established in 2014 that specifically helps survivors of sexual violence through legal assistance, policy advocacy, and institutional training. SurvJustice is the only national US non-profit representing victims of campus sexual violence in campus hearings, and college students make up a majority of the victims (Kingkade,

2017). Dunn is one of several activists sexually assaulted as a college student who later went on to found non-profits to help victims. Other examples include Jess Ladd, founder of Sexual Health Innovations and Callisto Campus ProjectCallisto; Amanda Nguyen, founder of Risenowus and creator of the Sexual Assault Survivor Bill of Rights (2017), and Nobel Peace Prize nominee; and Dana Bolger and Alexandra Brodsky, who co-founded Know Your IX (Bolger and Brodsky, 2014). Ramey in the UK, and Sulkowicz, Pino, Clark, Dunn, Ladd, Nguyen, Bolger and Brodsky in the US represent just some of the student activists who have put their own privacy and rights to one side to fight for the rights of students to come. Yet there is little understanding of the personal toll of this (Deacon, 2014; Mekuto, 2019; Sharma, 2016; Vagianos, 2019; Whitfield and Dustin, 2016).

Social media and student activism in the UK and US

Some researchers question the efficacy of using social media to promote social change, even referring to activism via social media as 'slacktivism' (Kristofferson et al., 2014) which de-incentivizes actions outside of social media leaving participants feeling they have already done their part (Schumann and Klein, 2015). This paper contends social media is a way to connect students and form bridges for national and international student activism.

Though not as advanced in its use of social media as the US, student activism in the UK is tapping into this medium. The CUSU Women's campaign recently released an open letter on Facebook asking for the 'criminal standard of proof' beyond reasonable doubt to be dropped in favour of 'more likely to be true than not true' (Caithlin, 2018). Ravensbourne University students in London have created GIFs and other assets for the UK version of Time'sUp (Ravensbourne University, 2019). Two male students from Warwick University were banned from the University in 2018 for ten years after it was found they were involved in a group chat aiming rape threats at women students at Warwick, this was later reduced to one year. Students utilised social media and one of the women targeted, released an open letter about the impact of this decision. Warwick University later reported that neither of the men would be returning to Warwick (Adams, 2019). Students from University of Oxford have set up a website where student survivors can share their stories of sexual violence (It Happens Here). Revolt Sexual Assault is an online student led campaign working to raise awareness of sexual violence in UK universities. They have mobilised snapchat encouraging students to share their experiences online using filters to conceal identity.

The US has a stronger lead in the use of social media as a platform. This is likely due to the higher awareness of this issue in general over the longer term. In the years leading up to Sulkowitz's Mattress Project, and well before #metoo became mainstream, a smaller number of college student survivors had already begun to use social media to tell their stories and raise awareness. One example is Angie Epifano, who published their experience of sexual assault and perceived mishandling of it by Amherst College administrators in the university paper in 2012. It was shared on social media, receiving 370,000 hits/views in just the first week of its publication (Hechinger, 2012). Feminist media outlets with large social media followings (e.g., feministing.com, jezebel.com) covered many of these public disclosures and began to post about sexual violence on campuses with greater frequency (Colby et al., 2010). During this time, two college student-created online pictorial disclosure campaigns (Project Unbreakable, Surviving in Numbers) took shape in an effort to combat rape myths and increase awareness of the prevalence of sexual violence. The impact of these earlier online awareness efforts is important to acknowledge, as they represent the seedlings in a connected and growing readiness for change model.

As well as receiving negative social media feedback, student activists have continued to thrive alongside the wake of increased public support of sexual violence survivors, making sure that important student-specific issue are included in #metoo conversations, for example, #metooPhD where graduate students have contributed (Hardy, 2018). The aim of #metooPhD was to create an online repository of anonymous accounts of sexual violence victimization experienced by anyone in academia. While #metooPhD was created by a non-student, many graduate students in particular submitted their stories of victimization, highlighting a type of student that had often been left out of the discussion of sexual violence on campuses and the reach of this extends beyond the US to Europe and other countries.

13

Challenges, opportunities and ways forward

In reviewing student activism in relation to sexual violence on campus the academics and student-author-activists writing this current paper collaboratively make the following recommendations, which may contribute to sustaining cultural change through community ownership of the issue.

Universities working in collaboration with student activists

Working in collaboration with student activists so that they feel free to express and explore better solutions in a culture of openness, may be part of the solution. Over recent years, there have been a number of successes for student activists. Some students have engaged as policy entrepreneurs, helping to advance critical policy changes (Kingdon, 1995, 2010) facilitating the progression of campuses to greater stages of readiness to address sexual violence (Edwards et al., 2015, 2016). An increase of awareness about sexual violence can normalise the conversation and provide more support for survivors to speak with authority, commanding respect. However, this may be at the expense of student activists own well-being (Deacon, 2014; Mekuto, 2019; Sharma, 2016; Vagianos, 2019; Whitfield and Dustin, 2016). Greater institutional support may go some way to ameliorating this.

Universities in both countries have not progressed equally in their readiness to change, with some institutions still failing to adequately protect their students, remaining in the 'denial' phase in the stages of change (Edwards et al., 2015, 2016). Though institutions may view collaboration as risky, we conversely recommend that universities instead see this as a way to be dynamically at the forefront of change beyond 'token' involvement of students. Collaboration between student activists and universities may demonstrate a promising move in terms of community ownership of responsibility for sexual violence prevention (Edwards et al. 2015, 2016).

Questions remain about if and how universities can move forward given that other policy streams such as the current administration in the US have shifted. This highlights the potential for a shifting role of student activists to keep sexual violence on the agenda. This would require a cultural shift from closure to openness, where universities that have high levels of activism and foster close working with students in responding to sexual violence are viewed as pro-active leaders of change, rather than having a more prevalent issue of sexual violence. Thus, we make some recommendations specifically regarding development of the CCREM (Edwards et al. 2015, 2016). We recommend that this model include further items of measurement, for example,

developing the model to include measures, which consider whether student activists feel supported in their student activism.

Connecting student activists

Continuing to find ways to connect student activists across institutions and countries is critical to support isolated students, keep the issue on the agenda and provide a collective space where activism leading to cultural change can grow, rather than fade (Kingdon, 1995, 2010). Social media is one way to achieve this. Our review of the literature did not identify that universities across countries were sharing activism, but that there was some evidence of this occurring across institutions within countries, particularly in the US and to a lesser extent in the UK. Connecting student activism in ways supportive of transitional change, given the transient nature of students on campus, is important. Chessum (2014: 1) notes:

> One of the greatest weaknesses of student activism is its lack of memory, and the inability or refusal of those who have been involved for a long time to pass down what they have learned.

The turnover rate of college students means that advocacy must be passed down each year, making recruitment a constant focus of activism. Empowering students and trusting them to be a part of the movement is how activism is sustained over the years. Graduating students can pass the baton to other students who will continue the work. Management of transitional issues through online student activism, providing a digital history of the shared experience of sexual violence, may be one way to achieve this. Online student activism can provide an online repository of past action, Whitford (2019) refers to this as 'institutional memory':

> "One of the things that I've seen over decades in terms of where students win real victories that are lasting and sustainable, is often you have student institutions that provide you with institutional memory," Johnston said. Creating a place for that information to live is crucial. Without it, college officials can wait out student movements knowing that when a new crop of students arrives, they'll have to start from scratch (p. 2-3).

In addition, student activists must consistently find ways to engage other students in the work to help frame this as a community issue. Student activism helps to involve those that do not have direct experience of sexual violence by highlighting the issue and allowing them to relate to it. It is important to move away from a narrative that puts the entire responsibility of stopping sexual violence on sexual violence survivors. Understood in this way, higher levels of community readiness may be achieved moving more firmly into the sustainability stages of readiness where a majority feel as if they too have ownership of this issue (Edwards et.al., 2015, 2016).

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[1] We recognise the use of different terms, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct. We acknowledge the difference in these terms, and default to the term sexual violence, except where quoting others' work or statistics that use alternative terms.

[2] Student-activist-author refers to the role of two students who contributed to this paper throughout, commenting on drafts and contributing their own voice to this work, also collaborating with recommendations.

[3] The two authors are highlighted in the following reference: Edwards, K.M., Moynihan, M.M., Rodenhizer-Stämpfli, K.A., **Demers, J.M. and Banyard, V.L.** (2015) 'Campus Community Readiness to Engage Measure: Its Utility for Campus Violence Prevention Initiatives—Preliminary Psychometrics', *Violence and Gender* 2 (4): 214-224.

[4] 'Lad culture', a 'pack mentality', which may be found to contribute to 'rape supportive attitudes, and occasionally spilled over into sexual harassment and violence' (NUS, 2013: 28).