

**A Systems Change Approach to Addressing Sexual Violence at Yale
University**

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This paper aims to identify the systems influencing sexual violence on U.S. college campuses, specifically at Yale University. To accomplish this, three major questions will be addressed using systems-change concepts, including USAID's 5 Rs Framework, Donella Meadows "Leverage Points: Places to Intervene in a System," and feedback loops:

1. What systems need to change in order to enable a safe environment for reporting sexual violence?
2. What will incentivize individual survivors of sexual violence to report?
3. What does restorative justice look like in this context?

Recent accounts of sexual violence have brought light to an ongoing problem for U.S. universities: incidents of sexual violence are prevalent across college campuses and reporting of such incidents is lacking, causing insufficient data, statistics, and funding to combat this issue with effective programs. Studies from the Association of American Universities (AAU), the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), and the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ), show both an increase in programming and data collection aimed at addressing this issue, but also that reporting of sexual violence is severely deficient with 80% of rape and sexual assaults going unreported from the period of 1995-2013 (2017 Annual Report, 2018) (Langton & Sinozich, 2014). While there is a renewed call to action to reduce these types of incidents on college campuses, there remains a significant gap between reporting and prevalence rates indicating that challenges to reporting sexual violence still exist. This is partially due to a lack of clarity within policies on sexual violence and a lack of knowledge on the scope of these problems (Graham et al., 2017). 90% of colleges define sexual harassment and assault policies, but 13% of these policies do not include a definition of consent; of those that do, the definitions vary greatly and are worded vaguely (Graham et al., 2017) (Weiss & Lasky, 2017).

Two specific incidents sparked national debate and public outrage in the 1980's which contributed heavily to sexual violence being taken more seriously across U.S. college campuses. After public outrage in how the University of New Hampshire (UNH) responded to a gang rape in 1987, the university changed its judicial hearing process for sexual assault cases and created Sexual Harassment and Rape Prevention Program (SHARPP); the second U.S. rape crisis center to open on a college campus ever (SHARPP, 1970). Princeton experienced similar public pressure after a tape of fraternity brothers shouting, "We can rape whoever we want" at a "Take Back the Night" vigil made its way into national media attention (Kitchener, 2014). In response, Princeton established SHARE, and over the course of the program's first three years, students using its services grew fivefold (Kitchener, 2014). SHARE and SHARPP at UNH contributed to an increased prevalence of reporting sexual violence and the creation of similar services being offered at other schools (Malone, S., 2014). While such programs have grown over the years, they have yet to become the norm for all U.S. universities.

Using the concept of USAID's 5 Rs framework, this paper explores the results, roles, relationships, rules, and resources of Yale to better understand the scope of sexual violence taking place on campus (Walker, 2017). At Yale, more than 50% of victims of sexual harassment are acquainted with their harasser, and this number grows when looked at nationally (Yale University, 2018) (Zinzow & Thompson, 2011). Privacy protections are offered to victims by restricting contact with their assailants, but disturbance to the lives of the victims still occurs. Yale's reporting of sexual violence nearly tripled from 2015 to 2018, which is alarming, since

one survey showed that 72% of survivors showed reluctance to report, meaning that many assaults are going uncounted in this data (Yale University Title IX, 2018). Notable results from the Yale University 2015 AAU survey showed that students did not think the crime was serious enough to report; 36% believed the alleged offender would retaliate against the victim; only 50% believed campus authorities would take the report seriously and protect the victim's safety; which indicates a lack of confidence in the system (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015). There are many challenges for those who have experienced sexual assault, including stigma, shame, emotionally difficulties, fear of contradicting social norms, and lack of confidence in the school supporting them (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015). When looking to better understand what is holding sexual violence in place, elements include: status quo, silence by victims and bystanders, time-limits on reporting, confusion, lack of punishment, and lack of awareness on educational programs. Reviewing Yale's 2015 AAU survey, victims often report they did not know where to go, who to tell, that they felt shame, and believed it to be too emotionally difficult to report. Nearly 14% of victims did not think anyone would believe them (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015).

There are many actors in the system of sexual violence in the U.S.: government (e.g. federal, state, local), citizens, institutions, families, friends, students, and faculty). Students play a key role in peer education, ally-ship, and as bystanders. Since 87% of victims at Yale confide their assaults in friends, this is the first step Yale should take in implementing an intervention (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015). Faculty at Yale are another underutilized resource: professors and staff can recognize signs of violence and abuse and help take the appropriate steps to report it. Professors and faculty are the ideal role models to whom students should feel comfortable and safe in confiding assaults.

The relationships that exist among this system's actors can be classified two ways: formal and informal. The relationship between Yale, its faculty, and students is very formal, governed by rules and a hierarchical power structure. Between students and faculty, there is also a power dynamic, which is also governed by established rules and protocols. Informal relationships are mainly between students, governed by culture, stigma and norms. Using these relationships to leverage systems change, Yale must look at the conflicts within these relationships to inform its prevention efforts to combat sexual violence.

There are two major formal rules that help to govern sexual violence on U.S. campuses: the Clery Act and Title IX (White House Task Force., 2014). The Clery Act requires institutions to provide students and employees, on an ongoing basis, prevention and awareness programs on the crimes that take place on campus, including materials on bystander interventions and risk reduction aimed at recognizing warning signs of sexual violence (Clearly Center, 2018). Title IX (1972) is a law that protects people from sexual discrimination at institutions that receive federal financial assistance (Yale University Title IX, 2018). Informal rules also influence the system of sexual violence. Culture, patriarchy, toxic masculinity, and rites of passage, influence the social norms at colleges. From these, social pressures arise, including negative pressure from peers, which may lead to sexual violence. Positive pressure can help mitigate this negative feedback loop, such as engaging in consent education and bystander prevention programs to address and highlight sexual violence. This helps increase reporting rates, response rates, and prevention. Other positive pressures include protests. Today on Yale's campus there are student walkouts

and other forms of public protest in response to the Kavanaugh Supreme Court hearings and in light of the #MeToo movement.

The #MeToo movement has caused an increase in sexual violence reporting, indicating positive social pressure helps victims come forward when they see reporting normalized (Maxouris & Ahmed, 2018). As the #MeToo movement shows: reputation is critical. U.S. universities have more to lose when they ignore sexual violence, as has been shown at Princeton and UNH. #MeToo is helping put social pressure on colleges to do more in response to sexual violence, which helps break positive feedback loops that perpetuate the status quo.

Yale has multiple resources to address sexual violence, but its data shows that reporting is still insufficient, and sexual violence is ongoing. Current Yale resources include: Sexual Misconduct Response, SHARE, Yale Police, University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct, Office for Equal Opportunity Programs, Office of Gender and Campus Culture, as well as several apps and the “Blue Lights” on campus with emergency call buttons (Sexual Misconduct Response & Prevention, 2018) (Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education Center, 2018) (Yale Police Department, 2018) (University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct, 2018) (Office for Equal Opportunity Programs, 2018) (Office of Gender and Campus Culture, 2018). SHARE offers services for reporting, professional help, medical and health assistance, and will also accompany a student for evidence collection after an assault. The University-Wide Committee on Sexual Misconduct is Yale’s disciplinary board for sexual misconduct, where students can seek advice and resolution. Members include faculty, staff, and students and it is supported by independent investigators.

There are many existing structures to enable reporting of sexual violence, both on a federal, state, local, and institutional-level for Yale students, and yet reporting is still not at 100%. This requires several changes, both on the formal and informal levels. Reporting increases as new intervention programs are established and implemented (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015). This provides insight and opportunity for how Yale can tackle this issue and bring sexual violence reporting to 100%: time and funding should be allocated in greater numbers to educational programs, trainings, and services.

Another element in this system that has not been discussed is the lack of accountability by those committing these crimes, which is influenced by ineffective punishments by the current system. This change requires social shifts in current norms to place pressure on schools to follow-through on investigating reports and ensure assailants do not go unpunished. One successful example of leveraging this type of change using social pressures comes from Ma Jun in his work with IPE: Yale should focus on making its data robust and leverage it to push for change beyond the institutional-level to the state and federal levels.

To incentivize individual survivors of sexual violence to report their assaults requires informal rule and relationship changes. Currently, Yale students do not believe that their reports will be taken seriously, or that any meaningful results will come from reporting (Yale University 2015 AAU, 2015). Yale should use its data, such as the 87% of students who report their assaults to friends and fellow students, as evidence to change reporting structures to incentivize survivors to report. Yale must shift the risk of reporting away from the victims and onto the assailants. If those who commit these crimes were held accountable, like a zero-tolerance policy by the

school, survivors may have more incentive to report. This shift would indicate more trust in the institution.

While Yale has made strides in creating new sexual educational programming, there is still room for additional trainings, specifically aimed at consent, that would benefit the university. Examples like UNH's consent education programs on training bystanders have shown great results at increasing knowledge and awareness among the entire student body about consent and what constitutes sexual violence (Kitchener, 2014). Yale's Consent Educations program is relatively new, so robust program evaluation would be beneficial to capture the outcomes of that program.

Finding leverage points will be crucial to making systems changes regarding sexual violence at Yale. In the case of incentivizing victims of sexual violence to report, one leverage point is to change the goal of the system (Meadows, 1999). The goal of college sexual violence reporting systems should focus on creating an environment that enables victims, bystanders, friends, and faculty to be heard. As Meadows points out in leveraging public perceptions, the voices of the majority can often make a big impact (Meadows, 1999). Currently, uniformity among students in defining and acknowledging sexual violence is inconsistent. To address changing public perception, Yale should use Meadow's 6th leverage point: The structure of information flows (who does and does not have access to information). Yale needs to use the statistics it produces from surveys to redirect focus on ensuring that each student has a firm understanding of sexual violence and consent. In time, increasing knowledge among Yale students could flow into Meadow's 5th leverage point: The rules of the system (e.g. incentives, punishments, constraints) (Meadows, 1999). Colleges respond to social pressure as do policies. Public pressure needs to be consistent within the Yale community, using the university's statistics and consent education as evidence for why reforming policies around punishing assailants is needed. In order for Yale to be successful, it must incorporate those most affected by these crimes (survivors), to be involved in designing new programs, or when deciding funding allocation for programs. As shown in the Nidan study, bringing the people most impacted by the issues on board and giving them leadership roles creates capacity-building and achieves systemic change by ensuring that changes are reflective of the needs of those impacted by the issue.

Moving forward, there is still a question that has gone unanswered: what is the role of restorative justice for those who perpetrate sexual violence? This is a particularly difficult topic, but one that is necessary to explore to address systems changes for sexual violence. An aspect of this system that has been drastically overlooked is: what happens to the assailants? Where is the data on those who commit these crimes? At this time, punishments for sexual violence within U.S. universities is limited, often due to a lack of evidence. Time and time again, as with UNH, Columbia, Stanford, and others, defendants of sexual assaults at universities are let off with lenient sentencing, or no repercussions at all (Taylor, 2017) (SHARPP, 1970) (Miller, 2016). This needs to change in order for survivors to engage within this system. Survivors will continue to be de-incentivized to report until they know the system will believe them and that actual legal repercussions will ensue.

There is another actor currently de-incentivized to engage within this system: those who commit these crimes. Certain groups of people within the U.S. are questioning if the societal ostracization of those who commit these crimes is reasonable (Evans, 2017). This discussion further speaks to the lack of consistent education around sexual violence and defining consent.

However, this also begs the question: what is the next step beyond the #MeToo movement to address this system, with all actors involved?

Restorative justice focuses on the general recovery from an incident for the victim, perpetrator, and their community. Restorative justice takes the approach of advocating for an appropriate response to sexual violence (i.e. harsher and most strict punishments), and providing a pathway for what comes next for both the victim and the assailant. Helping those who commit crimes recover from them and giving them a pathway to move forward is a crucial element to justice (Harris, 2011). For restorative justice to be useful, awareness of sexual violence must increase and schools must create more robust efforts to combat these issues beyond reporting statistics - a social and cultural shift must occur. Steps for this type of change are already happening: new programs are being implemented and public pressures are becoming more prominent. Yale can capitalize on these efforts by engaging survivors into the planning and implementation process of sexual educational programs and services, and the school can review its current judicial processes to identify gaps and create new policies to ensure that assailants are held accountable. Yale can begin now to implement restorative justice to combat sexual violence by engaging with all actors involved (undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff). When definitions, policies, and social and cultural expectations become clearer, everyone who engages within the Yale community will have a better understanding of what constitutes sexual violence, and what they can do to help ensure it no longer occurs. This increase in awareness will help increase reporting, but most importantly this will help shift social norms around reporting, and what is considered the “norm” around sexual violence.

Group Feedback Session: Our group met and conducted our feedback session on Wednesday, October 10, 2018. Everyone agreed that we worked well together and engaged meaningfully on this project, and did substantive work related to the project.

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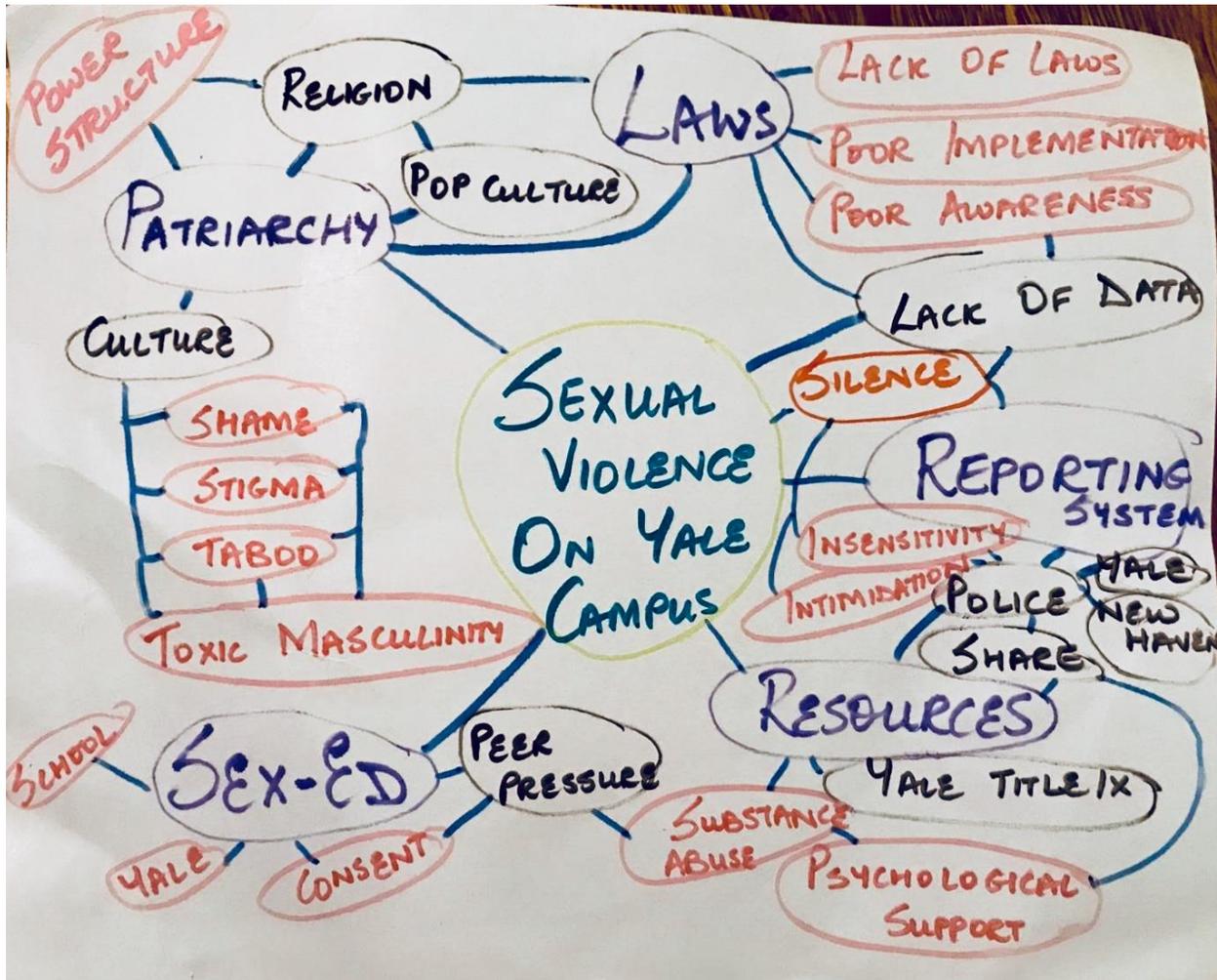
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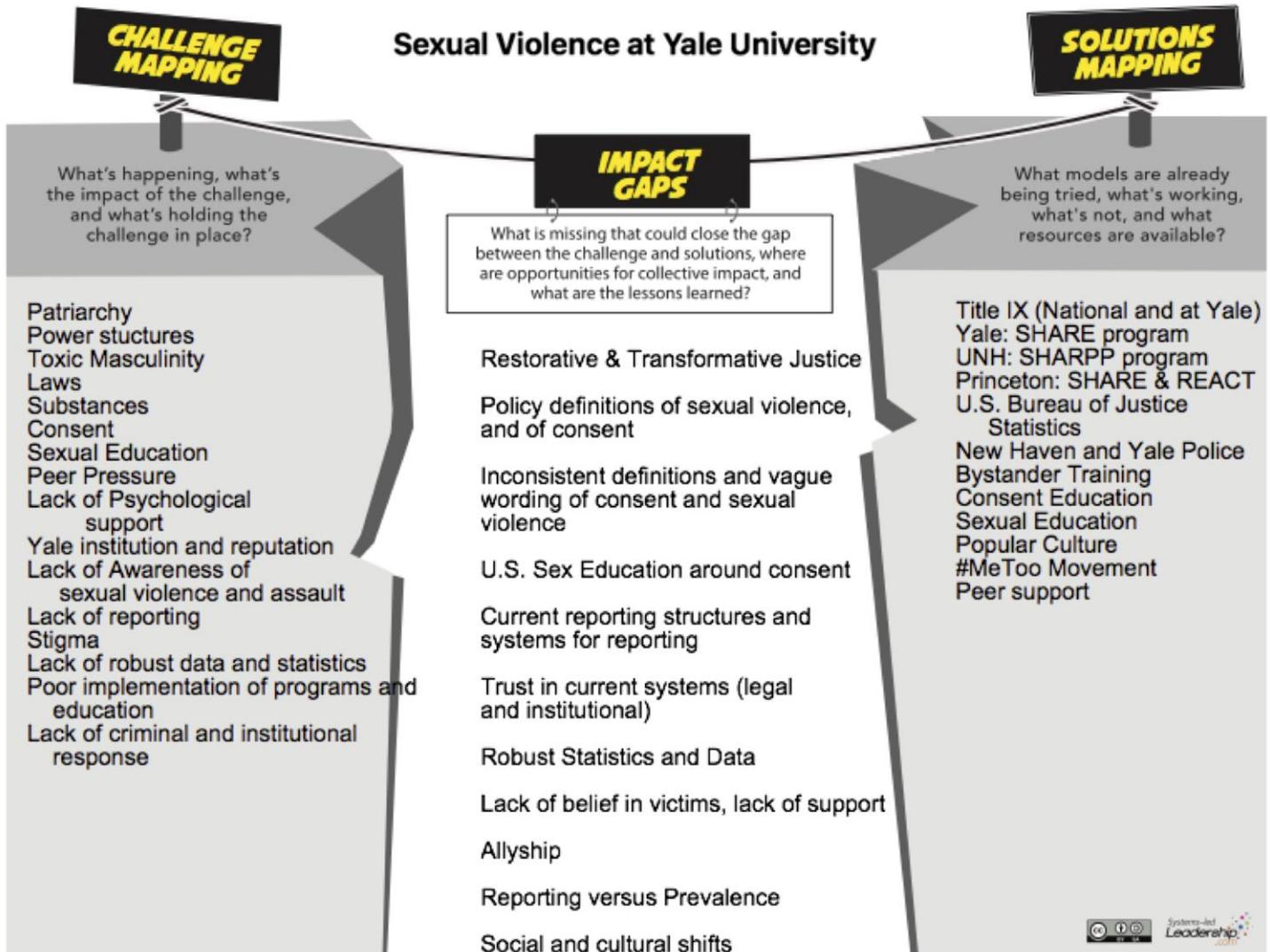
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Systems Map





Feedback Loops

Negative feedback loop

In the article 'Leverage points' (Donella H. Meadows 1997), the author used two negative feedback loops combined together to explain how to keep the temperature constant in a room. The main idea of the negative feedback loop is eliminating the unwanted behaviors to an acceptable extent using negative feedbacks like punishment, ignorance, criticism, and so on or used reversed behaviors or mechanism. In our project, the negative feedback loop can explain why there are so few reports on sexual violence and how this loop could help reduce the sexual violence.

Why report rate on sexual violence is so low



Why negative feedback loop could help reduce sexual violence

