

REWRITING PATRIARCHAL NORMS IN ACADEMIA:  
INVITATIONAL RHETORIC IN A CROWDSOURCED SURVEY

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts  
in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric  
in the College of Arts and Humanities  
at the University of Central Florida  
Orlando, Florida

Summer Term  
2018

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis seeks to understand the how texts are constructed to forward feminist communicative objectives through a case study of Dr. Karen Kelsky's "A Crowdsourced Survey of Sexual Harassment in the Academy." In this research, sexual harassment is understood as an act of power, sexual in nature, enacted by faculty or staff (employed or contracted in different capacities) in their relations with other faculty or staff, who are often lower ranking. By adopting invitational rhetoric as a theoretical framework, this thesis examines the way Dr. Karen Kelsky's crowdsourced survey creates the space to articulate and elevate often suppressed personal testimony regarding sexual harassment. By welcoming, and then displaying, narratives that have been deliberately silenced over the course of history, Kelsky's spreadsheet showcases a collective consciousness surrounding sexual harassment in academia.

The current scholarship surrounding feminist communicative praxis highlights the importance of the written personal narrative as meaning-making and as a reflective practice, especially through the medium of journaling. However, this research examines how texts can employ personal testimony to co-create meaning as a mode of resistance. In particular, Kelsky's artifacts create a space that privileges and displays situated knowledge about sexual harassment that has been otherwise obfuscated. By conducting a feminist rhetorical analysis, this thesis argues that Kelsky's artifacts perform invitational rhetoric that mediates situated knowledge surrounding sexual harassment in the academic workplace. Reflection and dialogue shape the nature of storytelling as evoked by the survey, which are approached by this thesis as feminist communicative praxes that are activated throughout engagement with the artifacts.

For Mom and Dad

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the individuals who contributed to this research and my academic career in meaningful ways:

Thank you first to Dr. Wheeler for guiding me through my ongoing graduate career and finally, this thesis. Over the last three years, you've been able to stimulate my personal and professional growth without obfuscating the extracurricular qualities that make me who I am. Without your generosity, I would not have a project that captures so well the kind of professional I am becoming.

Thank you to my committee for the thoughtful questions and comments that helped shape my ideas into a researchable project and my writing into a clear and comprehensive argument.

Thank you to my professors, who have helped me discover the academic interests that I expect will color my career for years to come: Dr. Rounsaville, Dr. Brenckle, Dr. Miller, and Dr. Applen.

Thank you to my fellow Knights from diverse fields and disciplines who have enriched my academic experience with invaluable support, insights, and encouragement.

Thank you, most of all, to my unconditional support system at home. Family, friends, and my loved one, because of you, I can face each day.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

*The first problem for all of us, men and women, is not to learn, but to unlearn.* –Gloria Steinem

On October 5th of 2017, The New York Times published an article that brought the culture of silence to its limit: Harvey Weinstein completed a trifecta of iconic abusers led by Bill Cosby and Donald Trump, who, months prior, had been ousted by the media for sexist views and sexual harassment charges. Now, with Weinstein facing accusations from eighty-four women, he finds himself sacked by the board of The Weinstein Company, left by his wife, and dismissed from various Hollywood, national, and international academies, societies, and guilds. With extreme action being taken against a Hollywood mogul of Weinstein's magnitude, those who had suffered at the hands of notable figures began to come forward, spawning the term "The Weinstein Effect." With the Effect spreading across fields and disciplines, a viral hashtag began to host narratives of survivors of sexual harassment known as the #metoo movement.

Karen Kelsky, a former tenured professor who runs the academic job consulting business *The Professor Is In*, and a blog of the same name, started an online survey on December 1st of 2017 called "A Crowdsourced Survey of Sexual Harassment in the Academy." It prompts participants to share what happened and when, what the harasser's gender and position relative to the survivor were at the time (professor, mentor etc.), institution type and field, institutional responses and career consequences for the harasser (if any), and the impact of harassment on the career and health of the person who experienced it. She saw her exigence in constructing the #metoo moment for academics, using a common data collection method for the social sciences and humanities: A crowdsourced survey (Laherty). In her introductory blog post that hosts the link to the survey, Dr. Kelsky states:

The sum total of these...entries allows everyone to see that sexual predation is endemic to the power hierarchies of the academy in ways that almost perfectly parallel Hollywood: Powerful older men are gatekeepers to vulnerable younger women, use their power for sexual predation, and are then protected by other senior men and women invested more in preserving the power structure than in defending victims. Women of color are doubly vulnerable and doubly bullied when they see redress.

The millennia-old hierarchies of the academic world, the intimate nature of most scholarly fields and disciplines, the male dominance of virtually every field other than women's studies, and budding scholars' critical dependence on references for career advancement make for conditions in which abuse of all kinds can run rampant with reprieve.

While collegiality and commitment to research, scholarship, and learning are common aspects of academic culture, the hierarchical and likely autonomous structures that govern universities foster an environment where sexual harassment goes largely unaddressed, completely ignored, and often, intentionally suppressed. While administrations may have a multitude of justifications for this, in general, the desire to keep the image of the ivory tower pristine and beyond moral indiscretions seems like a driving force. Historically, incidents of sexual violence on campuses of higher education have been handled in an informal capacity by administration (Sloan & Fisher, Sloan, J. J., & Fisher, B. S.). To avoid both staining the school's reputation with the ugly truth of sexual harassment and negatively affecting student enrollment (and thus, revenue), administrators tend to sweep sexual violence into the dark corners of the ivory tower, thereby silencing the voices of survivors. Not only is this an unjust way to treat



individuals post-trauma, but the lack of accountability and punishment of the offender, coupled with the intent to cover-up any damages by the institution, leaves other unknowing faculty, staff, and students exposed to predators.

I wish to amplify the voices of survivors of sexual harassment in academic environments by exploring the way texts are rhetorically constituted to host, elevate, and disseminate public narratives. For example, one victim of sexual harassment stemming from an abuse of power writes about the long-term impact of her experience, illustrating a call to administrators in her submission to Kelsky's survey:

It is the single defining situation in my life – career and otherwise. I pray the others are spared this agony... This predator took advantage of my vulnerability – as he put it, “when I first met you, I knew I could do whatever I wanted to you.” [...] But this is what happens to people like me in the academy – the marginal of the ivory tower. We are subject to predators like this – and sadly, the institutions we depend on to protect and educate us, fail us entirely; instead, these elite institutions offer us up as a yet another perk to their gull professors who have everything and nothing to lose. From this experience, I have learned that my life is less valuable than that of a sexual predator because he is a full tenured professor. I have learned that if I complain, I will find my job is suddenly without funding, and other colleagues in my field won't support me. These are terrible lessons to learn – and I pray that someday they won't have to be learned by anyone because they won't exist anymore. The only way to ensure that this kind of exploitation and abuse stops is for universities to take sexual harassment

serious – ZERO TOLERANCE – to fire the perpetrator (tenured or otherwise)  
AND those in the administration and faculty who protect them. It is time for  
universities to protect the vulnerable in the community so that the university can  
be space for EVERYONE. (479)

The testimony represented above demonstrates how the victim sees her position in academia. While it was one perpetrator who targeted her and abused her, she identifies the responsibility within the power structure of universities to set boundaries that prevent future instances of abuse. The nature of the survey demonstrates a resistance to the patriarchal structure of power in academia by aiming to uncover narratives unacknowledged by the hierarchical institution of higher education.

In order to articulate the dynamics at play, I draw from feminist rhetorical theory to recognize oppressive patriarchal forces, as well as the alternative to patriarchal understandings of communication within academic disciplines. To guide my research, I pose several research questions including:

- How are the survey and spreadsheet enacting feminist rhetorical practice?
- How do the artifacts push back against the kind of oppressive patriarchal forces that allow sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination in academia?
- What emerges from a space that privileges feminist communicative practice?

With the intention to break the cycle of academic institutions serving the status quo, power dynamics that continually marginalize women as contributing members of the academy must be explicitly identified in order for institutions to better embody particular feminist values such as social justice, inclusion, and safety, a few seminal objectives (Foss, Foss, and Griffin). In order

to support the resistance of patriarchal forces in academic institutions, I employ “Sexual Harassment in the Academy: A Crowdsourced Survey” as a research site made up of a survey and spreadsheet developed by Dr. Karen Kelsky, of *The Professor Is In* ([www.theprofessorisin.com](http://www.theprofessorisin.com)), where the spreadsheet serves as a corpus for the narrative survey responses surrounding sexual violence.

Through feminist rhetorical analysis I argue that Kelsky’s artifacts perform invitational rhetoric that mediates situated knowledge surrounding sexual harassment in the academic workplace. To support this research, adopting feminist rhetorical perspectives provides the language to acknowledge dominant power dynamics while maintaining the privilege of personal testimony. The intent of this argument is three-fold: 1) To forward Kelsky’s exigence in realizing the depth and breadth of institutionalized silence, the culture of denial, and perpetuation of rape culture within academic institutions, 2) to demonstrate the how artifacts are constructed as feminist texts, and 3) to examine the implications of feminist communicative praxis. It is not enough to file away a report; an absolutely imperative element to the evolution of the academy is critical self-reflection on the way central values, principles, and beliefs manifest in the experience of its members. This kind of reflection may be brought about by elevating the voices of survivors who have been historically and systemically failed by the keepers and profiteers of patriarchal power structures.

### **Institutional Context**

The term “sexual harassment” can be understood as an act of power, sexual in nature, enacted by faculty or staff (employed or contracted in different capacities) in their relations with other faculty or staff, who are often lower ranking (Page). In addition, sexual harassment,

assault, grooming, sexual coercion, stalking, and other overtly psychologically or physiologically abusive interactions are not the only ways to constitute sexual harassment. It may also include consensual sexual relations where the power imbalance between parties implies that the relations can have a negative impact on well-being, engagement at the workplace, and career advancement (Page). Consequently, sexual harassment and assault are often the result of an abuse of power, whether it be authoritative power, power derived from notoriety, or power from the privilege of significant social standing.

Whether discussing any dimension of sexual harassment, the occurrence and severity of these interactions in academic environments continues to be not just ignored, but incubated through institutionalized silence (Gialospos). The problem of sexual harassment is often framed as that of individual perpetrators, rather than that of an entrenched culture of denial. Since sexual harassment, unintended or not, is a deeply ingrained social disorder, institutionalized silence presents itself as a buffer that perpetuates willful negligence regarding the responsibility of safeguarding students and faculty. Institutionalized silence will be used henceforth to refer to the demonstration of silence within institutions governed by behavioral norms that deny injustices committed against non-dominant populations.

What's more, institutions need to hold themselves accountable for ensuring equal access to upward mobility and safety in higher education for all. Robin Nelson, an assistant professor of biological anthropology at Santa Clara University, draws a correlation between academic norms and abusive behavior when she says, "In institutional structures that are set up so one individual has power over the career trajectory of another, there's always the possibility of abuse." Here, Dr. Nelson cites the way hierarchical infrastructure sets up a breeding ground for cycles of

abuse, where the instigator is often a person favored by patriarchal standards. The type of interpersonal reliance that academia necessitates in terms of upward mobility creates a dangerous terrain for vulnerable populations to navigate. From this, toxic narratives are created with lasting effects.

Victims of sexual harassment in academic environments, specifically, can experience mental health issues, feel unsafe on campus, relinquish teaching work, alter or interrupt their studies, or drop out of education altogether. Yet, the existing hierarchical structures and processes aim to keep the problem and its impact on involved parties hidden from public knowledge, even after the passing of Title IX. If a victim makes a complaint to their institution, there is currently no requirement for the institution to inform them of the action (or lack of action) taken against an abuser. What's more is that "universities routinely ask both students and staff to sign non-disclosure agreements that prevent any discussion of disciplinary proceedings brought against staff" (Page). These contracts, though willingly signed, generate a culture of silence and denial that protects perpetrators, even while the contract is framed in terms of protecting the reputation of the survivor. If the individual does find the courage, support, or willpower to speak up and chooses to put his or her livelihood on the line, the truth is often snuffed out without any course of action that may actually result in prevention or justice for the survivor.

Because of the lack of action taken by those in power and the fear of encountering the perpetrator on campus, survivors frequently choose to leave the particular institution and/or higher education altogether, or suffer backlash from the academic community (Gialopsos). The systematic protection of abusers over survivors demonstrates the "sheer force of patriarchal

solidarity in keeping powerful men safe and insulated from consequences” (Flaherty). More specifically, there are recurrent consequences for women in the academy, in terms of women’s lost, or “revised” contributions when they deal with the residue of harassment. Another aspect of protection for perpetrators is evident when considering the perceived social capital of powerful male scholars. Robin Nelson, professor at Santa Clara University, points to the tolerance fostered within academic culture when she says, “We have got to stop valuing individual scholars over the physical safety and mental health of everyone in our field.” These trends point firmly at institutionalized silence in academia, and the oppression of largely female voices.

With statistics reflecting a female-majority suffering sexual harassment, implications of value of presence and of intellectual contributions from female scholars and budding female scholars are discouraging. For example, Carlo A. Pedrioli has conducted research that indicates that “women as a group continue to have second-class status in U.S. academia. Research data show that since the early 1970’s the presence of women in academia has not improved satisfactorily and that women’s salaries have not improved at all” (214). Presently, a female full professor earned 88 cents for each dollar a male full professor earns (Pedrioli 190-191). Although improved from the early 1970s, the disproportionately low presence of women in academia remains notable.

Today, women still lag behind men in tenure-track positions and tenure held. For instance, 77.3% of women in academia hold tenure-track positions, compared to 88.3% of men. At the same time, 48.2% of women have achieved tenure, while 68.2% of men have achieved tenure (Pedrioli 189). The average male to female salary for full professors today is \$80,860 to \$71,419, respectively. The average male to female salary ratio for associate professors is \$58,941

to \$54,638, respectively. The problem most clearly becomes apparent with the average male to female salary ratio for assistant professors, which is \$49,015 to \$45,437.3, respectively (Pedrioli 190). Then, it follows that the institution that pays men higher starting salaries than it pays women to do the same jobs hosts a deeper problem than equitable pay alone; the institution has a mind-set that tolerates gender-based discrimination.

Regardless, women still hold academic positions in lower percentages than they hold professional and research doctorates. As noted above, women earn well over 40% of the doctorates awarded in the U.S. today, yet women hold only approximately one-third of the tenure-track positions in U.S. higher education (Pedrioli 189). This kind of discrepancy merits further interrogation. Socialized in the U.S. not to ask for what they want, many women end up not negotiating their salaries while seeking employment. The results of such behavior can have a critical impact on women's starting salaries, which then impact earnings over time. The numbers point to the way institutionalized silence creates workplace environments that represent a more likely potential danger zone for women than men, reducing female representation and intellectual contribution across disciplines.

The university campus is often something of a second home to academic persons, where they spend a considerable amount of time carving out a life's work. Therefore, it should be a top priority of administrators, faculty, staff, and students to foster a safe space for engagement, learning, and productivity. Contrarily, the culture of silence that surrounds sexual harassment by colleagues and authority figures only perpetuates rape culture and an underwhelming representation of female voices. The mental and physical health consequences of sexual harassment, both short and long term, can be devastating and life changing. Fear of retaliation,

alienation, and public shame are barriers to the exposure of sexual abuse, especially in academia, where career aspirations are vulnerable to public scrutiny (Gialopsos). Furthermore, victim shaming, defined as placing partial or total responsibility for the harm experienced by a survivor on his or herself, is commonplace in workplace culture at-large; thus, institutionalizing silence across industries.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

*When the building blocks of abuse are dismantled, power structures become weak and destructible. –Unknown*

Analyzing Kelsky's survey and spreadsheet as a rhetorical text will provide context for the way resistance is constructed and will give opportunity for reproducibility. In the interest of resisting patriarchal forces, I take a feminist critical approach to a rhetorical analysis of the survey. Thus, this research design provides a comprehensive rhetorical analysis that reflects the social implications of choices made in text construction and how those choices shape the type of responses that get submitted. Considering the survey artifact with critical feminism will shed light on how the survey represents feminist values of inclusion and validation of lived experience, values often undermined within patriarchal structures that can be used as a means to resist oppression.

### **Critical Feminism**

Critical feminism is the extension of feminism into theoretical discourse across disciplines; including but not limited to anthropology and sociology, communication and media studies, psychology, English, education, and philosophy. Taken as a whole, the body of critical feminism underscores the cultural, historical, and linguistic construction of human identity and the social experience. With a central presence in the arts, social sciences, and humanities, critical feminism seeks to redefine research methods to better navigate these types of qualitative inquiry; this school of thought seeks to embrace the social and situated nature of knowledge created within the arts, social sciences, and humanities. A main reason to adopt such a perspective on the creation of knowledge is due to the subject matter within these disciplines stemming largely from

texts or events that can only be individually interpreted. Thus, it follows that the various perspectives interpreting the events are valuable; to disclaim objective standards of truth is not to disclaim all value judgments.

Largely, critical feminism takes up considerations surrounding the nature of gender and sex inequality, roles and identity performance, and the way experiences are shaped by identity markers and social infrastructure. On a methodological level, critical feminism is a deconstructive framework that aspires to examine the world in ways that correspond to the experiences of non-dominant populations so as to identify fundamental social transformations necessary for an equitable society. In general, critical feminist studies begin with concrete experiences that rely on theory for a deeper understanding of the forces and factors that shape the experience, building from the ground up. More specifically, themes that come up in critical feminist discourse explore access, discrimination, objectification, oppression, patriarchy, autonomy, and agency. In order to challenge the current distribution of power, these foci are unlikely to be obtained under the existing ideological and institutional structures.

Feminist researchers seek to explain the misrepresentation or lack of representation of the feminine perspective throughout history and fill the gap across disciplines for two key reasons: 1) To guide, enable, and support the struggle against discrimination and violence, and 2) to develop and test policies and procedures that help marginalized peoples gain equal access to individual, economic, and political resources.

### **History**

Studies informed by critical feminism have evolved with the phases of feminism that first emerged in the late eighteenth century and extend into the present. A core strength of critical

feminist thought is its origination in the experience of being dominated, not just thinking about domination. A common critique of the evolution of feminist ideology is the overlap between the wave-like phases of feminism (first, second, third, and fourth). A major exigence of first-wave feminism was women's suffrage, and other tangible rights (Wollstonecraft; Truth; Anthony). For example, Susan B. Anthony posed questions surrounding the language, such as the universal "he" and other gendered linguistic norms that do not specify women, found in foundational American texts and government documents.

Second-Wave feminism is a middle child of four feminist movements (Mitchell; de Beauvoir; Friedan; Rich; French; Reed). In her book, *The Second Sex*, French feminist Simone de Beauvoir wrote to diagnose the way patriarchal norms reduce women to bleeding vessels of milk, uterine lining, and babies, resulting in a male-dominated societal practice. de Beauvoir is considered a catalyst for the renewal of feminist thought after World War II, where nuclear-family relations in the United States reflected a return to the domesticity of women. Thus, critical feminism began to take up questions such as: What is a woman? If de Beauvoir's treatise was the spark for second-wave feminism, *The Feminine Mystique* by Betty Friedan was its declaration. Friedan's work forwarded critical feminist thought by unpacking the concept of "woman" in a patriarchal social structure. Further, critical feminists such as Adrienne Rich and Evelyn Reed wrote to reject determinism and the inherently patriarchal nature of capitalism. Other developments made during the second-wave of feminism of the 1960's and 70's include moves to obtain equal pay for equal work, legalize abortion, federally-fund day care programs, and extend affirmative action to include women.

While Friedan has been critiqued for her focus on white women, her aim was an objection to the glorification of domestic women in popular media; ironically naming the phenomenon “the problem that has no name.” With issues of diversity representing a clear gap in critical feminist scholarship up until the 80’s, third-wave feminism became concerned with individuality and diversity outside of sex and gender; raising questions surrounding violence against women and the reclamation of derogatory terms, both at the multidimensional intersections of identity (Anzaldua; hooks; Lorde; Bordo). With the fourth-wave emerging as recently as the mid-late 2010’s, critical feminism takes up research that incorporates the role of technology as a means of connection, identity negotiation, and knowledge dissemination (Cochrane; Diamond).

### **Feminist Rhetorical Practices**

A common analytical lens in critical feminism is feminist rhetorical criticism. Sonja K. Foss, Cindy L. Griffin, and Karen A. Foss claim that feminist theories offer a new perspective on rhetoric as they move on to situate feminist rhetorical theory within the discipline. Additionally, the women define feminism, rhetoric, and theory in terms of feminist rhetorical practice. In doing so, the authors acknowledge rhetoric as the study of socially-constructed realities rather than the study of persuasion, which has been traditionally regarded as adversarial, combative, goal-directed, and ends-oriented. For the authors, feminism is a concept based on equity. In continuation, the authors describe theory as the way to “clarify thinking” (9); it is a way to organize seemingly chaotic events in order to explain phenomena through the analyzation of signs and symbols.

For the field of rhetoric and composition, Foss, Griffin, and Foss have chosen to re-conceptualize and re-envision the standards of inclusion. They posit that a feminist is a person who stands up for humanitarian rights, and establish that feminism seeks to recognize all facets of society on the basis of equality in order to encourage self-fulfillment without constraints based in personal dimensions of identity (sex, gender, sexual orientation, race, etc.). In these terms, an understanding of rhetoric will allow individuals to make conscious decisions about the worlds they create and operate within. Foss et. al. state a widely held perspective of feminism within the field includes eliminating the oppression of all people who are marginalized by the dominant culture. They go on to say that "they see all living beings entitled to live life fully and to be affirmed and valued as unique significant contributors to the universe."

In accordance with their belief in inclusion, they posit that phenomena are unlikely to be limited to one theoretical explanation; the women express a likelihood that multiple theories will apply to each phenomenon. Historically, scholars and researchers have been required to separate themselves from their data. Now, researcher positionality is required and the disclosure of subjectivity has been necessitated. These ideals underscore the value of a document that exposes personal testimony as a means to prove the unacknowledged and tragic reality that arises as a consequence of an unchecked abuse of power in the academy. Ramazanoglu notes the role feminist methodologies play in the exposure of "unreasonable assumptions about the superiority and neutrality of reason" (211). In other words, she notes that research projects are intrinsically political and socially grounded; in order to be ethical seekers of knowledge, researchers should be accepting as well as disclosing our subjectivity. Giving context and personal history when

developing rhetorical theory gives audiences a larger scope on the explanation of phenomena as we know and perceive it.

In valuing lived experience, Donna Haraway examines feminism, science, and ideas of objectivity versus subjectivity. Haraway alludes to patriarchal hierarchies as political instruments used to discredit female contributions in the sciences and across disciplines. Haraway posits that objectivity is a burdensome concept when it comes to understanding gender after the social turn, for example, while aligning objectivity with a masculine hegemony. Consequently, a binary is drawn between feminist objectivity (informed from situated knowledge theories) and scientific objectivity. While feminist objectivity allows for a researcher or scientist to acknowledge her partial perspective, Haraway regards the idea of scientific objectivity as unsituated and unlocatable, that any claims of scientific objectivity are ways of “playing god.” Thus, Haraway calls for a new understanding for feminist discourse to regard objectivity. In order to forward her call, she pulls from the notion of situated knowledge to provide a point of entry into scientific objectivity while embodying the values of feminist rhetorical theory.

In “Fusing Horizons: Standpoint Hermeneutics and Invitational Rhetoric,” Kathleen J. Ryan and Elizabeth J. Natalie use Lorraine Code’s conceptions of objectivity and subjectivity to inform their understanding of invitational rhetoric. In aligning with Code, and similarly to Haraway, the authors posit that objectivity and subjectivity have been historically gendered, where objectivity is associated with patriarchal, masculine practices, and subjectivity is left to more feminine applications. Rather than establishing invitational rhetoric on a binaristic foundation of perception, the authors employ Code’s model of knowing that is based in on the intermingling of objectivity and subjectivity (Ryan and Natalie 75). In this case, persuasion is not

about (T)ruth, it is about a series of truths that illustrate phenomena in a collective consciousness. In remaining open to communicative difference, Marilyn M. Cooper writes to “rescue” the “notion of human agency bringing about positive change” (420). She engineers her rescue by reformulating the understanding of human agency from one that is born from free will and a consciousness of one’s intentions to an “emergent property of embodied individuals” (421). Thus, free will and choice are not impossible, rather cannot be extrapolated from a rhetor’s inherent subjectivity.

Such subjectivity will be informed by elements such as academic status and other work-related opportunity. In the case of the spreadsheet, it hosts thousands of responses that prioritize positionality by centralizing the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, forwarding narratives as the survivors lived experience or truth, and asking follow up questions that extend the narratives beyond the instance of sexual harassment toward consequences and long-term symptoms of abuse. Furthermore, Kelsky shares her experience with sexual harassment so as to join in conversation with the participants. Even though her experience does not meet requirements warranted to participate in the survey, she aligns with the need to address the fact that survivors experience unfair and unnecessary treatment. Thus, this thesis seeks to use the understanding that elements will be different across narratives in the analysis of Kelsky’s artifacts. As a result, the texts serve as a bridge between differences in order to expose a collective consciousness.

### **The Role of Personal Testimony**

Feminist movements have resulted in several calls to action, one of which is to recognize the voices of women in the form of personal testimony, a call quite specifically catered to by

Kelsky's artifacts. Kelsky's number one question in the survey asks "What happened?" prompting a narrative response that showcases an experience of sexual harassment broadly construed. While any person can respond to the survey (and commit sexual harassment, for that matter), the overwhelming majority of perpetrators were identified as male in the spreadsheet. With males representing 96% of harassers described in the narratives, it follows that the display pushes back against patriarchal systems. What's more, the survey and spreadsheet demonstrate that survivors are not only physically beyond the experience, but that they are engaging in a project that aims to dismantle the kind of culture that has allowed sexual harassment to go on, ceaseless, within and throughout the history of the ivory tower, asking survivors to be agents in the dialogue.

Alluding to phenomena in which men only choose to, or are only capable of, hearing masculine speech, Helene Cixous identifies writing as the most powerful platform for feminine speech due to its rhetorical nature. According to her, writing becomes a way for women to break away from historical norms where the place of the woman is based in her suppression. She says, "women must write through their bodies, they must invent the impregnable language that will wreck partitions, classes, and rhetoric regulations, and codes" (886). The narratives in the spreadsheet seem to directly respond to Cixous's call for women to write their bodies into text in a literal sense, especially for the purpose of breaking institutionalized silence. The survey asks that survivors share the experiences that cannot be understood, or even heard, otherwise. Through this act, individuals that respond to the survey may be liberated by taking back the body that has been confiscated by patriarchal hierarchies in male-dominated establishments at large, literally and figuratively, by seizing the opportunity to speak and expose oppressive forces.



Cixous compares the way women have been driven away from writing to the way they have been driven violently away from claiming agency over their corporeal selves, the body with and through which we function. By considering the role of narrative storytelling in feminist rhetorical theory, I argue that meaning is made in the spreadsheet through the convergence of the social consciousness represented. Narratives are central to the goals of Kelsky's project, therefore, resistance to oppression hinges on the way the artifacts mediate thousands of personal testimonies. With the privileging of subjectivity as the "new normal" and recognition that objectivity is unreachable, personal testimony is essential to the understanding of identity and the furtherance of feminist rhetorical ambitions. Identity is a product of an ever-shifting context, one which is responding to a network of elements including economic conditions, sociopolitical institutions, and interpersonal relationships (qtd. By Ryan and Natalie 75).

Kristie S. Fleckenstein writes to identify the transactional relationship (one in which both parties are being affected and changed by the interaction with the other) between institutions, texts, and bodies. She talks about the way our corporeal selves cannot be separate from the writing with which we interact. She remarks on how problematic it is that people look at text as disembodied, as having little to do with a physical dimension, with a life, and this perception undermines the ability for text to affect change. To interrupt the disembodiment of texts, Fleckenstein calls for somatic writing that cultivates *immersion* and *emergence* simultaneously; she calls for us to become aware of our inherent immersion within a body of text, and that we need to illustrate an awareness of the personal and professional context that moves within that body, as we approach it, as we work through it, and as we come out of the other side.

Of personal testimony, Fleckenstein adds that “writing is a place to see and re-see the components and possible trajectories of one’s lived experience and to situate and re-situate that experience within a world of other thoughts and other embodied reactions” (298). According to Fleckenstein, writing somatically depends on the continuous hybridization of who and what and where we are. Kelsky’s artifacts give individuals a chance to immerse themselves in their own narratives, setting them up alongside the narratives of other survivors of similar traumas, and reminds them that they have finally come to be on the other side of the narrative. Throughout this process, a collective consciousness emerges that creates a sense of community and support for trauma victims. Within this specific consciousness, symbols may represent exclusive and oppressive values within academic institutions. As symbols in the shared consciousness are revealed through agentive narration, survivors may become empowered through the community-oriented practice of meaning making fostered in the project.

### **Reciprocal Empowerment and Agency**

Feminist critical theorists forward empowerment as personal authority with connotations of self-determination, competence, independence, knowledge, choice, and action. However, empowerment becomes reciprocal when applied in a social situation in which something must be discussed or negotiated, or action must be taken. In these cases, power and empowerment exist in relation to other people. Patricia S. E. Darlington and Becky Michele Mulvaney write to offer an alternative model of “power,” which is traditionally associated with unproductive patriarchal paradigms that focus on “self-versus-other” ideologies. The term empowerment implies stepping into a role of “agent” that has power over the self, rather than access to exercise power over others. Feminist theory forwards empowerment as “the necessity and the will for women, and for

the female subject, to move from awareness of female objectification to convinced, and active social agency; from passivity to engagement” (cited in Ponterotto 147). Particularly, it seems that empowerment hinges on the self-awareness of the denial of power due to an objectified role in society, instead of inertly accepting the proverbial cards one has been dealt. Only when a subject allows herself to become self-aware can she be able to step in as the agent of her narrative.

Sharing a narrative about such loss of power requires survivors to negotiate and renegotiate their roles as a subjects and agents before, during, and after the traumatic experience. In terms of the spreadsheet, the opportunity for renegotiation takes place alongside thousands of other individuals who have chosen to reflect and to exercise their right to their voice. This type of reflection often leads to a self-awareness, where one can assess the various factors at play in a given situation. If survivors choose to identify the structures acting with and against them, they are able to use the available means of persuasion to illuminate the injustices that have become institutionalized in academic workplaces. By hosting previously untold or unacknowledged narratives of sexual harassment, the spreadsheet can serve as a site for reciprocal empowerment for and by survivors of such harassment. Simultaneously, Kelsky’s artifacts hold an opportunity to demonstrate how reciprocal empowerment can act as a new concept of power upheld by a feminist framework of compassion and community that also forwards personal authority and agency.

The artifacts resist the dominant discourse by elevating realities that illustrate the detriments around power relations in academia. In his research on how rhetorical texts shape discourse, Scott Graham claims that rhetorical agency means voicing counter-hegemonic ideas,

or resistance to dominant discourses. This resistance isn't necessarily a location in one moment in time, but can stretch as "rhetorical motion through time" (381). In terms of Kelsky's artifacts, Graham's concept underscores the correlation between the ongoing nature of the artifacts and the long-term effort it will require to break free of institutionalized practice that perpetuates sexual harassment. In understanding rhetorical agency as a part of a system where multiple agents and actors interact, change can be understood as the nonlinear product of the system; the product becomes a choice among options, underscoring the role of the rhetor in delivering a message. In other words, change is not the objective, but it becomes a possibility when perspectives are shared and valued by all participants in a communicative event.

In order to be a responsible rhetorical agent, Cooper calls for an openness to other possibilities, opinions, and voices that can inspire a deliberative rhetoric of fresh constructions to flow through interpersonal interactions that will, in turn, shape our surroundings and expand our consciousness. Further, recognizing both speakers and listeners as agents in persuasion allows for all parties to be understood as responsive beings that have the ability to change their minds. Neither rhetorical nor material identities are substances; they are systems, resulting from pathways of intertextualities inside and outside the skin (Fleckenstein 301). Agency becomes an evolving response to the rhetor's experiences and environment over time, intention and choice follow respectively as a result of the influence of lived experience. For these reasons, "change" or the result of a persuasive attempt is not the objective of invitational communication. For example, the objective of this thesis is to examine the way the construction of the artifacts sets up the opportunity to value, share, and recognize lived experience where varied perspectives are available for consideration.

In her research on the corporeal agency of motherhood, Amy Koerber defines rhetorical agency as a disruption to disciplinary power (95), where resistance has the potential to push against the “sense” of the system (88). In other words, resisting dominant ideologies can be a catalyst for proponents of said ideologies to reconsider how to better incorporate the best interest of underrepresented populations. While Koerber describes several key ways such “sense” can be disrupted, she concludes that we do not currently have a way of measuring all future effects of resistance. Any act of resistance- whether or not the actor succeeds in her goals or is able to carry out her choices- could potentially contribute to change. As in the case of Kelsky’s artifacts, there isn’t a way to follow up with contributors, nor is there a way to measure the change that it may or may not bring on. However, the idea of agency concedes that the reciprocal empowerment brings about the *possibility* of change.

## CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

*The point is not for women simply to take power out of men's hands, since that wouldn't change anything about the world. It's a question precisely of destroying that notion of power.*

–Simone de Beauvoir

In order to best engage the kind of work that is being done within and through Kelsky's artifacts, I employ invitational rhetoric as my theoretical framework. As a way to enact feminist rhetorical practice, an invitational rhetorical lens allows me to read how the artifacts make meaning through the exposure of oppressive hierarchical structures that cripple the advancement of academia and the holistic human experience. In what follows, I discuss the kind of meaning that is made through the performance of invitational rhetoric and the kind of practice that is prompted through an engagement with the artifacts. Moving forward, I will trace the presence of the four conditions of invitational rhetoric throughout the survey and the spreadsheet in their respective chapters. The four conditions are named as follows: Safety, openness, validation, and freedom. Tracing the textual and contextual components of Kelsky's artifacts sets up a foundation to consider the underlying implications and consequences of the choices she made in the construction of her artifacts. Throughout, I feature a few excerpts from her artifacts, including her disclaimers for participation, her questionnaire, and sample responses featured in the spreadsheet.

### **Invitational Rhetoric and Meaning Making**

For over two decades, invitational forms of rhetoric have proved valuable in a variety of situations ranging from public discourse, to workplace communication, to “the construction of visual artifacts that may evoke dialogue” (Modesti 4). This type of persuasion is intended to

serve as an alternative to more dominating types of persuasion that capitalize on ideas of domination, competition, and change (Ryan and Natalie 70, 88). According to Code, knowledge arises out of the “subjective-objective tension in human interaction,” where subjectivity and objectivity intermingle according to the persons involved in a dialogue (74). Central to this thesis, the situatedness of knowledge informs my understanding of the way invitational rhetoric can shape the construction of texts and the kind of collaborative work with which they are associated. Through Code, I occupy a position that situates invitational rhetoric as a communicative option that does not rely solely on argument, but on the recognition of the situatedness of knowledge and validation of personal testimony and truths (Ryan and Natalie 84).

Explorations of invitational rhetoric in practice include Kirtley’s (2014) examination of composition pedagogy; Pedrioli’s (2004) application of invitational rhetoric to faculty mentoring; DeLaure’s (2008) and Carey’s (2014) investigation of Ella Baker’s speaking style; Taylor, Durant, and Boje’s (2007) and Greiner and Singhal’s (2009) considerations of health and safety communication; Bone et al.’s (2008) considerations of spoken and written dialogue in Jimmy Carter’s listening tour during the energy crisis and the World Trade Center site’s post 9/11 dialogue; and Bates’ (2017) invitational reading of Brazilian O Machismo graffiti. There have also been efforts to extend invitational rhetorical principles into classroom teaching (Mallin & Anderson, 2000; Novak & Bonine, 2009; Modesti, 2012) and interactive web technologies (Harrison & Barthel, 2009).

Closer to the present project, Bone et al. (2008) and Bates discuss how their artifacts allowed viewers to enter into dialogue, encounter panels that had shareable world-views, and to contribute their own panels in response to these invitations (Bates 67). Similarly, contributors to

the survey come together with Kelsky to co-create a collective invitational rhetoric expressed first by the initiating rhetor and by responding expressed by the contributors (Bates 70). As described by Sonja K. Foss and Cindy L. Griffin in their seminal proposal for invitational rhetoric, an invitational rhetor seeks not to persuade individuals into accepting or rejecting a point of view, where success is measured by “rightness”; rather, it seeks to create spaces for understanding that allow both the initial speaker and her audience to contribute perspectives where success is measured by a mutual understanding of the one another’s truths.

### **Reflection and Dialogue**

According to Ryan and Natalie, the theory and practice of invitational rhetoric constitutes a commitment to feminist praxis, which bell hooks defines as "action and reflection on the world in order to change it" (cited in Ryan and Natalie 85). In addition, Audre Lorde poeticizes the exigence of feminist praxis, stating that it alters "old blueprints of expectation and response" since "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." Through this thesis, I forward Ryan and Natalie’s notion that “invitational rhetoric has the power both to dismantle the master's house and recreate a community where all people have space at the table of participatory democracy” (Ryan and Natalie 86). However, before any dismantling or recreating, I argue that participants of invitational exchanges must analyze assess, and assume accountability through critical reflection for the positions one occupies. While the contributors to the spreadsheet may critically reflect on their experience as a way to overcome their trauma, viewers of the spreadsheet have an opportunity to ask themselves if they have ever been the intentional or unintentional instigators of sexual harassment.



Simultaneously, participants must engage in critical dialogue with occupants of other positions that can and reinform one's perspective on one's own experiences (Ryan and Natalie 75). Deprioritizing "rightness" and prioritizing openness and candidness provides the best opportunity to reach each other. Fittingly, Foss and Griffin draw on feminist nonviolence ideologies to underscore the importance of consensus through dialogue as a feminist strategy of persuasion (cited in Ryan and Natalie 69). Thus, the idea is that dialogue paves a peaceful road to understanding that can lead to behavior change as a personal choice, not because participants are left without options. What's more, invitational rhetoric forwards the idea that change occurs as a result of insights gained in the exchange of ideas (Ryan and Natalie 73). Understanding one another's standpoint through dialogue leads to rhetoric's epistemic function of socially constructing knowledge.

With the combination of these deliberate practices, the choice to revise one's way of thinking and behaving presents itself naturally as one becomes more self-aware. Then, it is up to the participant to use new perspectives to reinform lines of thought that govern behavior. Without the need for a specific and prescribed change, invitational rhetoric welcomes outcomes rooted in societal evolution. While the positive outcomes of invitational communication are more accessible when one is aware of and willing to practice reflection and dialogue as described in this thesis, the same or similar positive outcomes may be reached through other methods of communication not expressly theorized here. However, when it comes to the performance of invitational rhetoric, the intention to make meaning that is genuine and insightful warrants some deliberate moves in prompting information as well as the articulation of sentiments.

Invitational rhetoric is but one of many options in a communicative toolbox, where an appreciation of difference is necessary for proper use by both rhetor and interlocutor. For communication to be invitational, the initiating rhetor must create the conditions necessary for a successful exchange. Because of the “nonhierarchical, nonjudgmental, non-adversarial framework established for the interaction,” understanding that engenders appreciation, value, and a sense of equality becomes the ultimate goal of the communication and categorizes a successful transactional dialogic (Foss & Griffin 5). In short, the expression of solidarity represents an embodiment of invitational rhetoric’s focus on equality between speakers and audience (Bates 68). Carlo A. Pedrioli points out that the requirement of a willingness to engage in invitational rhetoric is a prerequisite for the success of invitational rhetoric, and consequently is also a potential limitation to this type of communication.

Again, this type of willingness may be fostered naturally, without specifically considering the procedures and protocol of invitational rhetoric. However, it is important to check in with oneself through critical reflection in order to recognize what kind of communication one is promoting. As participants who must hold themselves accountable for the positions they hold, properly reacting to offering requires a willingness to engage each other's beliefs and be willing to set aside some of one’s own beliefs in the desire to move toward the mutual understanding that sexual harassment is perpetuated through institutionalized silence (Ryan and Natalie 71). However, participants need not be wholly converted from their original standpoint to reach a mutual understanding. Rather, rhetor and interlocutor must avoid deflecting contributions from others because they cannot immediately relate to the perspective offered, often understood as “active listening” or simply maintaining an opened mind.

### *Offering and Willingness to Yield*

In order for reflection to result in reform, feminist rhetorical theories suggest that knowledge be viewed as socially-constructed, culture-bound, and situated (Bauer; Foss et al.; Giroux; Jones Royster & Kirsch; Markowitz). Carlo A. Pedrioli shares his belief that when parties choose not to engage each other in an invitational manner, “they cannot come to understand each other” (210-11). An invitational rhetorical methodology warrants that “offering” and “willingness to yield” are the primary tools to uncover and understand the situated knowledge participants have acquired from a given experience; these tools can be used to establish the conditions of invitational rhetoric (safety, openness, validation, and freedom). These terms imply a rhetorical transaction between rhetor and interlocutor; if invitational outcomes are desired, one can employ “offering” and “willingness to yield” to cultivate a safe space. When a rhetor offers a perspective, the interlocutor must be willing to yield that the situated knowledge offered is valid and worth considering.

According to Foss and Griffin, rhetors who offer “tell what they currently know or understand; they present their vision of the world and show how it looks and works for them” (Foss and Griffin 7). By including the links to her artifacts, she offers an unprecedented opportunity: Survivors can share their story without the risk of becoming ostracized members of their departments. This structural choice demonstrates the gesture of offering. Correspondingly, engagement with invitational texts should not result in victimization, or further victimization, of the participant. Conversely, invitational texts should reciprocate some type of fulfillment for the contributor, such as a confidential and cathartic release. By choosing to contribute to the spreadsheet via the survey, participants offer the candid iteration of sexual harassment that

plagued their personal experience in academia. Through her structural and linguistic choices, Kelsky was able to gain trust from survivors that brought them to speech. Without the responses, the spreadsheet would not be able to reflect the previously unspoken realities of women in academia.

What's more, transcribing the experiences that have been institutionally suppressed from public knowledge can give survivors an opportunity for healing (Anderson and MacCurdy; Henke). Feminine inclination toward emotional intelligence and intuition highlights the importance of release and resolve in feminist communicative practice. For example, Naomi Ardea, author of *The Art of Healing from Sexual Trauma: Tending Body and Soul Through Creativity, Nature, and Intuition*, writes eloquently about her experience with narrative therapy and her exigence as writer:

Writing reawakened and strengthened my connection to my inner voice, which is so vital for guiding me in healing from trauma. I write and release the secrecy, shame, and self-blame of sexual abuse. It's a way to listen to myself with compassion, *validating* that my experiences and ongoing pain deserve time and space to be heard. And often, the emotional turmoil then eases. In our society, the impacts of sexual trauma and the details of survivors' healing journeys still largely remain invisible. One of my goals as a writer is to bring these details out into the open, to educate the public and give hope to survivors.

Each step of the project presents a choice to the potential contributor. Whomever chooses to engage with the survey must make the choice to submit a response. Then, she can decide whether or not she wants to read other submissions. If such content is a trigger for her, there is nothing

forcing her to scroll through the narratives. The kind of release, therapy, and healing is chosen by the participant. In many cases, submitting a written narrative may be enough; in other cases, reading through the spreadsheet may bring about empowerment. It is possible that a survivor is simply comforted by the knowledge that the project exists.

Writing responses to the survey can bring about narrative therapeutic recovery, where the survivors have the power to relieve the burden brought on by the culture of silence. Furthermore, this kind of silence elucidates that social insensitivities prevent members of different groups from interacting epistemically in productive ways such as listening to each other, learning from each other, and mutually enriching each other's perspectives. In fact, listening is a significant aspect of feminist communicative praxis that requires a certain kind of restraint not possible in a culture of conquest and conversion, requiring the listener to hold contributions until the speaker has finished uttering her thoughts. This restraint demonstrates a placed value in contributions from other members of a dialogic, where one is equally concerned with listening as she is with sharing.

Furthermore, audience members engage in offering when they "ask questions and make comments...aimed at learning more about the [rhetor's] ideas, understanding them more thoroughly, nurturing them, and offering additional ways of thinking about the subject for everyone involved in the interaction" (Foss and Griffin 8). In other words, participants will be more successful in their communication if they can maintain a curious and opened mind. It can be assumed that contributors to the survey agree on the prevalence of sexual harassment in academia. However, the same cannot be said for the viewers. Invitational viewership requires a willingness to accept the conditions of the consciousness surrounding sexual harassment,

namely, that it exists on the same plane of reality occupied by non-victims. If viewers were to approach the artifacts from an immovable position that rejects institutionalized silence as a toxic facet of academic culture, an invitational transaction cannot take place.

While a limitation of surveys is the inability to ask follow up questions, Kelsky doesn't stop at prompting a narrative of the sexual harassment. The survey contains a series of questions that aim to give the story a well-rounded context and give dimension to the conclusion by asking about long-term career and health consequences. These type of questions give the impression that Kelsky is not simply trying to satisfy her own curiosity. By asking questions that take the participant beyond isolated experiences of sexual harassment, she indicates that she wants to learn about the way the individual was personally transformed and how these transformations reflect commonalities that manifest in a shared consciousness. Kelsky strikes a balance in the construction of her artifacts that signals towards compassion for survivors on an interpersonal level, in addition to her overarching goal of inciting a paradigm shift that responds to the phenomenon of sexual harassment as a consequence of an abuse of power in academia.

At its best, a willingness to yield asks both speaker and listener to reconsider their stance as a result of the discourse they create together (Ryan and Natalie 74). By virtue of Kelsky serving as the initiating rhetor, she demonstrates her willingness to yield. As a result, willingness to yield is demonstrated through the choice to automatically upload the submissions to the spreadsheet. Due to the rhetorical nature of the artifacts, each narrative does not receive a direct response; nor do contributors get feedback from Kelsky and other readers of the survey. Rather, willingness to yield comes from the amalgamation of narratives that weave together a reality, a shared consciousness, that, as Kelsky states, eliminates "plausible deniability from academic

institutions about the pervasiveness and severity of sexual harassment.” Contributors are not asked to put themselves in a position where they can be tried for their reports, nor do they send their narratives into the void. The stories receive a spotlight, where each one reifies the last.

The dialogic relationship enacted when performing offering and willingness to yield is supported via Lorraine Code’s “ways of knowing.” By underscoring the value of knowing other people as an epistemic foundation for invitational rhetoric, communicative artifacts that foster a collective consciousness become dynamic, communicative mediators “located in the relationship of the self to others, where the knower wants to participate in generating knowledge with others” (cited in Ryan and Natalie 76). For this communicative mediation to yield results, Code suggests adopting a subjective epistemological stance. This position welcomes the interactions between oneself and other people because it is based on an understanding that people are reliant on each other to build knowledge through communicative engagements. Moreover, knowing other people means taking genuine interest in another person and having the desire to learn about their point of view (Ryan and Natalie 80). This way, personal testimony that is not backed with hard data or tangible evidence can be validated and used as legitimate support for a perspective. For this reason, Kelsky’s spreadsheet should be seen as a permissible repertoire of verification that institutionalized silence is breeding toxic workplaces.

## CHAPTER FOUR: SURVEY PERFORMANCE OF INVITATIONAL RHETORIC

*No woman is really an insider in the institutions fathered by masculine consciousness. When we allow ourselves to believe we are, we lose touch with parts of ourselves defined as unacceptable by that consciousness. –Adrienne Rich*

In the following two chapters, I analyze the structural and linguistic aspects of Kelsky's artifacts to show how they establish the conditions of invitational rhetoric: Safety, openness, validation, and freedom. By establishing of the conditions of invitational rhetoric, the survey invites participants to co-break institutionalized silence by sharing their personal experience with sexual harassment throughout their academic careers. That is, the survey and accompanying spreadsheet represent a form of consciousness raising in which the shared narrative surrounding sexual abuse, and its various consequences, can be recognized by community members and lead them to campaign for institutional change (Bates 65). It is worth noting that on behalf of Kelsky as the initiating rhetor, the survey provides more opportunities for linguistic analysis versus the spreadsheet, which holds a better opportunity for structural analysis (demonstrated in the following chapter).

By drawing an invitational rhetorical analysis of Kelsky's artifacts, the survey presents as an invitation to participate in a dialogue about sexual harassment, where the construction of the text allows Kelsky and her contributors to take turns playing the role of rhetor and playing the role of audience. Largely, Kelsky herself plays the role of the audience in the survey, stepping in as the initiating rhetor by inviting survivors to tell their stories and setting guidelines for the kind of responses she is wants. In expressing her goals and expectations in this manner, Kelsky constructs artifacts that establish the external conditions of invitational rhetoric: Safety, value,



freedom, and openness (cited in Pedrioli 210), and sets up a rhetorical situation that necessitates change in the academic cultural climate. In order to demonstrate how Kelsky's survey performs invitational rhetoric, I will trace how the external conditions become established linguistically and structurally in her disclaimers and questions.

In the survey, featured in the Appendix, Kelsky repeatedly states that her goal is to increase visibility of the institutional practice incubating sexual abuse to separate herself from a more traditional action-oriented personal agenda. Before posing her survey questions, Kelsky lists eight disclaimers having to do with the preservation of anonymity of contributors, how responses will be used and displayed, and how she understands "sexual harassment." The survey follows, made up of thirteen questions; Kelsky states her goal of increasing visibility repeatedly throughout the disclaimers that frame the questions. By situating her artifacts around her goals, she leans on invitational rhetoric as a way not only to persuade survivors to contribute, but as a way to empower individuals through the genrification of invitational rhetorical practice. Through a cathartic release that has been stanchd in departments across academia, an old yet untold reality emerges. In analyzing the linguistic and structural components of the survey with a feminist rhetorical lens, I argue that the survey performs invitational rhetoric as a mode of persuasion by establishing the conditions of safety, openness, validation, and freedom.

### **Safety**

Foss and Griffin define safety as a condition of invitational rhetoric that creates a feeling of security in absence of danger for the audience (10). Kelsky establishes the condition of safety by constructing a safe space in three key ways: 1) Survivors can treat the survey as a confessional that may be extended through direct communication with her, 2) By monitoring the

kind of responses that get uploaded to the spreadsheet, and 3) By being transparent about the goals and mechanisms of the survey. While creating a safe space is important when inviting the kind of inherently vulnerable confessions that come about when discussing experiences of sexual harassment, maintaining the safe space is arguably more crucial so as not to obfuscate the urgency of the project. Furthermore, Foss and Griffin state that communication contributes to a feeling of safety when it “conveys...that ideas and feelings...will be received with respect and care” (10). Kelsky reifies her safe space in the fifth and eighth disclaimers, which do similar work, when she states:

5. Any cells marked [Removed] or [Redacted] represent content that the contributor requested remain confidential when filling in the form, upon realizing that all content goes automatically to a public spreadsheet. I am monitoring for this several times a day, and would appreciate alerts by email if you see content that needs to be removed.

8. Any names will be XX-ed out of this publicly available document. However, if you wish for me to know your name or the name of the harasser, or have a personal request with regard to the information, please email me privately at [gettenure@gmail.com](mailto:gettenure@gmail.com). Many have done so, and I hold that information in total and complete confidentiality. Those who do say have consistently said that it was cathartic to name the perpetrator, even if it is just privately, to me. My list currently includes 123 names; I will potentially put people in touch who are victims of the same predator.

Thank you for participating; feel free to share with your networks.

These disclaimers showcase Kelsky's three key moves for establishing safety. First, she opens up the survey as a place to release the emotional burden of bottled up trauma from sexual abuse, giving individuals an opportunity to exercise agency prohibited by their institutions. While she is clear that the main goal is to increase the visibility of the scale of sexual harassment in academia, she also sets the survey up as a confessional. This way, the contributor can share her narrative with a human person without contributing to the survey itself, a choice that can still result in empowerment for the survivor. While the survey is subtly shaped as a confessional in the fifth disclaimer, this intention is more directly communicated in the eighth disclaimer. She encourages contributors to share as much as they need to feel a cathartic release, shaping the survey as a tool or opportunity for therapy and healing.

Second, she demonstrates the degree of personal care she intends to dedicate to the responses. Not only does she manually remove any information that individuals care to keep confidential, but she invites direct e-mails that draw her eye to content that she may have overlooked. By doing so, she shares the responsibility of maintaining safety with other contributors and survivors, so as to have a network of guardians looking after the collective consciousness surrounding sexual harassment and to cultivate a shared responsibility for that consciousness. This move reflects Kelsky's intention to co-create meaning with her audience. Furthermore, she suggests that the relationship initiated between her audience and herself does not need to end once the response is submitted. Through a series of suggestions, she takes the role of a mediator between the contributors, their narrative, and victims of the same abuser, showing that she does not need to remain a receptacle of narratives, but is willing to take a more active role if the contributor wishes.

Third, she makes sure the mechanism of the project is transparent, so potential contributors are aware that once they submit the response, it is directly imported into a spreadsheet. However, she also states that she monitors the spreadsheet multiple times a day to ensure that each response is handled with care according to the requests of the contributor. While she recognizes that she will not be able to maintain the spreadsheet without an automatic-uploading mechanism, she maintains the humanity of the project by holding herself accountable for making sure only the right information remains on the spreadsheet. A warrant of invitational communication maintains that all participants will hold themselves accountable for the role they play in the given interaction; in this case, Kelsky ensures that she is aware of her role and shares how she intends to maintain the integrity of her project. In addition, she shares the way other contributors have made use of the opportunity to break the silence, and that she is keeping a list. By sharing that she currently has a list of 123 names of abusers, she shows that survivors are not alone in wanting to give the whole truth of their experience, identity included. While she maintains that names will not be shared in the spreadsheet under any circumstances, she does not compromise the desire to give a name to the source of abuse.

She continues to cultivate the condition of safety in her survey artifact by stating the second disclaimer, which reads:

I will delete entries that appear to be from trolls or counter to the spirit of this project.

Here, she makes it clear that she intends to maintain the integrity of the project, and by association, the shared consciousness manifested in the spreadsheet. By removing contributions that make a mockery of her intention, responses that undermine the significance of dealing with

sexual abuse will not pollute the space. Moving on, she grounds safety within the context of academia, not just within the online context the survey is situated in. The seventh disclaimer states:

Please exercise caution and restraint in sharing stories that are not your own. While I appreciate the impulse to make incidents visible, you may further victimize the victim by giving details that are identifiable. Do NOT use identifiers of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. for anyone other than yourself, as in the tiny disciplinary and departmental worlds that most of us inhabit, these may serve to identify the victim.

Here, she recognizes that many academics may be outraged by stories from their students and colleagues and would like to make a contribution using a narrative that is not their own. In these cases, it is easy to mishandle information and neglect the kind of discretion that a first-person storyteller would be able to maintain. Many times, survivors have remained silent because of the very issue of associating themselves with the narrative and it negatively impacting their careers or social lives. To prevent these kinds of mishaps, she reminds contributors to be cautious if they choose to tell a story that isn't their own experience. She also shares why this is important, with departments often being intimate and social environments, a seemingly benign detail about a person may result in outing a survivor against her will.

Before potential contributors submit their responses, they come across a final question that states:

Other Comments You'd Like to Add (If you'd like me to know your name or the name of the perpetrator, please email me privately at [gettenure@gmail.com](mailto:gettenure@gmail.com). The

purpose of this survey is to gather anonymous information to give a sense of scale. As always, I will publish no information without explicit permission and extensive prior discussion)

This question seems to function as the “fine print.” Kelsky’s choice to conclude her survey this way establishes the condition of safety by extending transparency. Additionally, rhetoric that contributes to a feeling of safety provides a means of support for communicators. This type of support will create a sense that participants can be open to new perspectives and ideas, “trusting that their communicative counterparts are working with and not against them” (cited in Modesti 6). Kelsky takes time here to restate three important clauses that contributors need to be aware of before they share their stories: 1) The purpose of her project is to increase the visibility of the scale of sexual harassment in academic workplaces, 2) that she is available to speak to outside of the information sought in the survey, demonstrating that she is not just an advocate for institutional reflection, but is prepared to step into the role as a personal ally, and 3) that she will not release information shared with her via e-mail until she and the individual have reached a mutual understanding about the way the information may be used.

### **Openness**

Foss and Griffin define openness as a condition of invitational rhetoric that seeks out and considers as many perspectives as possible. For the condition of openness to lead to invitational communication, Foss and Griffin suggest the process of “resourcement.” They describe resourcement as seeking a new source of “energy and inspiration. Resourcement involves disengaging oneself from an interaction frame of conquest or conversion of one’s audience and then engaging that audience from a non-conquest and non-conversion interaction frame” (qtd. In

Modesti 209). In other words, Foss and Griffin suggest that for invitational rhetoric to yield different kinds of results than traditional rhetoric, the rhetor should let go of the desire to bring the audience into the rhetor's camp. Rather, the rhetor should enter the interaction with the desire to learn. Again, the authors support the importance of openness and releasing the fixation on calculative change. Particularly in the construction of the survey, the structural choice to collect stories through an online survey establishes resourcement-as-openness.

While participants were not required to answer all questions, Kelsky made clear that responses would be stripped of names. Otherwise, all other information and access to the survey would be freely available online for all persons interested in sharing experiences sexual harassment. Additionally, by hosting the link to the survey on her blog, she does not impose her project to a specific target. Carlo A. Pedrioli posits that invitational rhetoric hinges on "the input and suggestions of others; the invitational rhetor's goal is to understand the position of others and not to close the self off from them" (125-126). To get the most well-rounded representations of the shared consciousness of sexual harassment victims in academia, she invites any and all individuals who have experienced sexual harassment in the academic workplace to share their stories regardless of gender, background, geographic location, or academic discipline.

Since academic culture has been reifying since the inception of formal higher education in the eleventh century, Kelsky chose to reach out to those that have been silenced by the patriarchal hierarchies that have and continue to shape the dominant ideology inside and outside of academia. Seeing as the way sexual harassment is a byproduct of the abuse of power, especially in the presence of imbalanced power dynamics, turning to the authorities of departments or human resources that deal with the files, reports, and other complaints would

only circulate the same story. Reaching out to the people that have been denied their agency and voice for the sake and safety of perpetrators' reputations is the way to break the cycle, especially by empowering the persons otherwise overlooked.

### **Validation**

Foss and Griffin define validation as the acknowledgement that audience members have intrinsic or immanent worth. By embracing immanent value, the invitational rhetor offers the opportunities for “rhetor and audience alike [to] contribute to the thinking about an issue so that everyone involved gains a greater understanding of its subtlety, richness, and complexity” (cited in Bates 66). While the first disclaimer does work to create the condition of safety by making clear that responses are automatically entered into the spreadsheet, I would like to highlight the work this disclaimer does to create the condition of validation. The first disclaimer states:

\*\*\*YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE PUBLIC! PLEASE DON'T ENTER ANY  
RESPONSE ON THIS FORM THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE  
PUBLIC! THEY WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ENTERED ON A  
SPREADSHEET THAT IS PUBLIC

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY AND ASSOCIATED SPREADSHEET IS  
TO MAKE ANONYMOUS PERSONAL STORIES PUBLICLY AVAILABLE  
TO GIVE A SENSE OF THE SCALE OF INCIDENTS AND THEIR  
RECURRING PATTERNS.\*\*\*

By coupling the two statements, interaction with Kelsky's artifacts warrants an understanding that sexual harassment is a perpetuated hindrance to the members of academia, past and present.



By exploiting imbalanced power dynamics, largely women have been denied a more authoritative presence in academic disciplines. While the limitation on women seeking fulfilling, lifelong careers is demoralizing enough, students also face a limitation in the kind of viewpoints and ideas presented to them throughout their education. Both men and women are likely to encounter a variety of perspectives in their careers, whether it be through interactions with employers, employees, colleagues, or clients. (Pedrioli 187). Therefore, diverse perspectives informing students in higher education will only serve to better prepare students to navigate future communicative interactions that are required of more high-stakes roles.

Central to an invitational approach, Foss and Griffin posit that validation allows for invitational communicators and interlocutors to avoid imposing their perspective on one another so as to invite participants to “enter the rhetor’s world and to see it as the rhetor does” (Bates 65). For example, in Bates’ work on Brazilian O Machismo graffiti, he notes that:

O Machismo does not present its messages—a critique of machismo—as a thing to be accepted or rejected. Instead, it allows the viewer to decide whether they want to enter into the perspective and lifeworld of the message and supply their own conclusion. (Bates 70)

Similarly, Kelsky’s artifacts do not ask about whether sexual harassment is or is not occurring, nor does it ask what contributors think should be done about sexual harassment. Rather, the condition of validation is established at once with the title of the project: “A Crowdsourced Survey of Sexual Harassment in the Academy.” Right at the start of the discourse, she states that her goal is to increase visibility of the phenomenon of sexual harassment in academia.

Traditionally, Aristotelian conceptions of rhetoric frame persuasion as a deliberate attempt to

change the mind of the audience. However, feminist critical rhetoric sees those attempts at deliberate and intentional change as patriarchal forms of social and intellectual violence (Ryan and Natalie 70).

Thus, Foss and Griffin frame invitational rhetoric as a means of engagement with an issue where meaning lies in the dialog, rather than a pseudo-objective, combative approach to opposing views (Ryan and Natalie 70-71). Kelsky could have suggested that the goal of her survey is to change behavior, but it seems that she understands that change can only come after a general acceptance that institutionalized silence has protected sexual predators in academia. In other words, invitational rhetors envision change as much as traditional rhetors, but the mechanism for change is presented in a new way (Ryan and Natalie 73). For example, Kelsky establishes the condition of validation with a series of questions in the survey, each listed with a space for a short-answer response as follows:

1. Institutional Responses to the Harassment (If Any)
2. Institutional/Career Consequences for the Harasser (If Any)
3. The Impact of the Harassment on Your Career
4. The Impact of the Harassment on Your Mental Health
5. The Impact of the Harassment on Your Life Choices/Trajectory

Similar to the way the first disclaimer warrants that participants and readers accept that incidents of sexual harassment have been plaguing academic workplaces when engaging with her artifacts, Kelsky's questions (listed above) create an a-priori condition of validation in two ways.

First, by adding "if any" when inquiring about the institutional responses and consequences for the harasser in the first two questions, Kelsky aligns herself with the

understanding that departments are not likely holding themselves accountable or taking significant action to prevent sexual harassment or provide justice for survivors. Second and in continuation with this alignment, she does not add “if any” when she asks about the impact the abuse had on the victims’ career, mental health, and life choices. By leaving off the qualifier, she recognizes that it is equally unlikely that a victim was able to bypass these kind of long-term impacts. While the individual is not obligated to answer every single question, she shows that she understands the reality of the damage and institutional negligence that the survivor has dealt with, welcoming a response. The inclusion, or lack thereof, of the phrase “if any” linguistically establishes the condition of validation throughout the questionnaire.

### **Freedom**

Foss and Griffin define freedom as the power to choose or decide, also referred to as self-determination, whose presence is a “prerequisite for the possibility of mutual understanding” (Foss & Griffin 12). Sonja Modesti suggests that freedom is “further cultivated when communicators provide opportunities for others to develop and choose options, facilitating rich and complex dialogues that foster the co-creation of meaning” (Modesti 7). By releasing the responsibility for persuasion to result in traditionally construed change, invitational communication will offer and request information for voluntary consumption that provides the space for choice without coercion, force, pressure, or fear (Modesti 7). When devising the survey, Kelsky makes a structural choice that creates a level of the condition of freedom: Short-response answers. When Kelsky asks her questions, she does not limit her contributors with multiple-choice answers. Rather, she leaves a space open for her individuals to take their time

and respond most-fittingly to the question. When she does list a multiple-choice question, there is a space at the final option where one can fill in answers outside of the prescribed options.

The first question in the survey most fiercely creates the condition of freedom, which is the foundation for the work the survey does for silence-breaking. It asks:

What Happened and When? (Feel free to include incidents that happened to you or to others close to you in your program/department/campus/lab/disciplinary group)

Here, she is asking survivors to communicate the information that they have been explicitly forbidden from sharing, freeing individuals from their institutional shackles and giving them the chance to use their voice. By setting this question first, she shows the degree of value she is placing on the personal testimony of the contributor. The choice to answer to this question demonstrates an engagement with the invitation, completing a communicative transaction. As the initiating rhetor, Kelsky positions engagement with her survey around the survivor's reclamation of agency. When the survivor chooses to write her truth in response to the first question, she embosses her narrative with permanence. While institutions may have prevented her story from leaving the filing cabinet, the survey requires that she write her narrative into existence as the agent of her life.

### **Validation and Freedom**

In presenting her artifacts, Kelsky offers her thoughts on the how her survey and spreadsheet can serve survivors of sexual harassment. She writes:

Sharing your story, even anonymously, can be transformative for victims. You can see that you're not alone, that you did nothing wrong, that the structure sets

you up for victimization and systematically prevents consequences for the perpetrator. I believe this document removes plausible deniability from academic institutions about the pervasiveness and severity of sexual harassment, and I hope that it can promote greater peace, clarity, and resolve among its many victims, no matter what they choose to do moving forward. Solidarity.

Here, she is sharing the way the choice to respond to the survey can lead survivors toward a new kind of freedom. Without justice, survivors take on the emotional burden of rationalizing what happened to them; rationalizing instances of sexual harassment on the self leads to an internalization of guilt and shame, where the victim is wondering what she did to warrant the kind of behavior and treatment from her abuser and her institution. Entry 1112 illustrates the psychological damage that institutionalized silence imbues in sexual harassment victims:

Rage, drinking, and debilitating depression whenever I have to encounter him or his work (which I am often assigned to teach). I continue to doubt my own account of the events even though I immediately wrote everything down so as not to doubt myself in the future. I blame myself even though I know I did nothing wrong. I blame myself for not filing a formal complaint. I berate myself for being a coward. (1112)

Creating the artifacts is Kelsky's way of providing a semblance of closure to neglected victims of sexual harassment. Clearly, there is something to be said about the exposure provided by the spreadsheet's display. As the survivor in the depicted narrative shows, personal writing did not provide her the kind of resolve she needed, she still sought to express her experience through another medium. More specifically, she sought to enter a conversation where other stories

supported that she did not bring her suffering upon herself. Rather, her suffering is the result of the toxic reality surrounding sexual harassment.

The fourth and sixth disclaimers do similar work in that they both serve in the gentrification of both validation and freedom. The fourth disclaimer states:

4. My goal is to allow victims to know they are not alone, and to raise awareness about this scourge in academic settings. Please don't participate if you don't wish to have your anonymous story visible to others. I fully support your right and desire to NOT share your story here if you prefer not to.

I will be discussing the content of this survey on my blog, The Professor Is In, and on my Professor Is In FB and Twitter accounts, and possibly in a Chronicle of Higher Education column, but have no plans to use it in any other way. I make it available for research projects only with permission; anyone seeking to use this material in research, please email me at the email address below. [Update 1/13/18: after going viral, the survey has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, Fortune, BuzzFeed, Jezebel, and other media outlets.]

Here, she is releasing survivors from the obligation to speak up. By stating that she supports the right not to share the story, she recognizes the various ways that individuals can choose to deal with their trauma. In some cases, reliving or rehashing traumatic events does not provide the same cathartic release for all individuals. Either way, the individual has the spreadsheet as a resource to validate the fact that she is not alone in the abuse that she has suffered, she is not a lone target, and she did not simply allow herself to suffer where others have fought; she is but

another deprioritized member of an institution that does not recognize their role and responsibility in protecting all of those who serve the objectives of the ivory tower.

Validation and freedom are also established by the sixth disclaimer. Kelsky writes:

6. I leave the definition of ‘sexual harassment’ open; you may share anything that you feel merits inclusion here. My goal here is to make visible the unacknowledged scope and scale of the problem of sexual harassment in academic settings in the aggregate -- with complete anonymity for all who participate.

By virtue of leaving the definition of sexual harassment open, she validates that the feeling of discomfort was warranted by whatever experience the survivors had. That is, Kelsky recognizes that her view is but one perspective among many, and that successful rhetoric does not deny the legitimacy of other views. This provides the potential contributor the freedom to disclose, or not disclose, the traumatic situation that they categorize under sexual abuse. In some cases, sexual harassment does not present itself as an identifiable physical assault. While these circumstances are represented throughout the narratives, it is also important to realize the subtler acts of sexual harassment. For example, entry 128 shares a harrowing account of behavior that is, as she says, not explicitly “wrong,” and yet, severe discomfort ensues simply by reading the story:

a tenured faculty member in the art history department at Rutgers has a reputation for looking down the shirts of female students, making inappropriate comments about female students' appearance, and being vulgar in lectures when teaching material that includes nude or suggestive forms. when I worked at the front desk in the department, he did various things that were uncomfortable but not overtly

WRONG -- rubbing my back, touching my knee, etc. I finally said something when he leaned in closely to smell my neck, ostensibly because he liked my perfume, and "accidentally" brushed my breast with his hand. I was a phd student and he was the director of graduate studies. (128)

A look, a comment, or even an e-mail or note can leave scars that distract from work-related responsibilities and ambitions, especially when they come from a figure that one is meant to trust and look to for support and guidance. While the harm of physical assault should not be obfuscated by broadening the understanding of harassment, prevention of all types of sexual harassment would benefit both women and men in academic workplaces.



## CHAPTER FIVE: SPREADSHEET PERFORMANCE OF INVITATIONAL RHETORIC

*Indeed, what women know on the basis of subjective experience does matter.*

–Kathleen J. Ryan & Elizabeth J. Natalie

In the previous chapter, I traced the way Kelsky's survey establishes the conditions of invitational rhetoric. In recognizing how the survey and spreadsheet co-create and shape the discourse on sexual harassment, it's important to note Kelsky's choices in the creation of the spreadsheet that extend the conditions of invitational rhetoric and activate empowerment. By establishing invitational rhetoric's conditions in her artifacts, Kelsky reconstitutes the survey and spreadsheet to serve feminist goals by forwarding personal testimony, or narratives, as valid evidence for the exposure of sexual harassment and negligence in academic institutions. The spreadsheet, hosted in Google Sheets, is the repository for the responses to the survey. Responses are automatically uploaded into columns designated for each of the thirteen questions on the survey. With the far-left column hosting the date and time the response was submitted, viewers can endlessly scroll through the narratives organized in the order they were submitted. Currently, there are upwards of 2,400 rows, representing the 2,400+ survivors of sexual harassment who chose to share their story.

With the spreadsheet tackling a consequential systemic issue head-on, it is not without its criticisms. In the case of the artifacts, the methodology is not IRB approved or procedurally verified as would be required to satisfy the standards of academic research involving human participants. However, the intention is not to provide a corpus for scientifically-validated inferences that prove a case against a specific target for a particular set of incidents. The reason to trace stories shared in the survey, rather than the stories of victims of one particular public

figure, is to have a more well-rounded sample of experiences. Therefore, the purposes of the spreadsheet are (1) to create a public space for survivors to voice their experiences with safety guaranteed through anonymity, and (2) to present an indisputable case that sexual harassment throughout academia is a ubiquitous problem which demands further, more sustained inquiry and action. Kelsky continues on her introductory blog post:

I hope it provides aggregate information in the form of personal stories of abuse and its career outcomes for victims (which, as a cultural anthropologist I consider the most potent form of data), paving the way for more frank conversations and more effective interventions.

With 2,438 responses-and counting-contributed by persons in all different chapters of their careers in academia and across disciplines, the spreadsheet paints a striking portrait of what harassment looks like in one particular industry, with a special focus on the systematic attempts to keep abuse out of sight.

Significantly, the spreadsheet provides a way to gauge the pervasiveness and severity of abuse, ranging from inappropriate glances and extending to rape and stalking. While certain gestures may very well be involuntary, such as a glance, Kelsky recognizes that the likelihood of academics not understanding the concept of informed consent is slim to none (Flaherty). In addition, she mentions her hope that men would feel discomfort as they read through the narratives in the survey. For Kelsky, she envisions that the discomfort may lead toward a close examination of behavior and an aim to be more observant of the behaviors of their colleagues. Kelsky states her hopes for academic culture:

Women are overwhelmingly the victims of sexual harassment, and until this issue is addressed head on, women will continue to be hounded out of academia, as they are from every other career from comedy to politics. I hope that gathering stories will allow women in particular to know they are not alone, and create conditions for women to thrive in their chosen careers.

The spreadsheet shows that survivors are not outliers, but are victims of “the systemic, institutional and patterned nature of sexual abuse in the academy” (Flaherty). In an e-mail to Colleen Flaherty of *Inside Higher Ed*, Kelsky states, “You cannot solve a problem if you can’t see it. This survey aims to make the problem visible to all.”

Therefore, these narratives represent a response to the invitational rhetoric by engaging with the survey and submitting their responses, qualifying consent. With a limitation on the analysis of linguistic choices made on behalf of Kelsky as the initiating rhetor, the spreadsheet presents itself as a place to examine the way invitational rhetoric is demonstrated in the structural choices made in its creation. In what follows, I trace how the spreadsheet establishes the four conditions of invitational rhetoric defined in the previous chapter: Safety, openness, validation, and freedom.

### **Safety**

When considering how Kelsky creates the condition of safety in her construction of the spreadsheet, a few structural facets stand out as key choices that shape the performance of invitational rhetoric. Particularly, the sheet itself prohibits access to copying, sharing, and downloading the responses featured in the spreadsheet. This function is a significant move that serves to establish safety. By protecting the responses, Kelsky does everything in her power to

assure contributors that viewers will not misuse the narratives by taking them out of context and exploiting the descriptive, and sometimes graphic, content within the stories. Additionally, as offered by Google Sheets, Kelsky sets the document up so that viewers do not have access to commenting or editing the submissions. The inability for viewers to add comments in writing maintains the rhetorical nature of the project that fosters a sense of freedom for survivors. Furthermore, by preventing any chance for viewers to manipulate the submissions, she ensures that the stories will be presented as-submitted. This guarantee underscores the move to empower survivors to tell their own stories as a way to claim agency and be heard.

### **Inhibiting the Male Gaze**

Uniquely, the rhetorical nature of the spreadsheet continues to create safety by eliminating the influence of the male gaze on the narratives. In feminist rhetorical theory, the male gaze is theorized as an expectation of women to rhetorically argue, via their choices, behavior, and presentation, that they are worthy (Ponterotto 148). By choosing to host the written responses to the survey within the spreadsheet, rather than in a documentary or other visual display, Kelsky eliminates opportunity for the male gaze to infiltrate the feminist discourse. In this way, Kelsky sets up a rhetorical situation that refuses the gaze, reducing the opportunity for men to claim territory. With the overwhelming majority of responses centering on the behavior of a male perpetrator, which oppresses or abuses a female survivor, the male gaze is a recurring symbol throughout narratives that positions the woman as an object in place to forward the trajectory of the male subject. Thus, I argue that the male gaze is one symbol within the rhetorical situation surrounding power dynamics in academia that perpetuates sexual harassment against women.

More specifically, it seems that the male gaze has reinforced, or potentially given opportunity to, the kind of power imbalances in the workplace that have institutionalized male privilege and a culture of silence, while simultaneously disenfranchising women. With the suppression of female voices stemming chiefly from structural power disparities that exist as a result of patriarchy and positionality (Code; Collins; Davis; hooks), the male gaze reproduces the notion that women are objects available for viewership and consumption. What's more, often individuals who are likely to misuse power or take advantage of an imbalance of power are the people who have direct influence over career trajectories, serving as department chairs, committee members, and hiring staff. Entry 209 describes an interaction that showcases how the male gaze, a symbol in the shared consciousness surrounding sexual harassment, manifests as an oppressive force:

Between 2009 and 2012, as an assistant professor, I was repeatedly told by tenured male colleagues in my department that the only way I could receive tenure was to demonstrate my "loyalty" to the department by getting married and purchasing property. I was the only unmarried person in the department - there was only one other female faculty member in the department. At one point (2011), a male colleague (tenured) made comments during a faculty meeting about the fact that I was unmarried and wondered aloud about my sexual partners. No one said anything. (209)

Due to the prevailing male gaze, the cultural climate in this survivor's department correlate women's dedication to their post with marriage. By situating the determination of tenure on whether a colleague is married or not demonstrates the belief that women, and their intellectual

contributions, are inessential to the department unless they are fulfilling the role of wife. Thus, women are objectified by the notion that they must be claimed by the institution of marriage, which has historically maintained women's place in the home. Not to mention how willingly her colleagues shared their concern and curiosity about her personal life, as if her presence in the meeting warranted an interrogation of her extracurricular activities. This submission reflects the way the male gaze influences the perception of women as colleagues; women cannot be separated from their sexuality, nor can their humanity be understood outside of an objectified social standing.

Unfortunately, the fact of the matter is that both men and women perpetuate the idea that women are objects in a male-subject world. In testing the female attitude toward the male gaze, researchers conducted an experiment where they exposed discrete groups of women to centerfold editorials varying in explicitness. The data revealed that the women more willingly accept the male gaze when exposed to the more explicit imagery of the female body (Wright et al). These results support the view that provocative media depictions of women perpetuate the message that women are sights to be observed by others. Historically, women have been denied a voice in the public sphere; women have often been left in domesticity as a body to be discussed, rather than a people equipped to participate as agents in the human experience.

Interestingly, it should be noted that women cannot gaze masculinely due to a lack of societal privilege. Privilege is at the hinge of why it is impossible for a woman to cast the male gaze as a tool for power, validation, oppression, etc. The ideal, sanctioned by historically specific physical and behavioral models of acceptable female corporeality, reflects society's discourse on gender-connotated power relations. This discourse "reveals the status of women in that society

which most often emerges as exclusion from social power and denial of female subjectivity, individuality, and agency,” rendering the female body a territory conquered by masculine spectatorship and patriarchal standards (Ponterotto 148). In continuum, Elizabeth A. Brunner posits the male gaze as a strategy that traps women within patriarchal heteronormative binaristic discourses by contradicting the evolution of gender norms. As a systematically oppressed demographic, women are posing a threat to patriarchy through an increase in visibility and power that results in an interruption of historically male-dominated positions such as CEO, CFO, and CLO. For these reasons, it is important to navigate the impact of the male gaze so as to forward female empowerment and the social evolution that feminist ambition has procured thus far.

In accordance with Brunner’s assertion of the gaze as a tactic, Ponterotto considers the social oppression enforced by the gaze as a method to coerce women to conform to an arguably unrealistic model of what women should look like biologically and aesthetically by confining all bodies to a binary (male/female, heterosexual/homosexual, etc.). This view is perpetuated ad nauseum through the mainstream media and several “cults” exposed by the author such as “the cult of thinness,” “the cult of fitness,” and “the cult of beauty.” Ponterotto goes on to discuss the physical, psychological, and social consequences provoked by the normative canon of the model female such as poverty, negative body image, declining health, and negative political consequences due to the assimilation into patriarchal expectations. Thus, this type of normalization undermines the placed value on diversity as strength perpetuated by feminist ideologies.

### **Openness**

Next, openness becomes established by the free access, open-sourced nature of the artifacts. Any person with access to the internet can look through the spreadsheet at their leisure. For example, had Kelsky made the spreadsheet accessible only to a certain population, the condition of openness would have been compromised. In addition, there is no deadline for submission; the spreadsheet will continue to import responses to the survey as long as Kelsky's links are active. The choice to maintain her project in a state of becoming underscores the fact that eradication of sexual harassment in academia, and all workplaces, requires an ongoing effort.

### **Validation**

Third, Kelsky demonstrates validation in two major ways: First, by setting up an automatic-upload mechanism. Kelsky chooses to establish her trust in her contributors by negating a pre-authorization of narratives. Her automatic-upload setting demonstrates that she is willing to accept whatever participants frame as sexual harassment, validating that the discomfort and consequences brought on by the harassment are warranted. Second, Kelsky organizes the responses based on the submission time and date. This way, Kelsky does not establish a hierarchy, where stories that she deems more pressing or more exemplary of sexual harassment would be more accessible or hosted at the top of the spreadsheet. This outcome is likely born from adopting a motivation rooted in the spirit of dialogue (Modesti 4), where one utilizes mindful, civil language that shapes an environment where growth and perspective can develop naturally and allow participants "to disengage from the dominance and mastery so common to a system of oppression" (Pedrioli 211). Invitational communication is unable to



reach its full potential of understanding if participants come in with self-serving ulterior motives and if rhetors qualify responses based on personal preference.

### **Freedom**

As warranted by the principles of invitational rhetoric, persuasion or communicative intent should not be motivated by the sole desire to change minds. Rather, motivation should be born from the desire to understand. Kelsky reconstitutes the spreadsheet as a method of display, rather than as a tool to model, manipulate, or analyze the data. Moving away from patriarchal exigencies when constructing the spreadsheet makes it less of a calculative device and more of a discursive space. All the while, the choice to operate within a spreadsheet creates the condition of freedom, showing that rules of genres do not need to pigeonhole rhetorical intent.

Kelsky uses the spreadsheet to shape the discourse with a kind of orderliness that is not aligned with the dysfunction surrounding sexual harassment. Bringing order to such a chaotic experience makes it a more approachable topic of discussion. Often, people are put off by stories of sexual abuse and choose to avoid discussing an “ugly” and “offensive” conversation. Collecting the narratives with a methodical organizational structure makes the content more accessible, literally and figuratively, as viewers can endlessly scroll through the narratives to draw conclusions for themselves about the state of affairs in academic institutions.

## CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

*I am not free while any woman is unfree, even when her shackles are very different from my own.*

–Audre Lorde

Significantly, the performance of invitational rhetoric acknowledges multiple authorities, which procures different social dynamics and different voices being heard. Because of this acknowledgement, multiple perspectives can be valid at the same time. Thus, invitational rhetoric can validate the personal experiences and testimonies of any individuals regardless of how privileged or non-privileged such perspectives happen to be. Also, invitational rhetoric gives women and other marginalized populations, along with other empathetic insiders, an approach to call upon in attempting “to transform systems of domination and oppression” (Ryan and Natalie 81). The opportunity for transformative outcomes is significant when considering the impact that hundreds of years of unrecognized abuse has had on members of academia, the culture, and the knowledge that has been born from these institutions.

This thesis sought to elevate the voices of survivors of sexual misconduct in academic environments by considering the way a survey and spreadsheet are co-creating discourse. By conducting a feminist rhetorical analysis, this research discusses the way Kelsky’s choices shape the type of responses that get submitted. Considering the survey and spreadsheet with critical feminism shed light on how the survey performs invitational rhetoric by linguistically and structurally establishing the conditions of safety, openness, validation, and freedom. By demonstrating these values, the survey invites participants to co-break institutionalized silence by sharing their personal experience with sexual misconduct throughout their academic careers.

Therefore, these narratives represent a response to the invitational rhetoric by engaging with the survey and submitting their responses.

By establishing invitational rhetoric's conditions in her artifacts, Kelsky constitutes her survey and spreadsheet to serve feminist goals, forwarding personal testimony or narratives as valid evidence for the exposure of sexual misconduct and negligence in academic institutions. These power dynamics continually marginalize women as members of the academy, and these commonalities or symbols shed light on the way female corporeality is regarded within higher education. By making a choice to claim ownership over experiences of sexual harassment and subsequent events, survivors become agentive authors of their narratives. Transcribing personal testimony is a way for individuals to reflect on the experiences they've had, where they had little to no control, in order to navigate their trauma and reclaim their identities and their bodies.

Often, the navigation of trauma results in a reframing of the conclusion; with prompts from the survey, narratives end with the long-term impact of the event on the survivor, not on how the perpetrator got off or how the institution saved face. The warrants of participation with Kelsky's artifacts require potential contributors to be keenly aware of the way power hierarchies in academia perpetuate abusive behavior that victimizes underrepresented and subordinate populations in the academy. In part, and with the validation of personal testimony and recognition of sexual harassment as an institutional folly, empowerment precedes participation in the survey. Thus, I argue that the spreadsheet showcases an activation of reciprocal empowerment created by Kelsky's invitational rhetorical situation. In other words, the artifacts' linguistic and structural performance of invitational rhetoric creates the foundation for reciprocal empowerment to become activated.

Stephanie Kerschbaum, in her analysis of disability disclosure and identity performance, also discusses rhetorical agency as something that does not necessarily need to be wielded purposefully or something that needs to realize its intended effect. Agency can be “realized afterwards, such as by relating narratives like those performed in the course of disability disclosure” (64). Rhetorical agency is situated in and negotiated in human interaction (63). If rhetorical agency is “situated and negotiated in human interaction,” then it is something that can be asserted- consciously or not- in discourse. Rhetorical agency can be something women exercise by sharing their experience of sexual harassment. By rhetorically analyzing the discourse in the crowdsourced survey, Kelsky’s artifacts provide an opportunity to learn more about what constitutes agency and demonstrates how reflection can provoke a reclamation of power that results in change.

### **Implications: Recurring Symbols**

By performing invitational rhetoric, the spreadsheet privileges personal testimony surrounding sexual harassment in academia. By transferring privilege to a series of voices that have been systematically undermined for millennia, the spreadsheet sets up a rhetorical situation where the narratives become genred. Thus, I argue that because of the genrefication of the narratives, viewers can expect certain moves to be made that manifest as symbols. The manifestation of moves as symbols can be understood as a coming together within, and defined by, the common context of sexual harassment. While these symbols are seen at the center of the collective consciousness hosted within the spreadsheet, implications are that they in turn rest in the center of academic culture. In the previous chapter, I explored the male gaze as a symbol of particular concern within feminist rhetorical theory. With a few other key symbols presenting

themselves in various narratives, it is worth exploring what they can mean for the perpetuation of unsafe and unjust conditions in academic workplaces.

In “Rhetoric in a New Key, Women and Collaboration,” Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede write to embody the power of storytelling. In telling a number of stories on collaborative writing to underscore the positive consequences of an embodied dialogic when approaching texts, the authors reflect a site of struggle and opportunity. They posit that storytelling gives rhetor and interlocutor the chance to see and feel experiences from a new perspective and glimpse at new and/or different ways of being. Not only do stories shine a light on new perspectives, but they tell us what is “commonsensical” in our society (Lunsford and Ede 234). For example, an interesting trend emerges from the narratives that give insight to academic culture. According to the self-identified status of survivors at the time of the abuse, graduate students are the most vulnerable members of academia, making up 52% of the reported incidents. While tenured professors were the least represented targets featured in the survey, making up .6% of the reported incidents. These numbers are indicative of the advantage taken in relationships hosting an imbalance of power.

By answering the questions in the survey, contributors were prompted to share what happened, what the relationship was with their perpetrator, what consequences the perpetrators faced (if any), and what kind of impact the harassment had on the life of career of the survivor. However, contributors filled in gaps when sharing their stories. While the action of answering any of the questions represents a deliberate choice by the contributor, filling gaps in where Kelsky did not prompt them shows that the survivors are taking control of the narrative. Some

moves made by contributors outside of the immediate request by Kelsky include sharing the type of objectification faced by the individual and the decisions made on how to deal with the incident.

A function of the spreadsheet allows viewers to filter through the survey based on keywords featured in the responses (rape, stalk, professor, mentor, etc.). By using the search term “tenure,” which appears 1,093 times, a few interesting and troublesome implications arise. As expected, when one traces through the stories, the narratives show that perpetrators often occupy a higher-valued position or status in academia. Tenure implies some sort of job security, which can become a barrier to justice when committing a crime like sexual harassment on a colleague or student. In the cases where a perpetrator has tenure, it seems that departments are using tenure as a means to justify a lack of action. Post 185 shares:

I was the only woman in one of my courses. The professor was a man and made inappropriate comments about women all semester that were sexist. He made it clear I wasn't as good as my fellow students because I was a [woman] and that I wouldn't succeed like they would. On multiple occasions he made comments about how women had reported him to Title 9 for sexual harassment and he failed them. He also made comments about how he could say and do whatever he wanted because he was tenured. (185)

Over the course of a career, it is expected that academics disseminate a large quantity of work that leads them to earning recognition, and eventually, tenure. With the often-impressive associated reputation of academics with power, departments seem to associate a greater loss with persecuting a perpetrator than neglecting a newer, or less-valued, survivor. Through the choice to

remain passive, the institution aids in the internalization of immunity within perpetrator; when the harasser feels that he is unstoppable, he is likely to continue, if not increase, his abuse.

On the other hand, the presence of tenure also seems to influence the way individuals assess their chance at justice. Incidents of sexual harassment leave survivors with several decisions to make that will have an effect on short and long term success and health. Understanding the reality of the weight that tenure holds in academia often discourages individuals from taking action. One contributor responded to the question prompting information on institutional responses to the harassment by stating: “None. I haven’t reported it and am unlikely to while I’m untenured.” At times, contributors even cited commentary made by colleagues and higher-ups that suggest survivors lay low to avoid hindering their own chances at tenure. For example, post 130 shares:

In my second year as junior faculty, students came to me to report that the department chair made inappropriate comments during a conference that were sexual in nature. The chair had already had to attend “training” on sexual harassment prior to his career. Upon requesting assistance from another colleague, I was told “this is how he is. Nothing will happen. Protect yourself since you don’t have tenure.” I reported it anonymously and urged the students to report. Nothing happened.

While in this particular incident, the contributor was not personally attacked and did report the incident, I believe that the attitude and workplace culture surrounding sexual assault in academia is well-illustrated insofar as the risk involved in reporting incidents. Interestingly, this risk correlates with the fact that the choice to report harassment often backfires on the victim. By

voicing a behavior that can (and probably should) impact the trajectory of the perpetrators career, the irony lies in that the victim herself is faced with the chance that her career will be negatively impacted.

### **Limitations**

A limitation of this research stemmed from a lack of insight on the way dimensions of diversity outside of sex and gender influence how sexual harassment is constituted in the academy. Previously, feminist methodologies examined sex and gender without prioritizing the intersectionality of dimensions of diversity. In order to get the most well-rounded understanding of communication, intersections of gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, and class must be understood. Feminist methodologies position these factors as additional variables in models of oppression and raise questions about how these factors are intertwined in social divisions and relationships. Furthermore, feminist methodologies seek to validate personal experience and ways of knowing as situated knowledge not limited to the gender spectrum. A limitation on the type of data I am able to retrieve from the survey and spreadsheet include dimensions of diversity that extend beyond sex, gender, and academic status, due to a lack of questions that seek to delineate these kind of differences in the experiences of survivors. On the contrary, Kelsky shares a disclaimer prior to the survey questions that states:

Please exercise caution and restraint in sharing stories that are not your own.

While I appreciate the impulse to make incidents visible, you may further victimize the victim by giving details that are identifiable. Do NOT use identifiers of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. for anyone other than yourself, as in the



tiny disciplinary and departmental worlds that most of us inhabit, these may serve to identify the victim.

Seeing as this limitation is a byproduct of the maintenance of anonymity, it reads as a purposeful way to prevent outing survivors to their colleagues or employers. In order to navigate this limitation, I refer to the authors of the narratives as survivors, participants, contributors, etc. so as not to pigeonhole the authors to any one particular social dimension. However, this research stands to acknowledge the significant correlation between sexual abuse and a female victim. As a start, the project seeks to make visible that there is a problem. Future research may take up the need to elevate the voices of women who may suffer discrimination for reasons outside of their sex, gender, and academic status.

### **Contribution to the Field: Performing Invitational Rhetoric**

By analyzing artifacts that embody values often undermined by patriarchal forces, this research demonstrates the way texts can be used as a means to resist oppression. This kind of discursive space provides a unique opportunity to speak up about truths that administrators and policy makers have historically obscured. The existence of the norms surrounding sexual harassment, namely institutionalized silence, reveals the utility of an invitational approach that allows the complexity of these norms to emerge and be acknowledged in the theorization of rhetoric. Invitational rhetorical construction can be employed when the rhetorical situation calls for a non-adversarial mutual understanding of issues and perspectives. Kelsky's survey and spreadsheet are an interactive form of communication that allows participants to write in regarding trauma that is too inconvenient to navigate for hierarchal institutions. In the case of this research, the conditions of invitational rhetoric served as the foundation of a safe space.

Examining how the space is rhetorically constituted as the survey and spreadsheet provides an example or model for rhetors who desire invitational outcomes. For example, in order to establish the four conditions of invitational rhetoric, a few general moves provide a starting point. For safety, rhetors should maintain transparency by listing the mechanisms of the text, defining terms and the understanding of the language used throughout the text, listing the intentions behind the interactive protocol, and listing how the content may be used in the future. For openness, rhetors should ensure that access to the text is widely available for a well-rounded pool of contributors. For validation, rhetors should use language that illustrates that the initiating party is an ally for the potential contributor, and that the contribution will be taken up with compassion. For freedom, rhetors should welcome candid expression and attempt to remove limitations on the kind of responses that can be submitted (i.e. short responses instead of only multiple choice).

### **Future Research**

This research responds to the need for a broader understanding of what sexual violence and harassment look like in order to deal with the fact that they are more a part of our everyday experiences than some of us are willing to admit. Only through the cultivation of practices of resistance can we develop the kind of collective consciousness that can help us become sensitive to the suffering of excluded and stigmatized subjects. This kind of consciousness can cultivate a model of shared responsibility that aims to improve epistemic conditions of participation in social practices. A deeper understanding can be attained by listening to those who have experienced sexual abuse. When put in conversation with one another, the collective

consciousness reveals commonalities in the experiences of sexual harassment that can shed light on the structures that carry those symbols. Future research should take up questions such as:

- How do women's narratives provide an opportunity to identify moments of objectification?
- What are the commonalities across experiences of sexual harassment in academia?
- How are women designating responsibility for incidents of misconduct?
- How are the ambiguities of the definition of "sexual misconduct" being exploited by both perpetrators and preservers of the status quo?
- How can research determine if non-dominant populations are empowered through invitational rhetoric?
- How can we extend agentive choices beyond an invitational communicative event?

Research on these interactions has beneficial potential outcomes for both men and women. In instances where women are unsure of how to respond, paralyzed by the fear instilled by the male gaze, they may find themselves unable to produce an audible "no" with the conviction necessary to deter a workplace predator (if deterrence was ever a possibility). When this happens, signals are misread, or go unsent, and the parties may end up in a nonconsensual sexual engagement with a bounty of repercussions. I would be willing to argue that there have been men in these situations who genuinely did not have ill intent, yet they face the consequences as a sexual predator. Therefore, further research should seek how to best reform expectations and norms in academic, and all, workplaces so as to create optimal conditions for all people.

## **APPENDIX: SURVEY**

# Sexual Harassment In the Academy: An Anonymous Crowdsourced Survey. By The Professor Is In (Karen Kelsky, Ph.D.; [www.theprofessorisin.com](http://www.theprofessorisin.com) @theprofessorisin)

Created Nov. 30, 2017. This is an open-source survey to gather anonymous stories of sexual harassment in academia/higher ed/college/university/advanced research settings (NOT K-12 or high school or other educational contexts).

Answers will appear automatically on a linked spreadsheet that you can see here:  
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1S9KShDLvU7C-KkgEevYTHXr3F6lnTenrBsS9yk-8C5M/edit#gid=1530077352>

IMPORTANT NOTES--PLEASE READ PRIOR TO FILLING IN THIS SURVEY!!

1) \*\*\*YOUR ANSWERS WILL BE PUBLIC! PLEASE DON'T ENTER ANY RESPONSE ON THIS FORM THAT YOU DO NOT WISH TO BE PUBLIC! THEY WILL BE AUTOMATICALLY ENTERED ON A SPREADSHEET THAT IS PUBLIC

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY AND ASSOCIATED SPREADSHEET IS TO MAKE ANONYMOUS PERSONAL STORIES PUBLICLY AVAILABLE TO GIVE A SENSE OF THE SCALE OF INCIDENTS AND THEIR RECURRING PATTERNS.\*\*\*

2) I will delete entries that appear to be from trolls or counter to the spirit of this project.

3) While I am greatly sympathetic to sexual predation in all professional settings, and want it to be exposed, PLEASE DON'T REPORT STORIES FROM HIGH SCHOOL OR ANY K-12 SETTINGS HERE. My audience and my goal is to try to the degree possible to identify patterns of harassment and harm in HIGHER ED settings -- college, university, academic research labs, research institutions, scholarly conferences and the like, targeting people who have or are seeking advanced degrees such as Ph.D., MA, MFA, Ed.D, J.D., and so on. I hope that others will do a similar project for other levels of schooling.

4) My goal is to allow victims to know they are not alone, and to raise awareness about this scourge in academic settings. Please don't participate if you don't wish to have your anonymous story visible to others. I fully support your right and desire to NOT share your story here if you prefer not to.

I will be discussing the content of this survey on my blog, The Professor Is In, and on my Professor Is In FB and Twitter accounts, and possibly in a Chronicle of Higher Education column, but have no plans to use it in any other way. I make it available for research projects only with permission; anyone seeking to use this material in research, please email me at the email address below. [Update 1/13/18: after going viral, the survey has been featured in the Wall Street Journal, The Guardian, Fortune, BuzzFeed, Jezebel, and other media outlets.]

5) Any cels marked [Removed] or [Redacted] represent content that the contributor requested remain confidential when filling in the form, upon realizing that all content goes automatically to a public spreadsheet. I am monitoring for this several times a day, and would appreciate alerts by email if you see content that needs to be removed.

6) I leave the definition of "Sexual Harassment" open; you may share anything that you feel merits inclusion here. My goal here is to make visible the unacknowledged scope and scale of the problem of sexual harassment in academic settings in the aggregate - with complete anonymity for all who participate. I will make no effort to use this information for any purpose except to increase public awareness on my blog. I will make no effort to identify the contributors or the actors in their stories in any way.

7) Please exercise caution and restraint in sharing stories that are not your own. While I appreciate the impulse to make incidents visible, you may further victimize the victim by giving details that are identifiable. Do NOT use identifiers of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc. for anyone other than yourself, as in the tiny disciplinary and departmental worlds that most of us inhabit, these may serve to identify the victim.

8) Any names will be XX-ed out of this publicly available document. However, if you wish for me to know your name or the name of the harasser, or have a personal request with regard to the information, please email me privately at [gettenure@gmail.com](mailto:gettenure@gmail.com). Many have done so, and I hold that information in total and complete confidentiality. Those who do say have consistently said that it was cathartic to name the perpetrator, even if it is just privately, to me. My list currently includes 123 names; I will potentially put people in touch who are victims of the same predator.

Thank you for participating; feel free to share with your networks.

**What Happened and When? (Feel free to include incidents that happened to you or to others close to you in your program/department/campus/lab/disciplinary group)**

Your answer

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**What Was Your Status When the Incident(s) Happened?**

Your answer

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**What Was the Status of the Perpetrator(s) (Particularly, relative to you)?**

Your answer

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### What Was the Gender of the Harasser?

- Woman
- Man
- Non-Binary
- Unsure (if harassment was anonymous, for example)
- Various incidents with people of different genders
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### What Type of Institution Was It?

- Elite Institution/Ivy League
- Other R1
- Small Liberal Arts College
- R2
- Regional Teaching College
- Other Research Agency
- Other Type of School
- More Than One Institution (feel free to elaborate in "Comments")



**(Optional) What Was The Name of the Institution(s)**

Your answer

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**Your Field/Discipline**

Your answer

---

**Institutional Responses to the Harassment (If Any)**

Your answer

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**Institutional/Career Consequences for the Harasser (If Any)**

Your answer

---

**The Impact of the Harassment on Your Career**

Your answer

---

**The Impact of the Harassment on Your Mental Health**

Your answer

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## The Impact of the Harassment on Your Life Choices/Trajectory

Your answer

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Other Comments You'd Like to Add (If you'd like me to know your name or the name of the perpetrator, please email me privately at [gettenure@gmail.com](mailto:gettenure@gmail.com). The purpose of this survey is to gather anonymous information to give a sense of scale. As always, I will publish no information without explicit permission and extensive prior discussion)

Your answer

---

**SUBMIT**

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

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