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Is the “Red-Zone” White?: Associations between Racialized Identity, Sex Assigned at Birth, and College Sexual Assault Experiences

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I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Jenaë Bluhm entitled "Is the "Red-Zone" White?: Associations between Racialized Identity, Sex Assigned at Birth, and College Sexual Assault Experiences." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Child and Family Studies.

Dr. Spencer B. Olmstead, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

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(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

**Is the “Red-Zone” White?: Associations between Racialized Identity, Sex Assigned
at Birth, and College Sexual Assault Experiences**

A Thesis Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Jenae Bluhm
May 2021

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ABSTRACT

Guided by Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) and using data from the Online College Social Life Survey, we investigated whether the concept of the “red-zone” (i.e., the idea that first-year students are more likely than older students to be sexually assaulted; Cranney, 2015) was a universal concept or if it was relevant to only White students. Additionally, we sought to determine whether Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color (BIPOC) students were more likely to report having been sexually assaulted than White students. We conducted three logistic regressions to examine overall sexual assault experiences and three logistic regressions to examine whether reported sexual assault experiences occurred during the “red-zone.” Results indicated that Black men were more likely than White men, that AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) and Latinx women were less likely than White women, and that multiracial women were more likely than White women to experience physically-forced rape at some point in college. We also found that Black and multiracial men were more likely than White men, and AAPI and Latinx women were less likely than White women to experience verbally-pressured rape. Results also indicated that AAPI men were less likely than White men and that Black, AAPI, and Latinx women were less likely than White women to be raped while incapacitated during college. Additionally, when examining red-zone experiences, the interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth were not found to be associated with rape experiences measured in this study. However, women were more likely than men to experience sexual assault during the “red-zone.”

Key Words: College students, Intersectionality, racialized identities, rape, red-zone, sexual assault

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

At least 1 in 5 college women are sexually assaulted at some point during their university experience (Muehlenhard et al., 2016). Likewise, college men between the ages of 18 and 24 are five times more likely to be sexually assaulted than their non-college peers of the same age (Department of Justice, 2014). The consequences of these experiences are cause for concern. Research suggests that sexual assault survivors may experience mental health (i.e., anxiety and depression; Carey et al., 2018), physical health (i.e., pain that affects survivors' ability to work; Jozkowski & Sanders, 2012), and/or academic challenges (Jordan et al., 2014).

Although most reported sexual assaults are by White women, Coulter et al. (2017) found that 8.7% of Black students and 8.6% of students of a race unlisted on their survey had experienced sexual assault, in comparison to 7.0% of White students. These rates are particularly alarming when considering that Black people are often less likely to trust the healthcare system than White people (Boulware et al., 2003), likely due to medical racism (e.g., the Tuskegee Experiment, Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020; higher number of pregnancy-related deaths, CDC, 2019).

Sexual assault consequences are also particularly relevant to first-year college students, as these students (often women) typically find themselves in a “red-zone,” a time period wherein students are most likely to experience sexual assault while attending college (Cranney, 2015).

Contribution and Purpose of the Study

Whereas some existing research has examined the “red-zone” (i.e., Cranney, 2015) and, respectively, the sexual assault experiences of BIPOC students (i.e., Harris, 2020; Krebs et al., 2011), there are not (to our knowledge) studies that have examined the intersection of racialized identity and the “red-zone” phenomenon. We wondered if the “red-zone” is a phenomenon relevant only to White students, as it appears that White students are most often involved in the types of contexts that typically produce the “red-zone” (Hughey, 2010; Salinas et al., 2019) and past “red-zone” research has not examined how racialized identity may inform a student’s sexual assault experiences (or lack of sexual assault experiences; Cranney, 2015). As such, it is likely that much of the attention given to campus sexual assault is focused on White first-year students, rather than all students.

Sexual assault statistics may not always be reflective of the experiences of a variety of individuals, rather than just White survivors. For example, the National Crime Victimization Survey (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2018), whose statistics are widely shared by the Rape And Incest National Network (RAINN, 2021), asked survey participants to report demographic information about the sexual assault perpetrators but not their own demographic characteristics. Consequently, although these statistics draw warranted attention to sexual assault experiences, they are not generalizable to survivors of various ethnicities. Thus, there is clearly a need to apply a critical, intersectional lens to our investigations of sexual assault experiences.

In 2020, Harris called for “scholars...[to]...take a race-conscious and intersectional approach to [campus sexual assault]” (p. 27). In heed to this call, the purpose of our study was to determine whether BIPOC students were more likely than White students to experience rape during their college experience. We also sought to build upon “red-zone” research (Cranney,

2015) by investigating whether this phenomenon is relevant to Black, AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander), Latinx, and multiracial students or if it is relevant only to White first-year students. We addressed these purposes by analyzing data from the Online College Social Life Survey (OCSLS), a large study that included students of various racial/ethnic identities from 22 universities across the United States.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This study focused on the sexual assault experiences of college students and examined how these experiences differed for students of a variety of racial/ethnic and gender identities. We draw upon the theory of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) to examine the intersection of multiple oppressed identities, specifically gender and racial/ethnic identities. Intersectionality also guided our investigation of whether and how the number of marginalized identities informs the likelihood of self-reported sexual assault experiences and whether these experiences were most likely to occur during the first year of college (during the “red-zone”) or during subsequent years.

The purpose of Intersectionality is to examine the interactions of multiple marginalized identities (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991; Romero, 2018). As stated by Romero (2018), “...by avoiding only looking at racism, sexism, classism, or other ‘isms’ apart from one another, we focus on the intersection of these various forms of oppressions as they actually exist in our daily lives” (p. 36). This assertion was supported by several researchers (e.g., Lewis et al., 2018; Moradi & Grzanka, 2017) who clarified that to correctly and appropriately use Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) is to examine the ways that individuals experience compounded oppression at the hands of intersecting systems of power (i.e., Black, AAPI, Latinx, Indigenous, Polynesian, and multiracial women are simultaneously oppressed by sexism and racism).

Although Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) is also used to examine various marginalized identities (e.g., classism, racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, etc.), it originated from Black women’s experiences of being erased from both discussions of sexism and

discussions of race (Crenshaw, 1989). Women of Color's centrality to Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) is confirmed by Moradi and Grzanka (2017). In fact, this erasure experienced by Black women led to Alice Walker's (1983) Womanism movement, as White feminists marginalized and excluded Black female voices in the fight for women's rights.

Romero (2018) likened Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) to a Rubik's cube: intersecting identities are experienced all at once and the interaction of these identities looks different in various situations. Collins (2000) also explained that BIPOC women, particularly Black women, "encounter a distinctive set of social practices that accompany our particular history within a unique matrix of domination characterized by intersecting oppressions" (p. 23).

However, when using Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), it is not enough to simply examine the intersection of various identities. This does not mean that Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) can only be used to examine the experiences of women (Brassel et al., 2020). Rather, "what makes an analysis intersectional is its conceptualization of social categories not as distinct or static entities (like identities) but as mutually constructed and fluid, continually shaping and shaped by dynamics of power" (Moradi & Grzanka, 2017; p. 506). In other words, Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) also acknowledges that a person can simultaneously have experiences of privilege and oppression, both of which inform their experiences and manifest differently in different situations. These dual experiences do not cancel each other out (i.e., just because a Black man does not experience sexism does not mean that he is free from any form of oppression; Moradi & Grzanka, 2017). As such, our study examined the experiences of both men and women, so as to consider the experiences of a variety of intersectional experiences. To further contextualize the study of campus sexual assault within Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), "using an intersectional framework...exhibits how intersecting systems

of domination embedded throughout institutions, and not only individual behaviors, such as students' alcohol consumption, contribute to the perpetuation of violence against Women of Color on Campus” (Harris, 2020; p. 3-4).

As discussed throughout the paper, sexual assault is prevalent on college campuses (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014), and these experiences likely differ based on the intersections of racial/ethnic identity and gender. Below we discuss research findings on campus sexual assault, followed by a discussion of each of these characteristics.

The “Big Picture” of College Student Sexual Assault

Sexual assault on college campuses is a prevalent problem across the U.S. Between 18 and 20% of college women, 4% of college men, and 21% of transgender students (see Cantor et al., 2015; Muehlenhard et al., 2016) experience sexual assault during their time in college. In response to these high rates of sexual assault on campuses, President Obama (2014) dedicated an entire weekly address to campus sexual assault and launched a campaign (“It’s on Us”; White House Task Force, 2014) to end sexual assault on college campuses. At the launch of this campaign, he emphasized that everyone must do their part to curtail campus assault, stating that “it is on all of us to reject the quiet tolerance of sexual assault [on campus] and to refuse to accept what’s unacceptable” (Obama, 2014). These statistics indicate that sexual assault warrants ongoing research not only to acknowledge this pervasive problem, and its causes, but to also provide direction for making changes to prevent future sexual assault on college campuses.

Sexual Assault and BIPOC Students

One aspect of sexual assault on campus that needs additional attention is the sexual assault experiences of students of Color, or those who identify as Black, Latinx, AAPI, bi/multi-racial or another minoritized group. Because peoples and students of Color are not a monolith,

the rates of sexual assault among various racialized groups varies. The CDC (2011) reported that 26.9% of Indigenous women, 22.5% of Black women, 14.6% of Latinx women, and 33.5% of multiracial women in the U.S. have experienced rape at some point in their lives.

According to Coulter et al. (2017), the highest rates of sexual assault on campus are among Black students and students who identified as a race not listed on their survey. However, some research has found no differences in the sexual assault rates of students from varying racialized identities (e.g., Krebs et al., 2016) and still other research has found that Black women are less likely than White women to experience sexual assault during college (Krebs et al., 2011). These statistics must be contextualized within our knowledge that, although Tarana Burke (2020) originated the #MeToo movement in 2006, the movement has since been colonized by White women (i.e., a news article entitled “A year ago, Alyssa Milano started a conversation about #MeToo. These women replied”; Pflum, 2018)—this often leads BIPOC women who have experienced rape to not feel comfortable discussing their sexual assault experiences (Harris, 2020).

Whether or not Black, Latinx, AAPI, Indigenous, and other students of Color experience different rates of sexual assault than White students, it is crucial to note that any students of Color who experience sexual assault are likely to have a different experience than White student survivors. For example, Black women are more likely than White women to have their victimization marginalized (Crenshaw, 1991) and forgotten (Barlow, 2020). Likewise, we acknowledge that the experiences of BIPOC survivors will differ. Students of any racialized group, including students who are Black, Latinx, AAPI, Middle Eastern, Indigenous, multiracial, and/or another racialized minority are not a monolith.

The odds of survivors of Color being effectively assisted are especially dim when one

considers the dismal rate which rape kits have been used in the past (e.g., Ritter, 2011; 2016), the unacceptable treatment of BIPOC women who have been raped while at college (Harris, 2020), and the way in which White sexual assault survivors are treated (e.g., Runtagh & Edge, 2017). This is not to imply that women of Color are worth less than White women, but to acknowledge that women of Color must deal with both discrimination against their gender and discrimination against their racialized identity (Crenshaw, 1991). Black female rape survivors also commonly face an added measure of scrutiny and judgment that White survivors do not, purely because of their being both Black and female (Crenshaw, 1991). As such, it is important to intentionally examine the nature of the sexual assault experiences of students of Color and acknowledge that students of various racialized identities are not a monolith.

Sexual Assault Experiences of College Men

Another group that often experiences marginalization is male sexual assault survivors, which may be due to the myth that “real” men “always” want sex (Sleath & Bull, 2010). Indeed, it is not solely women who experience sexual assault. The National Crime Victimization Survey found that, between 1995 and 2013, 17% of student rape survivors were men and 4% of non-student rape survivors were men (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014). Likewise, college men between the ages of 18-24 are five times more likely to experience sexual assault than their non-student peers of the same age (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2014).

One possible explanation for college men being more likely (in comparison to non-student men of the same age) to be sexually assaulted may be due to the college party/drinking culture (Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013). For example, hazing rituals commonly involve forcing new pledges to consume dangerous amounts of alcohol and, sometimes, forcing them to perform sexual behaviors (Allen & Madden, 2008). Although some might contend that sexual behavior

that occurs within the context of hazing does not qualify as sexual assault because there are not any “real” (i.e., job loss) consequences of not participating (Ward, 2015), Allen and Madden (2008) contended that “hazing is any activity expected of someone joining or participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses, or endangers them regardless of a person’s willingness to participate” (p. 14). Thus, it is possible that the pressure to conform and belong experienced by college men who participate in Greek life and other university organizations may provide a partial explanation for the increase in college men’s sexual assault victimization.

The likelihood of college male sexual assault victimization may also be a result of the cultural narrative of manhood. For example, Hollway’s (1985) “Male sexual drive discourse” suggests that men are “always” interested in sex and therefore “always” consent to sex. The combination of the idea that men “always” want sex (Hollway, 1985) and the culture of sexual freedom on college campuses (Armstrong et al., 2006) may create an environment in which men feel pressured to have sex, even when they do not actually want to have sex (Kettrey, 2016).

To investigate how racialized identity and gender inform sexual assault experiences, we tested the following hypotheses:

H1: Black women, AAPI women, Latinx women, and multiracial women will be more likely than White women, White men, Black men, AAPI men, Latinx men, and multiracial men to (a) report an incapacitated rape experience while attending college, (b) report a verbally pressured rape experience while attending college, and (c) report a physically forced rape experience while attending college.

Sexual Assault and First-Year Students: The “Red-Zone”

We further unpacked the Intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) sexual assault experiences of study participants by examining students’ “red-zone” experiences. The “red-zone” (Cranney, 2015) is the concept that first-year students are more likely to be sexually assaulted than more advanced college students (Armstrong et al., 2006; Cranney, 2015). This is not to say that only first-year students experience sexual assault, but that the “red-zone” simply draws attention to the increased risk of sexual assault among first-year students.

The “Red-Zone’ Cocktail”

It might be said that the “red-zone” is a “cocktail” of various factors present in a college student’s first year. The first “ingredient” of the “red-zone’ cocktail” is first-year students’ desire to fit in with their peers (Armstrong et al., 2006). These new students perceive that the best way to achieve their goal of fitting in is to join the college party scene (Armstrong et al., 2006; Armstrong & Hamilton, 2013). However, when the party scene is combined with additional “cocktail” ingredients (i.e., first-year students’ vulnerability, the predatory nature of many fraternities, and the presence of alcohol—which is often controlled by fraternities Armstrong et al., 2006), the “red-zone’ cocktail” develops.

Perhaps one of the most influential and concerning aspects of the “red-zone’ cocktail” is the hierarchy between fraternity members and first-year students (especially first-year women; Armstrong, 2006). Research has shown that subordinates may have difficulty saying “no” to a person in power (Hirsch & Khan, 2020; Johnson et al., 2018). This phenomenon is especially dangerous because fraternity men often expect female attendees to rely on them for transportation, to “show appreciation” for the party through sexual favors, and generally occupy

a subordinate role to fraternity men (Armstrong et al., 2006). These factors increase the likelihood of women falling prey to party rape (Armstrong et al., 2006).

Effects of the “Red-Zone”

Not surprisingly, students victimized by the “red-zone” are adversely affected (Armstrong et al., 2006). For example, a student’s first year of college is already fraught with new stresses (i.e., a new environment, new decisions, and new and more difficult coursework; Gibney et al., 2011). Adding a traumatic sexual experience is likely to make any student’s first year of college even more difficult, and may cause them to drop out, as sexual assault is associated with decreased mental health (Carey et al., 2018), and decreased mental health is associated with academic attrition (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2012).

Racialized Identities and the “Red-Zone”

Although literature that examines the “red-zone” discusses the concept as a universal and inevitable risk for all first-year students, we wondered if the “red-zone” is a phenomenon unique to White first-year students, in particular. We noted above that perhaps the most powerful part of the “‘red-zone’ cocktail” is the influence of campus fraternity houses. However, research indicates that most students involved in fraternities are White (Hughey, 2010; Princeton University, 2011; Ross, 2016) and Greek organizations are known for their racist tendencies and exclusion of students of Color (Hughey, 2010; Salinas et al., 2019). Thus, because of the demographic and historic racism among many fraternities, it is likely that White first-year women are at greatest risk for “red-zone” victimization. To investigate how racialized identity and gender inform sexual assault experiences during the “red-zone,” we tested the following hypotheses:

H2: White women will be more likely than White men, Black men, AAPI men, Latinx men, multiracial men, and Black women, AAPI women, Latinx women, and multiracial women to (a) report a physically forced rape experience during the “red-zone,” (b) verbally pressured rape during the “red-zone,” and (c) report an incapacitated rape experience during the “red-zone.”

CHAPTER THREE

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Current Study

To examine sexual assault experiences using Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), we conducted a secondary analysis of the Online College Social Life Survey (OCSLS) data set. The OCSLS includes an overall sample size of 24,131 college students from across the U.S. and was cross-sectional.

Participants

All Participants

To investigate H1a-c (i.e., if study participants ever had various types of sexual assault experiences during college), we included all study participants that identified as either cisgender female (68.8%) or cisgender male (31.2%). Although transgender and non-binary individuals are more likely than cisgender individuals to experience sexual assault (Cantor et al., 2015), we unfortunately had to remove transgender male ($n = 11$), transgender female ($n = 25$), and non-binary ($n = 155$) participants from the sample, due to small cell sizes. However, research indicates that the experiences of transgender and non-binary students warrant scholarly attention. Although the researchers who collected the OCSLS data provided participants with many racialized identity options, such as Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, “NA”, Indigenous (“Native American”), an unlisted AAPI ethnicity, an unlisted Latinx (“Hispanic”) ethnicity, an unlisted race, Puerto Rican, South Asian, Vietnamese, and White. Due to small cell sizes for some of these identities (i.e., among study participants who had experienced sexual assault, there were just four Indigenous women and no Indigenous men), we collapsed various racial/ethnic categories into five racialized identities: White (59.1%), multiracial (13.7%), AAPI

(13.3%), Latinx (8.9%) and Black (5%). To identify multiracial students, we counted the students who marked at least two races, when asked to mark all of their racialized identities. These adjustments resulted in 23,373 students that were included in our first set of hypothesis tests.

In regards to the term we chose to use to describe study participants of Mexican, Central and South American descent, we used “Latinx” as it is the term recommended by the American Psychological Association ([APA] 2019). However, we acknowledge that some may consider the term “Latinx” problematic (i.e., it may be difficult for non-English dominant members of the Latin community to pronounce; de Onís, 2017), and that the term truncates the rich diversity of the various Latin ethnicities into one monolithic term.

Additionally, we have intentionally chosen to use the term “racialized identity,” rather than “race” because “the invention of racialized groups (e.g., American Indians, black Americans, etc.) was for the benefit of European domination and oppression” (Williams, 2019, p. 658). In other words, the term “racialized identity” better acknowledges that race is a social construct and a process that was enacted by White people who colonized the land of other groups. Also, per APA recommendations, we did not capitalize the term “multiracial” (APA, 2019).

We also acknowledge that, when describing the sex of study participants, we use the term “sex assigned at birth,” rather than “biological sex” because:

“This functionally describes the assignment of a sex term (frequently binary male or female; however, intersex is an accurate assignment for some) predicated on observation of genitalia and/or determination of chromosomes and anatomical structures of the body

at birth, which necessarily is interpreted within a sociocultural context” (APA, 2019; para. 7).

Survivor Participants

To investigate H2a-c (i.e., if study participants who were sexual assault survivors had experienced various types of sexual assault experiences during the “red-zone”), we included all study participants who had experienced sexual assault that identified as either cisgender male (22.8%) or cisgender female (77.2%) (due to the fact that we had to remove the transgender and non-binary students). As with the previous hypotheses, we collapsed the various ethnicities into five general categories of racialized identities: White (61.1%), multiracial (16.7%), AAPI (10.1%), Latinx (7.1%) Black (4.9%). These adjustments resulted in 3,457 students who had experienced sexual assault and were included in our second set of hypothesis tests.

Procedure

The OCSLS was created by Dr. Paula England of New York University and was administered via the internet to students from 22 universities across the United States, between the years 2005 and 2011 (<https://pages.nyu.edu/ocsls/2010/>). Participating students were recruited from classes within a variety of departments and most, but not all, students that agreed to participate were recruited through these classes. Most of the classes from which students were recruited had a response rate between 99% and 100% (Armstrong et al., 2012), despite the fact that students could choose an alternative means of receiving credit. The OCSLS also asked participants to provide demographic information. The questions about sexual history most relevant to our study were those that asked students to report whether they had been sexually assaulted, the circumstance in which they experienced sexual assault (i.e., physical force, verbal

pressure, and/or while incapacitated), and when the assault happened (i.e., freshman year, sophomore year, etc.).

Measures: Control Variables

Greek Membership

Our first control variable measured study participants' panhellenic involvement. We chose to control for Greek membership due to the association between Greek life and sexual assault (i.e., Armstrong, 2006). Study participants reported on their Greek membership (i.e., membership in a fraternity or a sorority) by providing a dichotomous response (0 = *No*, 1 = *Yes*) to the question, "Are you in a fraternity or sorority?"

Age

Our second control variable was participants' age, which was measured on a continuous scale (ranging from 18 through 25). We controlled for age because research suggests that younger students are more likely to be sexually assaulted (Cranney, 2015).

Measures: Independent Variables

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic variables relevant to our study were each measured with a single item. In response to the question, "What is your gender?", students selected one of the following response options: male, female, female-to-male (transgender male), male-to-female (transgender female), and N/A. Due to small cell sizes, we removed transgender participants and N/A participants and created a dichotomous gender variable (0 = *Male*, 1 = *Female*). As such, references to "male" and "female" study participants will henceforth refer to cisgender study participants. Additionally, "sex assigned at birth" will now replace our usage of "gender."

In response to the question, “Which of these racial or ethnic groups describes you? (check all that apply)”, participants selected one or more of the following racialized identities or ethnicities provided by the OCSLS: White, Black/African-American, Chinese (from the US, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, etc.), Japanese, Korean, Filipino, Vietnamese, South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, etc.), Other Asian, Native American/Indian/Native Alaskan, Mexican American, Puerto Rican, other Hispanic, and “Other.” Due to small cell sizes, we removed Indigenous participants and participants who identified as an unlisted race, and collapsed the remaining ethnicities into five categories of racialized identities (1 = *White*, 2 = *Black/African-American*, 3 = *AAPI*, 4 = *Latinx*, and 5 = *multiracial*).

Measures: Dependent Variables

Sexual Assault Experiences

To measure students’ sexual assault experiences, we used three separate variables. Three items asked, “Since the start of college...” (a) “have you had sexual intercourse that was physically forced on you?”, (b) “have you had sexual intercourse that you did not want because someone verbally pressured you?”, and (c) “has someone had sexual intercourse with you that you did not want when you were drunk, passed out, asleep, drugged, or otherwise incapacitated?” In response to these questions, students were able to choose one of the following options: Never, Once, More than Once and N/A. Because we were conducting binary logistic regression analyses, we recoded this dependent variable as (0) *No* and (1) *Yes—once or more*.

Students who had experienced sexual assault were also asked to report when the assault had occurred, and could choose from the following options: Freshman, sophomore, junior, senior, fifth or higher year undergraduate, and graduate student. Because this variable was originally categorical, we recoded it numerically (i.e., (1) *Freshman*, (2) *Sophomore*, (3) *Junior*,

etc.) so we could include it in our logistic regression analyses. Because we wanted to make comparisons between students who had and had not experienced sexual assault, and also between non “red-zone” and “red-zone” sexual assault survivors, we coded a new variable that differentiated between sexual assault survivors who had been assaulted during their freshman year of college, and survivors who had been assaulted during later years of college: (0) *Yes, but not in the “red-zone”* and (1) *Yes, during the “red-zone.”*

Analysis Plan

Binomial Logistic Regressions

To test our hypotheses, we conducted a series of six binomial logistic regressions. By conducting these analyses, we operated under the following assumptions: (a) there was correct model specification, (b) the variables were measured without error, (c) any errors were made independent of one another, and (d) there was no perfect multicollinearity (Lewis-Beck, 1980). Logistic regression allowed us to examine how the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth are associated with the likelihood of reporting general sexual assault experiences and sexual assault experiences during the “red-zone.”

The first three regressions examined, respectively, physically-forced rape experiences, verbally-pressured rape experiences, and incapacitated rape experiences as separate dependent variables. Each dependent variable was regressed onto each of the independent variables racialized identity and sex assigned at birth and onto the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth. Greek membership and age served as control variables in each model. These first three logistic regression models focused on comparing those who reported not having experience any of the three forms of sexual assault to those who reported at least one or more instances of sexual assault (0 = *No*, 1 = *Yes*).

The next set of regression analyses used an adapted version of the three dependent variables that were used in the previous three logistic regression models (physically-forced rape, verbally-pressured rape, and incapacitated rape). Specifically, because these final three logistic regressions were investigating whether survivor participants had been assaulted in the “red-zone,” these three adapted dependent variables were coded as 0 = *Yes, but not in the “red-zone”* and 1 = *Yes, during the “red-zone.”* Each of these adapted dependent variables was, respectively, regressed onto each of the independent variables (racialized identity and sex assigned at birth) and onto the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth. The control variables for this set of analyses were Greek membership and age.

Chi-Square Analyses and Cross-Tabulations

Prior to conducting the binomial logistic regression analyses, we conducted chi-square analyses to identify whether there were proportional differences between the various ethnicities of study participants, in relation to our dependent variables. We also chose to conduct these chi-square tests to identify the most appropriate way to categorize the various races/ethnicities (e.g., keeping all AAPI ethnicities separate or collapsing them all into one group coded as “AAPI”).

Additionally, we conducted cross-tabulations for both the overall subsample (i.e., all study participants, regardless of survivor status) and the reduced subsample (i.e., the study participants who had experienced sexual assault), so as to examine cell sizes of the intersections of various racialized identities and sex assigned at birth. In other words, we conducted these analyses to avoid unnecessarily collapsing unique ethnicities into one category and to acknowledge differences between the various ethnicities that compose each racialized category of identity. Examining cell sizes ensured that we only collapsed ethnicities into one category if the number of participants in a given cell did not allow us to conduct statistical analyses with

sufficient statistical power. Although we did not construct tables that enumerate these analyses, the results of the Chi-Square analyses and cross-tabulations are available upon request.

Variable Relationships and Variance Explained

To determine whether the independent variables were related to the dependent variables, we examined the Wald test statistic, which is based on the omnibus Chi-Square test. This specified whether the coefficient is significantly different than zero. The independent variables were entered at the same time, as we did not have a theoretical reason for entering variables in a step-wise manner. Additionally, in order to know if the dependent variables were multicollinear, we ran bivariate correlations between them.

To (cautiously) determine how much of the variance is explained in each dependent variable, we examined a pseudo Nagelkerke R^2 . Because we are using a categorical dependent variable, variance does not necessarily apply as it would in an ordinary least squares regression. However, we were able to use the classification tables to see how well the independent variables in each model correctly classified participants based on their responses.

Probability, Odds Ratios, and Model-Data Fit

Regarding p -values, we set the probability value at .05, which indicates there is a 5% chance that statistically significant findings are due to chance. Additionally, $p < .05$ is a widely accepted p -value and this is largely attributed to Fisher (1956). As for confidence intervals, we used 95% confidence intervals when examining the odds ratios, which gave us a better idea of what the true odds ratios may be. Specifically, the tighter the confidence interval, the more confidence we have in the odds ratio estimate. In contrast, the wider the confidence interval, the less confidence we have in the odds ratio estimate. Having a value of zero within the upper and

lower confidence intervals indicates there is no significant relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

An odds ratio over 1.00 would mean that having a certain characteristic (e.g., identifying as a minoritized race, being female) indicates a participant is more likely to report having experienced the dependent variables during either their first year or at some other point during college. An odds ratio below 1.00 would mean that having a certain characteristic (e.g., being male) indicates a participant is less likely to report having experienced the dependent variable during either their first year or at some other point during college.

To determine whether the model-data fit is acceptable, we consulted the likelihood ratio test. The likelihood ratio test determines model fit by subtracting the Log-likelihood for the researcher's model (i.e., the final model) from the Log-likelihood for the null model (i.e., the intercept-only model). This equation determined whether the final model chi-square is higher than the intercept-only model chi-square. If the final model chi-square is greater than the intercept-only model chi-square, the model will have a significant p -value and therefore be determined to have acceptable model-data fit.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

We conducted six logistic regressions to investigate each of our six hypotheses (H1a-c, H2a-c). First, we examined participants' general sexual assault experiences using the full subsample. We then examined participants' "red-zone" experiences using a subsample of only study participants who had experienced sexual assault. In each hypothesis test we controlled for age and Greek membership.

General Sexual Assault Experiences (H1a-c)

Physically-Forced Rape Experiences (H1a)

Our first model, which was significant ($\chi^2 = 267.06, p \leq .001$), regressed the dependent variable of rape experience onto the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth. Interpreting the (pseudo) Nagelkerke R^2 , we found that the overall model explained 3.1% of the variance and correctly classified 94.0% of participants. Because the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth was significant ($p = .006$) (see Table 1), we split the model, by sex assigned at birth, into two separate models to more closely examine the interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth.

Men's Physically-Forced Rape Experiences

The model for men was significant ($\chi^2 = 33.41, p \leq .001$), explained 1.6% of the variance and correctly classified 95.9% of participants. Results indicated that Black men were almost twice as likely (OR = 1.88, $p = .005$) as White men to have experienced rape during college. No other differences were found based on men's racialized identities (see Table 2).

Women's Physically-Forced Rape Experiences

The model for women was significant ($\chi^2 = 164.46, p \leq .001$), explained 2.6% of the variance and correctly classified 93.1% of participants. Results indicated that AAPI women were 18.6% less likely (OR = .81, $p = .046$), Latinx women were 28.3% less likely (OR = .72 $p = .007$), and multiracial women were 1.35 times more likely ($p \leq .001$) than White women to have experienced physically-forced rape during college. No differences were found between Black women and White women in reports of physically-forced rape experienced during college (see Table 3).

Verbally-Pressured Rape Experiences (H1b)

We next examined pressured rape experiences based on the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth. This model was also significant ($\chi^2 = 363.77, p \leq .001$), explained 3.7% of the variance and correctly classified 92.2% of participants. Because the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth was significant ($p = .024$) (see Table 4), we again split our model by sex assigned at birth to further investigate this interaction.

Men's Verbally-Pressured Rape Experiences

This model was significant ($\chi^2 = 52.51, p \leq .001$), explained 2.3% of the variance and correctly classified 95.4% of participants. In this model, Black men were almost twice as likely (OR = 1.71 $p = .010$) and multiracial men were almost 1.5 times more likely (OR = 1.47, $p = .011$) than White men to experience verbally-pressured rape during college. No other differences were found based on racialized identity (see Table 5).

Women's Verbally-Pressured Rape Experiences

This model was significant ($\chi^2 = 154.67, p \leq .001$), explained 2.1% of the variance and correctly classified 90.7% of participants. Results indicated that AAPI women were 33.5% less

likely (OR = .67, $p \leq .001$) and Latinx women were 40.4% less likely (OR = .60, $p = .007$) than White women to experience verbally-pressured rape during college. No other differences were found based on racialized identity (see Table 6).

Incapacitated Rape Experiences (H1c)

The final dependent variable that we regressed onto our interaction terms was incapacitated rape experiences, or being raped while intoxicated, under the influence of drugs, being asleep, or otherwise not in the state of mind to consent to sex. This model was significant ($\chi^2 = 317.87$, $p \leq .001$), explained 3.5% of the variance and correctly classified 93.0% of participants. Because the interaction of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth was significant ($p = .001$) (see Table 7), we again split our model by sex assigned at birth to further investigate this interaction.

Men's Incapacitated Rape Experiences

This model was significant ($\chi^2 = 60.33$, $p < .001$), explained 2.6% of the variance and correctly classified 95% of participants. Results indicated that AAPI men were 41.4% less likely (OR = .59, $p = .006$) than White men to experience incapacitated rape during college. No other differences were found based on racialized identity (see Table 8).

Women's Incapacitated Rape Experiences

This model was significant ($\chi^2 = 202.31$, $p \leq .001$), explained 3% of the variance and correctly classified 92.2% of participants. Results indicated that Black women (OR = .45, $p \leq .001$), AAPI women (OR = .54, $p \leq .001$), and Latinx women (OR = .57, $p \leq .001$) were all about half as likely as White women to experience incapacitated rape during college. No other differences were found based on racialized identity (see Table 9).

Control variables

An examination of the Greek membership control variable indicated statistical significance in the physically forced rape experience model (OR = 1.56, $p \leq .001$), in the verbally pressured sex rape model (OR = 1.30, $p \leq .001$), and the incapacitated rape model (OR = 1.68, $p \leq .001$); to see the significance of the Greek membership control variable in the split models, please see the relevant tables. Regarding age as a control variable, we found statistical significance for the physically-forced rape experience model (OR = 1.67, $p \leq .001$), verbally pressured rape experience model (OR = 1.15, $p \leq .001$), and the incapacitated rape experience model (OR = 1.16, $p \leq .001$). To see the statistical significance of age as a control variable in the split models, please refer to the relevant tables.

“Red-Zone” Sexual Assault Experiences (H2a-c)

To examine the “red-zone” sexual assault experiences of participants, we limited our next set of analyses to those who reported having experienced sexual assault during college. We then considered whether these occurred during the first year of college or later during the college experience. All models controlled for age and Greek membership.

Physically-Forced Rape Experiences in the “Red-Zone” (H2a)

Our first model focused on the “red-zone” was significant ($\chi^2 = 274.80$, $p \leq .001$), explained 25.5% of the variance and correctly classified 69.2% of participants. The interaction term for sex assigned at birth and racialized identity was not significant ($p = .345$), so we did not split the model to focus attention on each sex. We therefore examined the main effects and found that women were over two times more likely (OR = 2.13, $p \leq .001$) than men to report experiencing physically-forced rape during the “red-zone.” No main effects were found for racialized identity (see Table 10).

Verbally-Pressured Rape Experiences in the “Red-Zone” (H2b)

Our second model was significant ($\chi^2 = 274.80, p \leq .001$), explained 23.8% of the variance, and correctly classified 73.9% of participants. The interaction term for sex assigned at birth and racialized identity was not significant ($p = .07$), so we did not split the model to focus attention on each sex assigned at birth. No main effects were found for sex assigned at birth nor racialized identity (see Table 11).

Incapacitated Rape Experiences in the “Red-Zone” (H3b).

Our final model was significant ($\chi^2 = 328.39, p \leq .001$), explained 24.8% of the variance, and correctly classified 71.5% of participants. The interaction term for sex assigned at birth and racialized identity was not significant ($p = .332$), so we did not split the model to focus attention on each sex. In looking at the main effects, women were more likely ($OR = 1.40, p = .048$) than men to experience incapacitated rape during the “red-zone.” No other main effects were found (see Table 12).

Control Variables

We found that Greek membership was not significant for physically-forced rape experiences, verbally-pressured rape experiences or incapacitated rape experiences that happened in the “red-zone.” However, we found that age was significant for physically-forced rape experiences ($OR = .58, p \leq .001$) that happened in the “red-zone.” That is, for each year increase in age, participants were about 42% less likely to have experienced rape as a result of physical force, in the “red-zone.” Age was also significant for verbally-pressured rape experiences ($OR = .58, p \leq .001$); for each year increase in age, participants were about 42% less likely to have experienced rape in the “red-zone” as a result of verbal pressure. Finally, we found that age was significant for incapacitated rape experiences ($OR = .57, p \leq .001$) that occurred during the “red-

zone”, meaning that for each year increase in age, participants were about 43% less likely to have experienced incapacitated rape in the “red-zone.”

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the sexual assault experiences of Black, Indigenous, and Peoples of Color (BIPOC) college students using an Intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) approach to determine how these experiences differed as a function of racialized identity and sex assigned at birth. We then examined how these experiences differed based on whether the assault occurred in the “red-zone.” Many of our hypotheses were partially supported. Below we discuss our findings, within the context of Intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989; 1991), and the implications of these findings for research and practice.

General Sexual Assault Experiences (H1a-c)

Our first three hypotheses were partially supported. Because BIPOC individuals are not a monolith, it makes sense that different ethnic groups had various experiences with sexual assault. Because there were significant interactions between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth, we individually examined the respective experiences of men and women. We first discuss the experiences of BIPOC men and then discuss the experiences of BIPOC women in our study.

Men’s Sexual Assault Experiences

Our study results indicated that Black men were more likely than White men to be sexually assaulted, through verbal pressure or physical force, at some point during their college experience. Multiracial men were also more likely than White men to experience rape, as a result of verbal pressure, during college. These results are consistent with findings from previous studies. For example, Black men are often assumed to be hypersexual (Miller, 2019), which would imply that they “always want sex.” According to Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989;

1991), this is an example of an individual who experiences both privilege (being male) and oppression (being Black, and therefore experiencing racism). Miller (2019) found that Black men are often believed to be especially prone to embody male sexual stereotypes, such as being sexually uncontrollable. In other words, it is the intersection of one's Blackness and maleness that leads to this assumption of a libido that exceeds that of the "typical" White male sex drive. This hypersexualization of Black men is historically rooted, as they have long been erroneously believed to be sexually aggressive towards White women (e.g., *Birth of a Nation*; National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2019)

This hypersexualization of Black men may also explain why multiracial men were more likely than White men to be raped, as some multiracial men likely identify as Black. Multiracial men are also commonly exoticized by White people (Sims, 2012). This is a form of racism, as the trope of viewing racially diverse peoples as different or unusual from "normal" White people has been used to brutalize Black people (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2019). The objectification of a person is associated with viewing them as less than human (Loughnan et al., 2010; National Center on Sexual Exploitation, 2017) and this may offer another explanation of why multiracial men may be more likely than White men to be raped. If these individuals are viewed as objects, rather than people, it may be easier for perpetrators to justify engaging in nonconsensual sex (rape) with them. Thus, per the tenets of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), multiracial men are also likely to simultaneously experience oppression (racist exoticization and/or hypersexualization) and privilege (being male).

We also found that AAPI men were less likely than White men to be raped while incapacitated. This is consistent with research, as White men have more privilege than BIPOC men (McIntosh, 1988) and are not bound by a "model minority" myth (Blackburn, 2019). In

other words, White men are not expected to be polite and submissive the way that AAPI men commonly are (Blackburn, 2019) and therefore may feel more comfortable reporting unwanted sex. Our findings support the common assumption that AAPI men are often perceived to be less masculine and sexual than men of other races (Silvestrini, 2020) and therefore may be unlikely sexual conquests. As such, within the context of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), AAPI men's respective experiences are likely to be informed by both privilege (being male) and oppression (racist emasculation and pressure to uphold the model minority myth).

Women's Sexual Assault Experiences

We found that AAPI and Latinx women were less likely than White women to experience physically-forced rape, incapacitated rape, or rape due to verbal pressure during college. Black female students were also less likely than White women to report being raped while incapacitated. These findings are consistent with past research that indicates that White students are more likely than BIPOC students to be involved in Greek life (Hughey, 2010; Princeton University, 2011; Ross, 2016) and that women involved in Greek life are commonly intoxicated by fraternity members and raped (Armstrong, 2006; Sanday, 2007). When considered through an Intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) lens, it is likely that these study results are due to the positionality of both White female students and White male students. That is, White fraternity men take advantage of their multiple privileged identities (i.e., being White and male) to exploit (mostly White) women's oppressed status as females by purposely intoxicating and raping them.

Our research also indicated that multiracial women were more likely than White women to be raped, due to physical force, during their time in college. Like multiracial men, multiracial women are also commonly fetishized (Gassam Assare, 2021). AAPI and Latinx women were less likely than White women to report experiencing rape as a result of verbal pressure from the

perpetrator. However, AAPI women are commonly exoticized and believed to be meek and submissive (Mukkamala & Suyemoto, 2018), which could lead to others perceiving them as easy sexual conquests. Like AAPI men, AAPI women are also expected to uphold the model minority myth (Blackburn, 2019).

According to the tenets of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), this incongruence between the objectification of Latinx women and AAPI women could be explained by the fact that White female sexual assault survivors have fewer oppressed identities than female BIPOC sexual assault survivors (McIntosh, 1988) and may therefore be more motivated to report instances of sexual assault while completing the survey. That is, according to Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), White female survivors not only have fewer oppressed identities than BIPOC survivors, but also do not have to confront racial stereotypes on top of dealing with the effects of being sexually assaulted.

“Red-Zone” Experiences (H2a-c)

Main Findings

Contrary to our hypotheses, the interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth was not associated with the likelihood of experiencing a physically-forced sexual assault, sexual assault due to verbal pressure, or incapacitated sex during the “red-zone.” The lack of interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth may be due to an unequal distribution of the various racialized identities of study participants. The overwhelming majority of our sample was White. When a group of participants is small (i.e., fewer than 30 participants), the statistical power to detect differences is also low. In the same vein, when a small group is compared to a large group (i.e., a BIPOC group being compared to a White group) the power of the larger group will be greater than the small group, making it more difficult to detect

differences between the two groups. This is perhaps one explanation as to why we did not find an interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth: we simply did not have the sample size to detect differences in the data we used for our study. Thus, because the majority of study participants were White, it is likely that their experiences of White privilege (rather than experiencing racial oppression and/or fetishizing) may have marginalized the experiences of BIPOC participants.

Although there was not a significant interaction between racialized identity and sex assigned at birth, we did find that women were more likely than men to be raped, as a result of physical force, in the “red-zone.” That women were more likely than men to experience physically-forced rape may be partially explained by heterosexual gender and cultural norms and scripts. According to these scripts, women are supposed to act as sexual gatekeepers and men are expected to pursue sex, even when a woman refuses (i.e., Hust et al., 2017). These scripts also explain why all study participants in our subsample (participants who had experienced sexual assault) were equally likely to experience sexual assault as a result of verbal pressure. Specifically, because it is considered “normal” for a man to “always” want sex (Kettrey, 2016) and for a woman to be pressured into sex (Hust et al., 2017; Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988), study participants may have not recognized their unwanted sexual experiences as rape. We also found that women were more likely than men to be raped while incapacitated. This finding may be due to the fact that college women, especially White first-year women, are often purposely plied with alcohol and raped by college men (Armstrong 2006; Sanday, 2007). When we consider these findings within the context of Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991), it is likely that women are more likely than men to experience sexual assault because of their oppressed identity as women.

Control variables

Although the “red-zone” models indicated that Greek membership was not associated with sexual assault experiences during a student’s first year, this nonsignificant relationship was of particular interest, as it seems to negate the role of Greek life in the “red-zone’ cocktail.” However, this lack of association between Greek membership and “red-zone” rape experiences may be due to the fact that study participants did not report on whether they were involved in a fraternity or sorority when they experienced sexual assault. Along with this, many of the women being targeted are first-year students (i.e., Armstrong, 2006) and therefore may not have had the opportunity to rush a sorority, leading them to mark "no" on the Greek affiliation question. Also, just because a first-year student is not officially a member of a Greek organization does not mean that they cannot or do not participate in fraternity parties (i.e., Armstrong, 2006).

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Limitations

Our results should be considered in light of several limitations. First, we acknowledge that our perspective is limited by the fact that we are privileged, White and cisgender individuals. Although we sought to apply an Intersectional (Crenshaw, 1989; 1991) perspective, we are aware that our positionality and biases inform our perspective of our findings.

Another limitation is that the data we used for this study (the OCSLS data) was collected between 2005 and 2011, making it dated and thus occurring prior to several important social movements. For example, the #MeToo Movement (Burke, 2020) garnered wide-spread attention in 2015, four years after data collection. Because the #MeToo Movement (Burke, 2020) led to an increase of sexual assault survivors coming forward with their stories (Burke, 2020; Zacharek et al., 2017), it is likely that the frequency of rape experiences was underreported in this dataset. Research suggests that 1 in 3 U.S. women and 1 in 4 U.S. men have experienced sexual violence (CDC, 2019). Additionally, recent global research found that 1 out of every 3 women have been physically and/or sexually harmed at least once (World Health Organization, 2021).

Because rape survivors are often disbelieved (e.g., CBS, 2019; Runtagh & Edge, 2017), it is not surprising that just 14.8% of our overall subsample reported at least one sexual assault experience. In other words, because sexual assault survivors often do not receive supportive responses when they disclose their assault experience, they may not be motivated to report sexual assault experience while completing a survey.

In addition to the #MeToo Movement, #BlackLivesMatter has also gained worldwide attention since the collection of the OCSLS data. This movement has also contributed to an

increase in advocacy for and implementation of needed change within society (American Civil Liberties Union [ACLU], 2018). In fact, according to the ACLU (2018), the #MeToo Movement (Burke, 2020) would not have been as wide spread if #BlackLivesMatter had not paved the way for social movements to spread online. Thus, it is possible that this additional cultural shift may have motivated survivors to acknowledge their sexual assault experiences while completing the survey, had this data been collected after this social movement.

The lower frequency of sexual assault experiences reported by study participants may have been due to the vagueness of some of the items, which is another important study limitation. For example, participants were asked, “Since you started college, have you had sexual intercourse that you did not want because someone verbally pressured you?” The term “verbally pressured” is vaguely-worded, which may have led participants to interpret (and answer) the question in different ways. We would feel more confident about this item had the term “verbally pressured” been defined for participants, or having provided an example of what it means to be verbally pressured in a sexual situation.

One construct that was not measured in the OCSLS, which presented another limitation, was alcohol consumption before the perpetrator sexually assaulted the survivor. This is a limitation because research has shown that alcohol consumption is associated with sexual assault (i.e., Armstrong et al., 2006). To be clear, the purpose of examining this variable would be to further contextualize a rape experience, rather than to blame a rape survivor for their sexual assault. In addition, the OCSLS did not ask participants to report on the person who attacked them (i.e., gender, racialized identity, relationship to the perpetrator, Greek membership, etc.). This is problematic because this lack of information limited our understanding of the survivor’s sexual assault experience. Having this additional information would have helped to further

contextualize participants' sexual assault experiences as we considered the Intersection of identities.

Another study limitation was our collapsing of the ethnic identities of study participants. Although study participants could choose to identify as Black, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Mexican, "NA", Indigenous ("Native American"), an unlisted Asian ethnicity, an unlisted Latinx ("Hispanic") ethnicity, an unlisted race, Puerto Rican, South Asian, Vietnamese, and White, due to small cell sizes we collapsed many of these ethnicities into a few racialized categories (i.e., categorizing Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, and unlisted Asian ethnicities into one "AAPI" group). Because this collapsing of ethnicities erased the distinctness of each culture, this study did not fully acknowledge the diversity between the many ethnicities that encompass a given race.

Another limitation is that the OCSLS only collected one wave of data that included students of various ages, rather than following a group of students throughout their entire college career. This study design limits the conclusions we can draw about the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. We cannot use causal language, due to the cross-sectional nature of the OCSLS data set. A final limitation is that, although the OCSLS dataset included LGBTQ+ students, we removed transgender individuals from our subsample due to small cell sizes. As such, our research findings cannot be generalized to individuals who are transgender. The lack of transgender participants in our subsample is also a limitation because it erases the experiences of an already marginalized group.

Implications

Our study results have important implications for future research and practice. Some of these are an outgrowth of the limitations of our study, but also represent an opportunity for future research and practice to consider the Intersection of identities that may influence the sexual assault experiences of BIPOC individuals. Each are discussed below.

Research

Study findings have several implications for future research in this area of study. First, because the OCSLS had so few transgender individuals, these participants were removed from the final subsample. However, because research has shown that transgender individuals, especially Black transgender people (Coulter et al., 2017), are much more likely than cisgender individuals to experience sexual assault, the experiences of these individuals should be centered by, not removed from, scholarly work. In a similar vein, although we did not exclude sexual minority (i.e., lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual, etc.) individuals from our analyses, future research should also center the experiences of these individuals, rather than lump them in with the analysis of heterosexual individuals. Sexual minority students are more likely than heterosexual students to have been sexually assaulted (CDC, 2010; University of Michigan, 2015), indicating a greater need to further study the sexual assault experiences of LGBTQ+ individuals.

We also recognize the need for an increased number of BIPOC participants in research, in order to better understand how racialized identity and sex assigned at birth inform an individual's sexual assault experiences. Specifically, our examination of the interaction term (racialized identity and sex assigned at birth) of the model that reported on student experiences of incapacitated sex during the "red-zone" was approaching statistical significance ($p = .069$)

This indicates that more data from the various BIPOC groups needs to be collected, so that differences between the diverse ethnicities of each racialized group can be more readily detected.

Due to the cross-sectional nature of the OCSLS dataset, a limitation of our study is that it is not longitudinal. Specifically, our general sexual assault analyses (i.e., *not* occurring during the “red-zone”) suggest that age is positively associated with the likelihood of experiencing some form of rape. That is, the “red-zone” is not the only time that students are at risk for sexual assault. Therefore, future research should employ a longitudinal research design that follows the experiences college students (of a variety of racialized identities, gender identities, sexual orientations) throughout the duration of their college career. Researchers should collect several waves of data, in which students are asked to report on their sexual experiences, since the last wave was collected, and inform students each time of various campus resources such as where they can obtain access to birth control and where they can receive treatment if they have been assaulted. This approach will allow researchers to examine how a student’s time in college informs their sexual assault experiences.

Future sexual assault research would also benefit from using less vague variable language, such as describing what is meant by “verbal pressure.” This is not to imply that we do not believe survivors’ experiences, but rather to acknowledge that participants (and researchers) may have different interpretations of the connotations and meanings of the variables.

Additionally, it would also be beneficial for future research to inquire about other aspects of the sexual assault experience, such as asking if alcohol was involved and, if so, to what extent.

Again, this is not to imply that the survivor was at fault if there was alcohol involved but we acknowledge that research has shown that alcohol use commonly precedes sexual assault

experiences and is often present during the perpetration of sexual assault, such as at parties (i.e., Armstrong et al., 2006; Sanday, 2007).

Sexual assault research would also benefit from using either a mixed-methods or a qualitative methods approach. Because sexual assault is a traumatic and personal experience, a quantitative-only method likely does not fully capture the experiences of these survivors. Additionally, as many social movements have recently gained wide recognition since the collection of these data (i.e., the #MeToo and #BlackLivesMatter movements), it seems that these movements add important context to sexual assault experiences. For example, since the #MeToo movement (Burke, 2020) brought an influx of sexual assault disclosures (i.e., Burke, 2020; Zacharek et al., 2017), sexual assault survivors may be more comfortable reporting sexual assault experiences on a survey or in a university setting. This was found to be the case at one private religious university which, upon the establishment of a campus Title IX office, saw a sizeable increase in reports of sexual assault or harassment (Fischer, 2018; Y Magazine, 2018). Also, although the COVID-19 pandemic was not a social movement, it has also led to an increase in sexual assault, also known as a “shadow pandemic” (Vaeza, 2020). Because neither of these social movements, nor the pandemic, had not yet impacted the world, a newer collection of data is warranted so that the effects of these phenomena may be factored into sexual assault research.

Practice

Most university sexual assault prevention education classes are likely taught by White instructors. Most university professors are White (National Center for Education Statistics, 2020; Pew, 2019), which suggests that sexual assault prevention education at the university level is likely to be shrouded in what Morrison (1998) refers to as “The White Gaze.” The impact of

“The White Gaze” (Morrison, 1998) must be considered within the context of sexual assault prevention interventions, due to the fact that women of Color have typically been marginalized during conversations about sexual assault (Crenshaw, 1991).

As such, we recommend that all college faculty, especially those teaching sexuality or sexual assault prevention classes, participate in diversity training that is specifically relevant to sexual assault. This would entail becoming familiar with Crenshaw’s Intersectionality (1989; 1991) theory, which discusses the experiences of Black sexual assault survivors, the history of White men’s fetishization of BIPOC women, and other materials (e.g., diversity trainings and workshops) that contextualize BIPOC individuals’ unique sexual assault experiences. Once instructors of sexual assault prevention education classes have begun to develop a critical perspective of sexual assault, they should incorporate elements of this literature into their class discussions. By taking the time to ensure that their discussions of sexual assault center the experiences of all sexual assault survivors (i.e., not just White female survivors), these instructors will be better prepared to address sexual assault issues relevant to a variety of students, rather than just White students.

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APPENDIX

Table 1
College Experiences of General and Red-Zone Sexual Assault Descriptives

Variables	General Sexual Assault			Red-Zone Sexual Assault		
	Force (23,097)	Coerce (23,044)	Incap. (22,980)	Force (1,383)	Coerce (1,594)	Incap. (1,414)
Racialized Identity						
White	5.9	8.2	7.5	56.4	42.7	51.2
Black	6.4	8.4	5.2	43.8	51.9	41.7
AAPI	5.5	5.8	4.4	41.8	38.8	40.7
Latinx	5.0	5.6	5.2	51.0	38.3	40.7
Multiracial	7.9	9.5	8.7	58.0	40.6	52.3
Sex Assigned at Birth						
Male	4.1	4.6	5.0	45.7	39.6	45.2
Female	6.9	9.3	7.8	56.1	42.6	50.7

Note. Values in each column represent percentages of those in each racialized identity or sex assigned at birth who reported one or more instances of experiencing the specified type of sexual assault. Force = physically-forced rape, Coerce= verbally-pressured rape, and Incap = incapacitated rape.

Table 2
College Experiences (N= 23,097) of Physically-Forced Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)

Variables	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald	df	<i>P</i>	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.44	.08	33.93	1	.000	1.56	1.34	1.81
Age	.16	.01	134.50	1	.000	1.17	1.14	1.2
Women	.76	.09	68.09	1	.000	2.15	1.79	2.58
Sex*Race			14.35	4	.006			

Note. Greek membership and Age served as control variables, men served as the control group, sex*race indicates the interaction term between participants’ sex assigned at birth and racialized identity.

Table 3*College Men's (N = 7,198) Physically-Forced Rape (Non "Red-Zone")*

Variables	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald	df	<i>P</i>	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.59	.15	15.61	1	.001	1.80	1.34	2.41
Age	.09	.03	9.66	1	.002	1.10	1.04	1.16
White			10.73	4	.030			
Black	.63	.22	7.92	1	.005	1.88	1.21	2.92
AAPI	.22	.17	1.54	1	.215	1.24	.88	1.74
Latinx	.30	.23	1.76	1	.185	1.35	.87	2.10
Multiracial	.34	.17	3.83	1	.050	1.40	1.00	1.96

Note. On this, and all the following non "Red-Zone" models, Greek membership and Age served as control variables, White students were the reference group, AAPI refers to study participants who were Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, South AAPI, or an unlisted AAPI ethnicity, Latinx refers to study participants who were Mexican, Puerto Rican, or an unlisted Latinx ethnicity, multiracial refers to students who were at least two races.

Table 4*College Women's (N = 15,899) Physically-Forced Rape (Non "Red-Zone")*

Variables	<i>B</i>	SE	Wald	df	<i>P</i>	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.40	.09	20.09	1	.001	1.49	1.25	1.78
Age	.17	.02	130.95	1	.001	1.19	1.15	1.22
White			31.05	4	.001			
Black	-.19	.16	1.43	1	.232	.83	.61	1.13
AAPI	-.21	.10	4.00	1	.046	.81	.66	.996
Latinx	-.33	.12	7.40	1	.007	.72	.56	.91
Multiracial	.301	.08	12.63	1	.001	1.35	1.14	1.60

Table 5*College Experiences (N = 23,044) of Verbally-Pressured Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.26	.07	13.64	1	.000	1.30	1.13	1.50
Age	.14	.01	139.62	1	.000	1.15	1.13	1.18
Women	.91	.08	121.31	1	.000	2.48	2.11	2.91
Sex*Race			11.23	4	.024			

Note. Greek membership and Age served as control variables, men served as the control group, sex*race indicates the interaction term between participants' sex assigned at birth and racialized identity.

Table 6*College Men's (N = 7,168) Verbally-Pressured Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.51	.14	12.38	1	.001	1.66	1.25	2.20
Age	.13	.03	23.33	1	.001	1.14	1.08	1.20
White			19.42	4	.001			
Black	.54	.21	6.69	1	.010	1.72	1.14	2.58
AAPI	-.35	.19	3.32	1	.068	.70	.48	1.03
Latinx	-.20	.25	.65	1	.420	.82	.51	1.33
Multiracial	.39	.15	6.51	1	.011	1.47	1.09	1.98

Note. On this, and the following non “Red-Zone” models, Greek membership and Age served as control variables, White students were the reference group, AAPI refers to study participants who were Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, South Asian, or an unlisted AAPI ethnicity, Latinx refers to study participants who were Mexican, Puerto Rican, or an unlisted Latinx ethnicity, multiracial refers to students who were at least two races.

Table 7*College Women's (N = 15,876) Verbally-Pressured Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.19	.08	5.39	1	.020	1.21	1.03	1.42
Age	.14	.01	115.98	1	.001	1.16	1.13	1.19
White			43.54	4	.001			
Black	-.23	.14	2.83	1	.093	.80	.61	1.04
AAPI	-.41	.09	18.73	1	.001	.66	.55	.80
Latinx	-.52	.11	21.72	1	.001	.60	.48	.74
Multiracial	.09	.08	1.31	1	.253	1.09	.94	1.27

Table 8*College Experiences (N = 22,980) of Incapacitated Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.52	.07	54.36	1	.000	1.68	1.46	1.92
Age	.14	.01	128.14	1	.000	1.16	1.13	1.18
Women	.64	.08	63.62	1	.000	1.89	1.62	2.21
Sex*Race			19.73	4	.001			

Note. Greek membership and Age served as control variables, men served as the control group, sex*race indicates the interaction term between participants' sex assigned at birth and racialized identity.

Table 9*College Men's (N = 7,145) Incapacitated Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.75	.13	32.63	1	.001	2.12	1.63	2.72
Age	.11	.03	16.04	1	.001	1.11	1.06	1.17
White			15.26	4	.004			
Black	.32	.22	2.12	1	.145	1.37	.90	2.10
AAPI	-.54	.20	7.45	1	.006	.59	.40	.86
Latinx	.11	.21	.29	1	.593	1.19	.74	1.68
Multiracial	.27	.15	3.34	1	.068	1.32	.98	1.76

Note. On this, and the following non “Red-Zone” models, Greek membership and Age served as control variables, White students were the reference group, AAPI refers to study participants who were Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, South Asian, or an unlisted AAPI ethnicity, Latinx refers to study participants who were Mexican, Puerto Rican, or an unlisted Latinx ethnicity, multiracial refers to students who were at least two races.

Table 10*College Women's (N = 15,835) Incapacitated Rape (Non “Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.43	.08	26.97	1	.001	1.54	1.31	1.81
Age	.16	.02	114.23	1	.001	1.17	1.14	1.20
White			73.47	4	.001			
Black	-.80	.18	18.95	1	.001	.45	.32	.65
AAPI	-.61	.11	31.86	1	.001	.54	.44	.67
Latinx	-.56	.12	21.55	1	.001	.57	.45	.72
Multiracial	.13	.08	2.56	1	.110	1.14	.97	1.34

Table 11*College Experiences (N= 1,383) of Physically-Forced Rape (“Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.06	.16	.16	1	.691	1.07	.78	1.46
Age	-.54	.04	200.28	1	.001	.58	.54	.63
Women	.76	.20	13.91	1	.001	2.13	1.43	3.17
Sex*Race			4.48	4	.345			

Note. On this model, and the following “Red-Zone” models, Greek membership and Age served as control variables, men served as the control group, sex*race indicates the interaction term between participants’ sex assigned at birth and racialized identity.

Table 12*College Experiences (N= 1,594) of Verbally-Pressured Rape (“Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	-.12	.17	.50	1	.480	.89	.64	1.24
Age	-.55	.04	191.87	1	.001	.58	.53	.62
Women	.32	.22	2.08	1	.149	1.38	.89	2.15
Sex*Race			8.71	4	.069			

Table 13*College Experiences (N= 1,414) of Incapacitated Rape (“Red-Zone”)*

Variables	B	SE	Wald	df	P	Exp(B)	95% C.I.	
							Lower	Upper
Greek	.06	.16	.16	1	.691	1.07	.78	1.46
Age	-.54	.04	200.28	1	.001	.58	.54	.63
Women	.76	.20	13.91	1	.001	2.13	1.43	3.17
Sex*Race			4.48	4	.345			

VITA

Jenae Bluhm (she/her) was born in Kansas City, Missouri and grew up in the Greater Kansas City Area. In 2019, Jenae completed her Bachelor of Science degree from Brigham Young University, with a major in Family Life. Following her graduation from BYU, Jenae began her studies as a Child and Family Studies (CFS) Master's en route to PhD student at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in Fall of 2019. Her research interests include sexual assault and sexual consent and how Crenshaw's (1989; 1991) Intersectionality theory informs one's experiences of sexual assault. During her time as a Master's student, Jenae worked as a graduate research assistant in the WAE Lab, a graduate research assistant in the Parenting Education Lab, and a graduate teaching assistant for the CFS 345 (Family Resource Management) class. Jenae also served as the secretary of the CFS Graduate Student Organization, was a co-chair of the Rape Myth Endorsement Research Team in Dr. Sarah Lamer's Social Perception and Cognitions lab, and was a member of the Society for the Study of Emerging Adults Social Media Subcommittee. Jenae was also the recipient of the Tennessee Fellow and the Seaton Graduate School Fellowships. She graduated as a National Council on Family Relations (NCFR) honors student with a Master's degree in Child and Family Studies from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in May 2021 and continued in the doctoral program in the Child and Family Studies department.