

UNDERSTANDING CAMPUS SEXUAL ASSAULT; WHY  
WOMEN DON'T USE RESOURCES

by

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A THESIS

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Background: Sexual assault on college campuses has long been recognized as a serious problem. As more legislation aims to respond to this serious issue and make resources more available to students, victims of sexual assault seem to not use these resources as often as they are intended to be.

Methods: In this study, data from the 2019 Association of American Universities Campus Climate Survey is analyzed to better understand the top reasons women are not using resources following a sexual assault. Data from each campus was abstracted and put in tables (n=30). The analysis broke out the data by three types of sexual assault (penetration by inability to consent, penetration by physical force, and sexual touching) to determine if types of sexual assault are associated with different reasons for not utilizing resources. The top reasons women reported for not using resources following a sexual assault were recorded and researched further to understand some of the underlying causes for those responses.

Results: The top reasons given for not using resources did show some variability, but some of the most common reasons given were: "I could handle it myself", "I did not

think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”, and “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult”.

Conclusion: This study is crucial for understanding why women are not utilizing resources following a sexual assault so schools can make changes to better attend to student needs.

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## Introduction

Sexual assault remains prevalent on college campuses around the nation with “26.4% of females and 6.8% of male” undergraduate students experiencing “rape or sexual assault through physical force, violence, or incapacitation”<sup>1</sup>. The effects of sexual assault can be significant for victims. One study compared the feelings of people who have experienced sexual or relationship violence with those who have not and found that victims of sexual or relationship violence had higher rates of feeling hopelessness, loneliness, overwhelming anxiety, difficult to function due to depression, self-injury, and suicidal thoughts, than those who were not victims of sexual or relationship violence<sup>2</sup>. Yet even in the face of these feelings following sexual violence, it seems that victims are not using resources after their sexual assault. A survey done by the Association of American Universities found that women who experienced “nonconsensual penetration by physical force or inability to consent made contact with a program or resource for 29.5 percent of incidents, TGQN (“students who listed their gender identity as one of the following categories: Transgender woman, Transgender man, Nonbinary/genderqueer, Gender questioning, or gender not listed”<sup>3</sup>) students for

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<sup>1</sup> “Campus Sexual Violence: Statistics.” RAINN. Accessed 2021.

<https://www.rainn.org/statistics/campus-sexual-violence>.

<sup>2</sup> “ACHA Position Statement: Sexual and Relationship Violence on College and University Campuses.” American College Health Association. Accessed May 20, 2021.

[https://www.acha.org/documents/About/ACHA\\_Sexual\\_Violence\\_Position\\_Statement.pdf](https://www.acha.org/documents/About/ACHA_Sexual_Violence_Position_Statement.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, vi. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

42.9 percent of incidents, and men for 17.8 percent of incidents”<sup>4</sup>. It is important to understand why the rates of resource use are so low, in order to make improvements to the policies and resources implemented at universities across the nation.

The aim for this thesis was to do an in-depth analysis of the reasons women on college campuses are not using resources following a sexual assault. Using the Association of American Universities Campus Climate survey from the spring of 2019, I conducted an in-depth analysis about the reasons women listed on the survey for not using resources after a sexual assault. Following the results, I make recommendations to Universities who participated in the AAU campus climate survey on how to adjust resources to be utilized by more students.

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<sup>4</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, xiii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).



## Chapter 1: Background:

### Legislation:

The high rates of college sexual assault illustrate the need for fundamental change. The U.S. government has passed legislation with the goal to respond to these high rates of sexual assault and to meet student needs. However, in many ways, the current legislation is not adequately encouraging and informing students to use resources.

### *Title IX:*

One of the key pieces of legislation was Title IX, codified in the United States code as 20 U.S.C. §1681<sup>5</sup>. This law, passed in 1972 was part of the education amendments<sup>6</sup>. Title IX states that “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance”<sup>7</sup>. Notably, the description of “discrimination on the basis of sex can include sexual harassment, rape, and sexual assault”<sup>8</sup>. Title IX can play a pivotal role in responding to sexual assault by ensuring that “survivors can safely continue their

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5 Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681.

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title20/chapter38&edition=prelim>.

6 “Title IX Enacted.” History.com. A&E Television Networks, June 22, 2020.

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/title-ix-enacted>.

7 Education Amendments Act of 1972, 20 U.S.C. §§1681.

<https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title20/chapter38&edition=prelim>.

8 “Title IX and Sexual Violence in Schools.” American Civil Liberties Union. Accessed May 2021.

<https://www.aclu.org/title-ix-and-sexual-violence-schools>.

studies without encountering their perpetrator on campus” and further “prevent other students from experiencing the similar harm”<sup>9</sup>.

While Title IX has the goal of preventing sex-based discrimination, its application faces some roadblocks. A study by Javorka and Campbell analyzed the role of the criminal justice system in relation to Title IX by conducting interviews with “presenters from seven national conferences on sexual assault, gender-based violence, or Title IX” and other qualified participants<sup>10</sup>. The results of this study identified how “several participants described a tendency for a variety of university and legal stakeholders (and the public at large) to misunderstand the purpose of university Title IX proceedings, or conflate them with the criminal justice system”<sup>11</sup>. This was related to the tendency to want to treat Title IX cases as criminal cases as “Title IX investigations were regularly overturned by the school’s appeal board”, described by one participant as the effort to “apply a criminal standard”<sup>12</sup>. Another important theme discovered by this study was “criminal justice responses were seen as better than or prioritized over university title IX responses”<sup>13</sup>. The participants of the study describe how the criminal justice system has “more resources and experience” than Title IX<sup>14</sup>. Further, victims

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9 Javorka, McKenzie, and Rebecca Campbell. “‘This Isn’t Just a Police Issue’: Tensions between Criminal Justice and University Responses to Sexual Assault among College Students.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 67, no. 1-2 (2020): 154. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12448>.

<sup>10</sup> Javorka, McKenzie, and Rebecca Campbell. “‘This Isn’t Just a Police Issue’: Tensions between Criminal Justice and University Responses to Sexual Assault among College Students.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 67, no. 1-2 (2020): 155–56. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12448>.

<sup>11</sup> Javorka, McKenzie, and Rebecca Campbell. “‘This Isn’t Just a Police Issue’: Tensions between Criminal Justice and University Responses to Sexual Assault among College Students.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 67, no. 1-2 (2020): 158. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12448>.

<sup>12</sup> Javorka, McKenzie, and Rebecca Campbell. “‘This Isn’t Just a Police Issue’: Tensions between Criminal Justice and University Responses to Sexual Assault among College Students.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 67, no. 1-2 (2020): 159. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12448>.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

face problems with concurrent investigations as differences in testimony to police or the Title IX office “may be used by defense lawyers as evidence of inconsistencies in the victims’ stories”<sup>15</sup>. One participant in the study describes how some survivors must choose not to move forward with a campus complaint because “it might hurt my criminal complaint”<sup>16</sup>. This emphasis on criminal justice over Title IX investigations “takes away from universities’ ability to provide for the educational needs for survivors”<sup>17</sup>. This points to an inherent problem in the system if the law (Title IX) which is supposed to provide protections for students is not actually utilized.

#### *The Clery Act:*

Another important piece of legislature enacted to help address sexual assault on college campuses was the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Police and Crime Statistics Act (The Clery Act). The Clery Act “was signed into federal law as an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1965”<sup>18</sup>. This Act is named after Jeanne Clery, a student who was raped and murdered by another student in 1986<sup>19</sup>. The Act requires schools to comply by issuing an Annual Security Report which includes: crime statistics, “a statement of current campus policies regarding procedures and facilities for students and others to report criminal actions”, “a description of programs designed to inform students and employees about the prevention of crimes”, “a statement of policy

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<sup>15</sup>Javorka, McKenzie, and Rebecca Campbell. “‘This Isn’t Just a Police Issue’: Tensions between Criminal Justice and University Responses to Sexual Assault among College Students.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 67, no. 1-2 (2020): 159. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12448>.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> McCallion, Gail. “History of the Clery Act: Fact Sheet.” Congressional Research Service. Congressional Research Service, October 20, 2014. <https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=759350>.

<sup>19</sup> “Clery Act.” Know Your IX. Accessed May 2021. <https://www.knowyourix.org/college-resources/clery-act/>.

regarding such institution's programs to prevent dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking... and the procedures such institution will follow once an incident of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has been reported"<sup>20</sup>. Importantly, the Clery Act contains the "Campus Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights which requires colleges to disclose educational programming, campus disciplinary process, and victim rights regarding sexual violence complaints"<sup>21</sup>. The Annual Security Report put forth by each university contains valuable information for victims of sexual assault. It is important to note that although the Annual Security Report holds a lot of information for people who experience sexual assault, they must know to look for it.

Amendments to the Clery Act have also made significant strides towards addressing sexual violence on college campuses. Notably, the "Clery Act was expanded in 2013 by the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (SaVE) Act"<sup>22</sup>. This SaVE Act amendment "improves transparency by requiring schools to report a broader range of sexual violence incidents", improves "the complaint process so victims know their rights and are supported", "requires equitable disciplinary proceeding", and "offers schools resources from federal agencies to improve their practices while also requiring them to provide education and awareness programs on campus"<sup>23</sup>. This amendment "would increase the transparency of reports of sexual violence by institutions to include

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20 Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1990, 20 U.S.C. §1092(f). <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1092>.

21 "Clery Act." Know Your IX. Accessed May 2021. <https://www.knowyourix.org/college-resources/clery-act/>.

22 "Clery Act." Know Your IX. Accessed May 2021. <https://www.knowyourix.org/college-resources/clery-act/>.

23 "Understanding the Campus SaVE Act," October 21, 2013. [https://www.nvcc.edu/support/\\_files/Understanding-the-Campus-SaVE-Act.pdf](https://www.nvcc.edu/support/_files/Understanding-the-Campus-SaVE-Act.pdf).

in their annual security reports statistics on domestic violence, dating violence and stalking that were reported to campus police authorities or local police agencies”<sup>24</sup>. The SaVE act also has components regarding university policies as it will “promote prevention and bystander responsibility by requiring colleges and universities to develop clear statements of policy regarding domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking prevention programs”<sup>25</sup>. Further, this amendment aims to help victims “by requiring colleges and universities to provide clear statements regarding their procedures followed when a case of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking is reported”, including providing “victims an explanation of their rights in writing”<sup>26</sup>. The SaVE Act has components that seem to encourage reporting of crimes and university transparency regarding crimes. However, it seems crime reporting rates remain low.

The AAU Campus Climate Survey shows higher rates of sexual assault and misconduct than the Clery data<sup>27</sup>. The AAU Report suggests that one of the possible reasons for this difference is that “the Clery data are based on incidents that are reported to individuals who are campus security authorities (CSA) or local law enforcement”<sup>28</sup>. Conversely, data from the “AAU survey is based on self-reports of incidents that

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<sup>24</sup> Congress.gov. "Congressional Record Extensions of Remarks Articles." May 22, 2021. <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2011/5/27/extensions-of-remarks-section/article/E975-2>.

<sup>25</sup> Congress.gov. "Congressional Record Extensions of Remarks Articles." May 22, 2021. <https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2011/5/27/extensions-of-remarks-section/article/E975-2>.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 81. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

occurred even if it was not reported to a CSA or local police”<sup>29</sup>. That is not surprising given that only 20 percent of college age female students report their sexual assault to the police<sup>30</sup>. Further, “most of the data in this report (AAU Campus Climate Survey Report) are based on retrospective self-reports for the time period since the student has been enrolled in school”<sup>31</sup>. Meanwhile, data from the Clery Act is based on “records kept by the CSA’s and generally cover a calendar year”<sup>32</sup>. The AAU Report also notes that the data sets may reflect different statistics because of differences in definitions<sup>33</sup>. The AAU survey uses “both legal (e.g., sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking) and school policies (e.g., without ongoing consent)”, while the Clery data is “based on federal definitions”<sup>34</sup>. Whatever the true cause, the Clery data seem to fall drastically short when compared to self-reported rates from the AAU Campus Climate Survey.

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29 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 81. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

30 “The Criminal Justice System: Statistics.” RAINN. Accessed May 18, 2021. <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/criminal-justice-system>.

31 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 81. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

32 *Ibid.*

33 *Ibid.*

34 *Ibid.*

*The Violence Against Women Act:*

One of the more recent pieces of legislation put forward is the H.R. 1620, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021<sup>35</sup>. This act will reauthorize the 1994 Violence Against Women Act which seeks “to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking”<sup>36</sup>. The 2021 Reauthorization builds upon the 1994 act by: authorizing new programs which “makes changes to federal firearms laws, and establishes new protections to promote housing stability and economic security for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking”<sup>37</sup>. Of particular importance for this study is the increased funding and services for victims of sexual assault. In the act, “Section 202. Sexual Assault Services Program”, states that this reauthorization will amend the “Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12511)” “by striking ‘\$40,000,000 to remain available until expended for each of fiscal years 2014-2018’ and inserting ‘\$60,000,000 to remain available until expended for each of fiscal years 2022 through 2026’”<sup>38</sup>. The Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12511) assists “States, Indian tribes, and territories in providing intervention, advocacy, accompaniment, support services, and related assistance for-adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault; family and household members of such victims; and those collaterally affected

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35 “All Info - H.R.1620 - 117th Congress (2021-2022): Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021.” Congress.gov. Accessed May 2021. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/all-info>.

36 *Ibid.*

37 *Ibid.*

38 “Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021” H.R. 1620. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/text#toc-HA08FD405DAE045CBBB15C15BC07E8995>

by victimization”<sup>39</sup>. The Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (34 U.S.C. 12511) also provides “for technical assistance and training relating to sexual assault”<sup>40</sup>. Thus, this change in funding noted in the Violence Against Women Act will significantly increase funding for services to parties dealing with sexual assault. It is important to note that this reauthorization will strengthen “essential protections for the most vulnerable, including, immigrant, LGBTQ, and Native American women and specifically supporting communities of color”<sup>41</sup>.

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39 “34 U.S. Code § 12511 - Sexual Assault Services Program.” Legal Information Institute. Legal Information Institute. Accessed May 20, 2021. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/34/12511>.

40 *Ibid*.

41 “House Passes Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2021.” Congressman Tom Malinowski Representing the 7th district of New Jersey, March 17, 2021. <https://malinowski.house.gov/media/press-releases/house-passes-violence-against-women-reauthorization-act-2021>.



## Chapter Two: Methods

*Data: AAU Campus Climate Survey:*

The Association of American Universities is a group made up of “America’s leading research Universities”<sup>42</sup>. The Association of American Universities Campus Climate survey was given to 27 member schools in its first launch in 2015 with questions about “sexual assault, other misconduct, and the campus climate”<sup>43</sup>. In the spring of 2019, there was a follow-up survey with 33 participating schools<sup>44</sup>. The 2019 survey had a total of 181,752 student responses, which was “a significant increase over the 150,072 respondents to the 2015 survey”<sup>45</sup>.

### **Methodology of the 2019 Campus Climate Survey:**

To develop the 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey, Westat partnered with the AAU Survey design team which had “representation from multi-disciplinary team of university professors and administrators from participating schools” who had “expertise in survey design and issues related to sexual assault and misconduct on campus”<sup>46</sup>. In

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42 “Who We Are.” Association of American Universities (AAU). Accessed May 2021. <https://www.aau.edu/who-we-are>.

43 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, vii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.*

46 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 2. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

developing the 2019 survey, the team made alterations to the 2015 survey by: reviewing “comments from schools whose students completed the 2015 survey, analysis of 2015 survey data, comments from SDT members, and comments from schools whose students would be asked to complete the 2019 survey”<sup>47</sup>. Importantly, the 2019 survey aimed to “reduce the burden on students” so some of the survey items were “removed or changed”<sup>48</sup>. The Survey Development Team also did a series of cognitive interviews with college students whose schools did not administer the survey to “test question accuracy and pilot testing”<sup>49</sup>. The survey itself was made up of 12 sections and each participant “was asked a core set of 54 questions in each of the following sections: background (A), campus climate (BB), perceptions of risk (B), knowledge of resources (C), sexual harassment (D), stalking (E), intimate partner violence (F), sexual assault/other sexual misconduct (G), opinions of program services (HH), sexual misconduct prevention training (H), perceptions of responses to reporting (I), and bystander behavior (J)”<sup>50</sup>. Additionally, students who enrolled in either 2018 or 2019 were asked about sexual misconduct prevention training<sup>51</sup>. The Survey was given to respondents in an online format and “all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students 18 years and older enrolled in one of the 33 participating schools were invited

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47 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 3. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

48 *Ibid.*

49 *Ibid.*

50 *Ibid.*

51 *Ibid.*

to complete the AAU survey<sup>52</sup>. The survey was administered by sending an email to each students' school email address on the launch date<sup>53</sup>. Each of these emails, including reminder emails “was signed by a high-ranking official at the university”<sup>54</sup>. The data collection process began February 1, 2019 and continued for a 14-week period, with an “average field period for the survey” being 30 days<sup>55</sup>. A survey was considered complete if: “It took the student at least five minutes to complete the survey. This criterion was applied to students who went through the entire survey and for whom it was possible to measure the amount of time to complete” or “The student answered at least one question in each of the following sections: sexual harassment (D), stalking (E), and nonconsensual sexual contact (G)”<sup>56</sup>. The first criteria aimed to exclude surveys where it was completed too quickly for the student to have fully read and answered the questions<sup>57</sup>. The second aimed to include surveys where someone did not press “submit” but did include responses about victimization<sup>58</sup>.

#### *Response Rates:*

The overall response rate for the 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey was 21.9 percent, but it varied by gender with 17.5 percent of men responding and 26.1 percent

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52 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 4. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

53 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 5. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

54 *Ibid.*

55 *Ibid.*

56 *Ibid.*

57 *Ibid.*

58 *Ibid.*

of women<sup>59</sup>. Further, the response rate varied by level with responses with 20.4 percent of undergraduate students and 24.5 percent of graduate and professional students<sup>60</sup>. Private schools had a higher rate of response as their response rate was 30.8 percent and “public schools had a response rate of 16.5 percent”<sup>61</sup>. When compared to the 2015 survey, the 2019 survey achieved a higher response rate by 2.6 percentage points<sup>62</sup>. The 2019 survey had a large range of response rates with school’s response rates ranging from 6% to 68%<sup>63</sup>.

### **Methodology for this study:**

To conduct this study, the first step was to identify the 33 schools that participated in the 2019 installment of the AAU Campus Climate Survey. Each school was searched by full university name in google and the university website was selected. Using the search feature on each individual university’s website, I then searched using the term “AAU Campus Climate Survey 2019”. This was followed by thoroughly looking through the first five links (or until the full report/data tables were found) to determine what AAU data they presented. If the school posted both the complete data tables and the full report, the data tables were the resource used for the analysis. The

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59 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 5. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

60 *Ibid.*

61 *Ibid.*

62 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 6. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

63 *Ibid.*

table that contained the questions of interest for this thesis was Table 3.14. A copy of the University of Oregon Table 3.14 is included in Appendix A that shows the questions asked of students at each school and the data that were used for each school. If the school did not post their data tables, the overall report was searched to see if they had posted Table 3.14. If the university did not post this table, it was excluded from this data set. The schools that participated in the AAU Campus Climate Survey in 2019 but are not represented in my data are: Case Western Reserve University, Iowa State University, and the University of Rochester. A full list of the schools included in my data (and those excluded) can be found in Appendix B.

From Table 3.14 of each school, I abstracted into Excel the percent of women who did not use resources following sexual assault, stratified by type of assault “penetration by physical force”, “penetration by inability to consent”, and “sexual touching”. For this study, only the women’s responses were recorded. Using a different Excel spreadsheet for each type of sexual assault women experienced, each school name was given a separate row, with columns for “what overall percent of women didn’t use resources”, “top reason given for not using resources”, “2nd most common reason”, “3rd most common reason”, etc. While going through each individual school, the most common responses in each form of sexual assault was found by analyzing the highest percentages in Table 3.14 and putting them in order to determine the top 1-5 responses. These responses were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet with response and percentage of students who chose that answer.

This was followed by looking at the follow up question portion of Table 3.14. Students who responded “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or

resources” or “other” as a reason they did not use campus resources, then answered a follow up question: “You said you did not contact any of these programs or resources (because it was not serious enough/for an ‘other’ reason/because it was not serious enough and for an ‘other’ reason). Please review the list below and mark any of the reasons that may better describe why you didn’t contact any of these programs or resources (Mark all that apply)”<sup>64</sup>. This follow up section asked for more details as to why they responded that way (an example of the follow up responses are shown using University of Oregon’s data in Appendix A). These responses were also analyzed and put in ranked 1-5 order to better understand why students may have responded “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” or “other”. Those top 5 responses were also recorded in the spreadsheet. Once this process was completed with all schools that had data publicly available (n=30), the data were checked again to ensure that the statistics, order, and reasoning were all correct. This was followed by doing an analysis determining ranking of reasons and their placement to better understand the top reasons given by women for not using resources. After that was completed for each form of sexual assault, these data were put into tables and compared to the summary of AAU aggregate data. It is important to understand that the aggregate data provided by the AAU combined “penetration by inability to consent” and “penetration by physical force” but it is separated in my analysis of individual schools.

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64 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, a5-21. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

After the overall patterns were understood, the top reasons listed by women were researched in-depth to better understand the popularity of those choices.

*Why Focus on Women:*

This study only focused on women's responses to the AAU Campus Climate Survey for a couple of reasons. The AAU Campus Climate Survey determined that "the overall rate of nonconsensual sexual contact by physical force or inability to consent since the student enrolled at the school was 13.0%"<sup>65</sup>. However, the estimate for women undergraduates and graduate/professional students is 25.9% and 9.7%, respectively<sup>66</sup>. Whereas the rates for male undergraduate and graduate/professional students is 6.8% and 2.5%, respectively<sup>67</sup>. This would indicate that women experience much higher rates of nonconsensual contact, which makes their reasons for not utilizing resources likely more common for a larger group of victims. Another important group in the AAU data was TGQN students who also have high rates of nonconsensual sexual contact by inability to consent or by physical force with "22.8 percent of undergraduates and 14.5 percent of graduate and professional students reported this type of victimization"<sup>68</sup>. However, because TGQN students made up only 1.7% of respondents, I was concerned

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65 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 78. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

66 *Ibid.*

67 *Ibid.*

68 *Ibid.*

that there may not be enough data from school to school to have a complete analysis<sup>69</sup>. Thus, because of their high rates of nonconsensual contact partnered with their high response rate, women are the focus of this study.

*Why Compare the schools to AAU Aggregate Results:*

There are two major reasons to do this study and compare it to the aggregate AAU survey results: (1) to separate and understand reasons for not using resources for different types of sexual assault and (2) to understand how individual schools compare to the overall aggregate results. The aggregate 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey results seem to combine penetration by “inability to consent” with penetration by “physical force” into “penetration by physical force or inability to consent” when describing the top reasons students did not use resources<sup>70</sup>. This study’s analysis separates the two forms of penetration into penetration by inability to consent and penetration by physical force, to understand if the two different forms of assault have different reasons for not contacting resources. It is important to separate the two kinds of assault particularly because “among undergraduate women, 7.3 percent experience penetration by just physical force and 5.4 percent by inability to consent”<sup>71</sup>. The uneven

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69 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, vii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

70 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 30. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

71 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, xiii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).



split between the two kinds of assault, make it important to analyze the reasons for not using resources separately. Another important reason that this study’s data looks at individual school responses was because “the majority of the estimates discussed in this report varied significantly across the 33 schools”<sup>72</sup>. Though the AAU Report states that “school characteristics—such as size, type (public/private), the number of crimes reported in the school’s Clery Act statistics, or climate/community measures—were not highly different across participating institutions”<sup>73</sup>. It was still important to look at how students at the various schools responded. The AAU report highlights how “some of the differences this survey found between schools are due to sampling error”<sup>74</sup>. They continue to state that some of this school-by-school variability may be from “different levels of non-response”<sup>75</sup>. However, by using our system of analysis, we can better understand why women are not using resources on a school-by-school basis, rather than an aggregate reasoning that may not highlight most school’s top reasons. Further, this analysis will be able to take a more in depth look at how different forms of sexual assault have different reasons for not using resources.

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72 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, xvii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

73 *Ibid.*

74 *Ibid.*

75 *Ibid.*

## Chapter Three: Results

In the tables that follow, I present the top 5 reasons for women not seeking resources broken out by type of sexual assault. When numbers are highlighted in yellow, this indicates the reason was reported as a top 5 reason at almost all or all participating schools.

Table 1: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Penetration using Physical Force, Number of Schools Top 5 Reasons for Not Contacting Resources<sup>76</sup>:

Reason Given	Top Reason (Number of schools)	2nd most reason (Number of schools)	3rd most reason (Number of schools)	4th most reason (Number of schools)	5th most reason (Number of schools)	Total Out of 30 schools
I did not know where to go or who to tell	0	0	0	0	2	2
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	12	4	8	3	1	28
I did not think anyone would believe me	0	1	1	3	3	8

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<sup>76</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	5	11	9	3	0	28
I did not want the person to get in trouble	0	1	2	5	3	11
I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	0	1	0	0	7	8
I feared it would not be kept confidential	0	0	2	3	6	11
I could handle it myself	11	11	6	0	0	28
I feared retaliation	0	0	0	0	1	1
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	1	0	1	12	4	18
Incident occurred while school was not in session	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other reason	0	0	0	0	1	1

\*California Institute of Technology had no statistics for this type of sexual assault.

\*Massachusetts Institute of Technology only had 4 reasons with statistics.

*Analysis of Table 1:*

The top reason given at most schools by women who did not use resources following a sexual assault involving penetration by physical force was “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” with 12 schools having that as their top response. This was followed closely by “I could handle it myself” with 11 schools listing this as their top choice. The second most common reason given at 11 schools was “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” and 11 more schools noted “I could handle it myself”. As you move down the line, more schools have responses of “resources wouldn’t provide me help needed”, “feared academic consequences”, etc. It is important to note that reasons of “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult”, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”, and “I could handle it myself” were given as top 5 responses at a large majority of schools in this study. This is also important because not only are these reasons given at nearly every school, but the majority are also the most common or second most common responses given. This suggests these are the key reasons for not using resources.

Table 2: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Penetration using Inability to Consent, Number of Schools Top 5 Reasons for Not Contacting Resources<sup>77</sup>:

Reason Given	Top Reason (Number of schools)	2nd most reason (Number of schools)	3rd most reason (Number of schools)	4th most reason (Number of schools)	5th most reason (Number of schools)	Total Out of 29 schools
I did not know where to go or who to tell	0	0	0	0	1	1
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	1	0	24	5	0	30
I did not think anyone would believe me	0	0	0	1	0	1
I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	12	18	0	0	0	30
I did not want the person to get in trouble	0	0	4	19	4	27

<sup>77</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	0	0	0	0	3	3
I feared it would not be kept confidential	0	0	0	1	7	8
I could handle it myself	18	11	0	1	0	30
I feared retaliation	0	0	0	0	0	0
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	0	0	2	3	14	19
Incident occurred while school was not in session	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other reason	0	0	0	0	0	0

\*California Institute of Technology only has 4 reasons listed under this type of sexual assault.

\*Texas A&M University had a tie for their top reason given, so both were listed as “top” reasons.

*Analysis of Table 2:*

Women who did not contact resources following a sexual assault that involved penetration by inability to consent showed a common pattern for their reasoning. The top reason given at 18 of the 30 schools was “I could handle it myself”, followed by 12 schools having as their top reason, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”. It is important to note that at every school included in this data “I could handle it myself”, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” and “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” were listed as one of the top 5 reasons women did not use resources following penetration by inability to consent.

Table 3: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Sexual Touching  
Number of Schools Top 5 Reasons for Not Contacting Resources<sup>78</sup>:

Reason Given	Top Reason (Number of schools)	2nd most reason (Number of schools)	3rd most reason (Number of schools)	4th most reason (Number of schools)	5th most reason (Number of schools)	Total Out of 29 schools
I did not know where to go or who to tell	0	0	0	0	4	4
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	0	0	16	7	4	27

<sup>78</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

I did not think anyone would believe me	0	0	0	0	2	2
I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	29	1	0	0	0	30
I did not want the person to get in trouble	0	0	5	11	5	21
I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	0	0	0	0	3	3
I feared it would not be kept confidential	0	0	0	3	1	4
I could handle it myself	1	29	0	0	0	30
I feared retaliation	0	0	0	0	0	0
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	0	0	9	6	5	20
Incident occurred while school was not in session	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other reason	0	0	0	3	4	7

\*California Institute of Technology only had 3 reasons with statistics, only the top 3 were counted.

\*Yale University had a tie for the 4<sup>th</sup> highest reason, so both were listed as 4<sup>th</sup> and no reason listed for 5<sup>th</sup>.



\*University of Kansas had a tie for the 5<sup>th</sup> highest reason so both reasons were included (6 reasons while every other school only has 5).

*Analysis of Table 3:*

For 29 of 30 schools the top reason given by women who responded to the survey that they experienced sexual touching without consent was “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”. This indicates that not only is this reason important, but also widespread, as nearly every school had this as their top reason. The second most common response given at almost every school in this study was “I could handle it myself”. Like the previous reasoning, the consensus indicated this was both an important reason (being the second most common) and widely agreed upon. For the 3rd, 4th, and 5th most common responses from schools, 27 of the 30 schools had “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” somewhere in their top five responses. Other notably high responses are “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” with 20 of 30 and “I did not want the person to get in trouble” with 21 of the 30 schools reporting these reasons as one of their top five responses.

Table 4: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Penetration by Physical Force and Responded either “I did not think it was serious enough” or “other” follow up Question Responses by School’s Top 5 Responses<sup>79</sup>:

Follow up Question: Reason Given	Top reason given. (number of schools)	Second most common reason (number of schools)	Third most common reason (number of schools)	Fourth most common response (number of schools)	Fifth most common response (number of schools)	Total
I was not injured or hurt	28	1	0	0	0	29
The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these programs or services	0	0	0	3	8	11
I contacted other programs or services I felt were appropriate	0	0	0	0	0	0
I had trouble reaching the program or service	0	0	0	0	0	0
I was too busy	0	0	0	6	8	14
The event happened in a context that	1	18	5	3	1	28

<sup>79</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

began consensually						
Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood	0	0	0	0	0	0
I might be counter-accused	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	0	1	7	8	7	23
Events like this seem common	0	8	14	5	0	27
My body showed involuntary arousal	0	0	2	1	1	4
Other reason	0	0	0	1	1	2
Total	29	28	28	27	26	

\*Massachusetts Institute of Technology only had 3 choices with percentages, so only 3 listed from this school.

\*University of Chicago only has 4 choices with percentages, so only four options listed.

\*Rice University only had one choice with percentages, so only the top option listed.

\*California Institute of Technology had no reasons with percentages, so no responses were recorded from them.

*Analysis of Table 4:*

For women who experienced penetration by physical force, the top response for the follow-up questions was “I was not injured or hurt” with all but one school having it as their top reason. The second most common response was “the event happened in a context that began consensually” with 18 schools listing that reason second. It is important to note that the reasoning “events like this seem common”, “the event happened in a context that began consensually”, and “I was not injured or hurt” had all, or almost all the schools in this study have these responses in their top five reasons. Though it is important to note that this is a follow-up section after responding “I did not think it was serious enough” or “other”.

Table 5: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Penetration by Inability to Consent and Responded either “I did not think it was serious enough” or “other” follow up Question Responses by School’s Top 5 Responses<sup>80</sup>:

Reason Given	Top reason given. (number of schools)	Second most common reason (number of schools)	Third most common reason (number of schools)	Fourth most common response (number of schools)	Fifth most common response (number of schools)	Total
I was not injured or hurt	24	4	1	1	0	30
The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to	0	0	0	0	10	10

<sup>80</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

contact any of these programs or services						
I contacted other programs or services I felt were appropriate	0	0	0	0	0	0
I had trouble reaching the program or service	0	0	0	0	0	0
I was too busy	0	0	1	0	13	14
The event happened in a context that began consensually	2	3	19	6	0	30
Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood	0	0	0	0	0	0
I might be counter-accused	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	4	22	4	0	0	30
Events like this seem common	0	1	5	23	1	30
My body showed involuntary arousal	0	0	0	0	4	4
Other reason	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	30	30	30	30	29	

\*California Institute of Technology only had four choices with percentages, so only four were listed for this school.

*Analysis of Table 5:*

For women who experienced penetration by inability to consent, their top follow up reason given was “I was not injured or hurt” with 24 schools listing that as their top reason. The reason “alcohol and/or other drugs were present” was the second most common for many schools with 22 schools having it there. It is important to note that the reasons: “I was not injured or hurt”, “The event happened in a context that began consensually”, “Alcohol and/or other drugs were present”, and “Events like this seem common” had every school listing that response in some place among their top 5 follow-up reasons.

Table 6: Women Who Experienced Sexual Assault by Sexual Touching and Responded either “I did not think it was serious enough” or “other” follow up Question Responses by School’s Top 5 Responses<sup>81</sup>:

Reason Given	Top reason given. (number of schools)	Second most common reason (number of schools)	Third most common reason (number of schools)	Fourth most common response (number of schools)	Fifth most common response (number of schools)	Total
I was not injured or hurt	30	0	0	0	0	30
The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these	0	0	1	13	8	22

<sup>81</sup> All Sources for this data in Appendix D.

programs or services						
I contacted other programs or services I felt were appropriate	0	0	0	0	0	0
I had trouble reaching the program or service	0	0	0	0	0	0
I was too busy	0	0	2	2	8	12
The event happened in a context that began consensually	0	0	0	11	13	24
Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood	0	0	0	0	0	0
I might be counter-accused	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	0	1	25	3	0	29
Events like this seem common	0	28	1	0	0	29

My body showed involuntary arousal	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other reason	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total:	30	29	29	29	29	

\*California institute of Technology only had one choice with percentages, so only the top choice was listed.

*Analysis of Table 6:*

For women who experienced sexual assault by sexual touching, their most common “follow-up” response for not reporting was “I was not injured or hurt” with all 30 schools listing it. This was followed by “events like this seem common” having all but one school listing that reason second. The third most common response was “Alcohol and/or other drugs were present” with 25 schools listing that option. Importantly, “I was not injured or hurt”, “Alcohol and/or other drugs were present”, and “events like this seem common” had all or all but one school list these options among their top five reasons for selecting “I did not think it was serious enough” and “other” as reasons for not using resources following a sexual assault by sexual touching.



***Comparison of Aggregate AAU Results to Individual School Analysis:***

This study differs from the Aggregate AAU data in that it differentiates between reasons given by women who experience “penetration by inability to consent” and “penetration by physical force”. While the AAU data combines the two into the category of “penetration by physical force or inability to consent”. The top reason women did not use resources or services following penetration in the aggregate AAU data was “I could handle it myself” with 48.8% (Appendix C). This finding is echoed in our data for women who experienced “penetration by inability to consent” as 18 schools listed “I could handle it myself” as their top reason. For penetration by physical force, the top reasons listed at schools was “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” with 12 schools listing this as their top reason, followed by 11 schools having “I could handle it myself”. This differs from the aggregate AAU data as their second most frequent response was “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” (Appendix C). This indicates that depending on what type of assault by penetration a woman experienced, her reasons for not contacting resources or services may be slightly different.

The AAU aggregate data lists “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” as their third most frequent response for women who experience penetration by inability to consent or physical force (Appendix C). This is consistent with my data for penetration by inability to consent which had 24 schools listing “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” as their third most frequent reason for not reporting. However, my data differs as it shows that penetration by physical force had only 8 schools listing “I felt embarrassed,

ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” as their third most common reason. In this category, “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” was the top reason for 12 schools. This could imply that feeling embarrassed may in general be a stronger barrier to using resources for those who experienced sexual assault by penetration using physical force than penetration by inability to consent. However, because the student populations, sexual assault rates, resource use, response rates, etc. are not consistent from school to school, a direct correlation cannot be made.

The fourth most common response from the AAU aggregate report was “I did not want to get the person in trouble” (Appendix C). This was also the 4th most frequently listed response for penetration by inability to consent with 19 schools listing it. Further, 27 schools in my data recorded “I did not want to get the person in trouble” among their top 5 reasons for not using resources. Interestingly, this was not the case for penetration by physical force. Only 5 schools listed “I did not want to get the person in trouble” as their 4th most common reason. Further, only 11 schools had “I did not want to get the person in trouble” in their top 5 reasons for not using resources. The reason “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” dominated the fourth most common category with 12 schools having it listed for penetration by physical force. Further, for women who experienced penetration by physical force 18 schools had that option in their top 5 reasons, indicating it is more prevalent at more schools in the top 5 options than “I did not want to get the person in trouble”. This could imply that concern over getting someone in trouble is less of a barrier to using resources for women who were sexually assaulted by physical force than by women

who were unable to consent. Again, other underlying factors could cause this discrepancy.

The AAU aggregate report listed the 5th most common reason women did not use resources following a sexual assault by penetration was “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” (Appendix C). Our data shows that for inability to consent penetration, 14 schools listed “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” as their 5th most common response, but only 19 schools had this listed in their top five reasons. For penetration by physical force, only 4 schools had “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” as their fifth most common reason, and this section only had 18 schools list it within their top 5 reasons. This would indicate that from school to school, “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed” may not be as common of a reason.

Another important component to address is the difference in follow up reasons given by women who responded, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” or “other”. The aggregate AAU data lists the top follow up reason given by women who experienced penetration by either inability to consent or penetration following a response of it “not serious enough” was “I was not injured or hurt” with 69.8% (Appendix C). This was also the top reason given across the different types of sexual assault. One important distinction between the aggregate data and this data is the role of alcohol or drugs in not using resources. In the follow-up section, for penetration by inability to consent or by physical force, the aggregate data had the second most common response of “alcohol and/or other drugs were present” with 54 percent (Appendix C). However, this study shows that the types of sexual assault have a

different emphasis on alcohol use as a reason for not reporting. For women who experienced penetration by inability to consent, alcohol use seemed to be more of a barrier to resource use as all 30 schools had “alcohol and/or drugs were present” among their top 3 choices. Conversely, penetration by physical force had only 8 schools listing alcohol in their top three responses. Importantly, penetration by physical force had fewer responses than inability to consent, but there is still a significant difference in the placement of alcohol in the list of top reasons for not using resources. This is not an unexpected result as the definition of “inability to consent” includes “unable to consent or stop what was happening because they were passed out, asleep, or incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs”<sup>82</sup>. This could lead us to reasonably believe that alcohol use may be more common in “inability to consent” but this study focuses on reasons for not using resources, which as indicated by the tables, seems to be a more prevalent barrier to using resources than in penetration by physical force cases.

The top five reasons listed in the aggregate AAU data by women who experienced sexual touching for not using resources were: “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” 62.4%, “I could handle it myself” 51.3%, “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” 18.2%, “I did not want the person into trouble” 13.4%, “I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed”, 13.0% (Appendix C). The prevalence of the response “I did not think it was serious enough...” was echoed in our findings as 29 schools listed this as

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<sup>82</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, v. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

their top response. The second most popular response in the aggregate report was “I could handle it myself” which was overwhelmingly our second most common response as well (29 schools having placed it there). The aggregate report listed “I felt embarrassed...” as their third most common response which was also the finding in our study with 16 schools having that reason placed third. The fourth most common reason listed in the aggregate reports was “I didn’t want the person to get in trouble”. Our finding echoes this, but the number of schools having this as their fourth most common response is less than the previous options, with only 11 schools having this choice as their fourth most common. The aggregate report had “I did not think resources...” as their fifth most common response. Our data did not have an overwhelming majority of schools placing this response in fifth (only 5), but our data likely follows the aggregate as 9 schools had this response in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 6 in 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5 in 5<sup>th</sup>, thus the statistics matching those schools’ responses would likely add up. It is not surprising that our data for “sexual touching” essentially followed the aggregate data. This is likely because “sexual touching” on the aggregate report was listed as “Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent” (Appendix C). For the individual school data, the category was listed as “Sexual Touching”, which as far as I know also combined inability to consent with physical force. Thus, we can expect that the data would largely follow the aggregate report’s placement of reasons because all the individual school data is counted within the aggregate report. One of the only differences is that this study counted responses from only 30 schools, while the aggregate data likely used all 33. If this is the case, most of the aggregate data would likely stem from the 30 schools included in this study.

*Limitations to this study:*

One of the major limitations of this study is that the schools participating in the AAU Campus Climate Survey “were not randomly selected, and the rates discussed in this report should not be seen as representing student populations beyond this group of schools”<sup>83</sup>. However, because of the scale and depth of the data, this study was selected to try to analyze the reasons women who took this survey did not use resources. There does not seem to be a wide variety of studies specifically analyzing this subject matter and a more representative study of schools across the nation could be extremely helpful for future analysis. Another serious limitation in this study is the fact that direct percentages can not be compared. Because population, sexual assault rates, response rates, etc. are not the same from school to school, I could not compare, and average percentages listed in each response category. Further, a couple of schools showed a lack of data as they would only have a couple reasons with percentages over zero. However, because of the importance of this subject matter, the study went forward with accommodations to try to address these limitations. Another important limitation is that not all forms of sexual assault from the AAU Campus climate survey were analyzed. The survey also asks questions about nonconsensual contact from “coercion; and lack of active, ongoing voluntary agreement by the victim”<sup>84</sup>. However, only inability to

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<sup>83</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, xvii. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

<sup>84</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. *Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct*. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 2. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

consent, physical force, and sexual touching were analyzed. Finally, the AAU data doesn't provide any data to examine whether reasons for not seeking support services varied by race or ethnicity. Such analysis might provide insight on how to best promote services to all students on campus.

## Chapter 4: Discussion of the Top Reasons Given for Not Using

### Resources:

The questions regarding why women decided not to use resources were asked on the AAU survey so that respondents could “mark all that apply”<sup>85</sup>. This formatting of the survey has led to many of the top responses being related to one another. This section will look further into the rationale of the most common reasons given by women for not using resources following a sexual assault.

#### *Minimization:*

The practice of minimizing one’s sexual assault is illuminated in many of the popular responses given on the AAU campus climate by women who did not use resources following their assault. The process of minimizing one’s sexual assault “can be a coping strategy”<sup>86</sup>. The minimizing of sexual assault takes on two major components: minimization of personal impact and minimization of assaultive behaviors<sup>87</sup>. Minimization of personal impacts relates to the “survivors’ beliefs about their reaction to the assault”<sup>88</sup>. This boils down to students not using campus resources because they did not think the outcomes “were bad enough to warrant or justify campus

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<sup>85</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, A5-21. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

<sup>86</sup> “The Effects of Sexual Assault.” WCSAP Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs. Accessed May 18, 2021. <https://www.wcsap.org/help/about-sexual-assault/effects-sexual-assault>.

<sup>87</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

<sup>88</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.



support”<sup>89</sup>. This method of minimization is seen in the common reasoning for not using campus supports, stating “I could handle it myself”. The second form of minimization--minimizing of assaultive behavior refers to the incident of their assault as “insufficiently severe”<sup>90</sup>. This second form of minimization is characterized by the common response of “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”.

*“Not serious enough”:*

The top reason given by women who experienced sexual touching on the aggregate AAU Campus Climate Survey for not using resources was overwhelmingly, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” with 62.4% of women stating that reason (Appendix C). This was also the top reason given by almost all the schools in our analysis. This was the second most common reason given by women who experienced sexual assault by penetration according to the AAU aggregate results, with 47.4% of women believing their assault was not serious enough (Appendix C). When asked what they believed was the single most important reason they did not use resources, 16.8% of women who experienced penetration sexual assault chose “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” (Appendix C). That was the second most chosen response behind “I could handle it myself” (Appendix C). The widespread belief that a sexual assault is not serious enough to use resources relates back to the “classic rape scenario”. This scenario is “one perpetrated by a stranger in an

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<sup>89</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

unfamiliar, deserted place that results in obvious physical injury to the victim”<sup>91</sup>. But all sexual assaults do not follow a formula. In fact, “about 85-90 percent of sexual assaults reported by college women are perpetrated by someone known to the victim”<sup>92</sup>. But more importantly is the fact that this “classic rape” scenario can be used to minimize someone’s personal experience by comparing it to others. An article in *Psychology Today* describes how women “downplay how much they have been harmed by sexual harassment and even assault”<sup>93</sup>. The author describes one of her clients minimizing her own experience by stating “I know a lot of women who were brutally raped...being sexually harassed by my boss was nothing”<sup>94</sup>. This form of minimization by comparison is exemplified in a study done by Kathryn Holland and Lilia Cortina in which Resident Assistants (RA) and undergraduate women were given a set of surveys which “examined knowledge and perceptions of sexual assault policies and resources, and reporting and help-seeking behavior among RAs...and the student they serve”<sup>95</sup>. The study found that many women “did not use campus supports because they perceived the behaviors to be insufficiently severe”<sup>96</sup>. More specifically, “these women primarily described instances of unwanted sexual contact and/or attempted rape and

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<sup>91</sup> Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>.

<sup>92</sup> “Most Victims Know Their Attacker.” National Institute of Justice. U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs, September 30, 2008. <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/most-victims-know-their-attacker>.

<sup>93</sup> Engel, Beverly. “Why Don't Victims of Sexual Harassment Come Forward Sooner?” *Psychology Today*. Sussex Publishers, November 16, 2017. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-compassion-chronicles/201711/why-dont-victims-sexual-harassment-come-forward-sooner>.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*

evaluated these behaviors as less serious than other forms of sexual violence”<sup>97</sup>. This study’s results explain why women who experienced sexual touching reported on the AAU survey that they did not perceive their assault to be “serious enough” to contact resources, when comparing it to other forms of sexual violence. The study from Holland and Cortina also explains that “some survivors did not seek help because there was no vaginal penetration”<sup>98</sup>. This further explains why those who experienced sexual touching may not perceive their incident as serious enough.

*“The event happened in a context that began consensually”:*

When respondents selected “I did not think it was serious enough” or “other” they were prompted with a follow-up question which asked for more details as to why they chose that response. One popular follow-up response was “the event happened in a context that began consensually”. This popular response could be viewed as a form of minimization because of the presence of consent at one point during the interaction. The role of consent and someone’s idea of whether they have consent plays a vital role in legal prosecution of sexual assault. In the California Supreme Court case, *In re John Z.* the court discusses whether or not the withdrawal of consent constitutes forcible rape<sup>99</sup>. The Supreme Court of California held “that a withdrawal of consent effectively nullifies any earlier consent and subjects the male to forcible rape charges if he persists in what

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97 Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 59. [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126](https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *In re John Z.*, 60 P.3d 183, 128 Cal. Rptr. 2d 783, 29 Cal. 4th 756 (2003).

has become nonconsensual intercourse”<sup>100</sup>. This was a significant ruling because it establishes that under the law, that consent can be withdrawn. However, this is only a ruling in a state supreme court case, it may not be applied the same way in different states. Further, the decision of this case does not equate to a law, which means it is not binding. Unfortunately, based on women’s responses of “the event began consensually” as a reason they did not view their assault as “serious enough” to contact resources, highlights the fact that some may minimize the assault because of the presence of initial consent.

*“Alcohol and/or other drugs were present”:*

One the prominent reasons selected from the follow up section was “alcohol and/or other drugs were present” with the aggregate report stating that 54% of women who experienced sexual assault by penetration using physical force or inability to consent selected that as one of their reasons. Our study concluded that penetration by inability to consent tended to have more schools ranking “alcohol” as one of their top 5 follow-up reasons and in higher placements than penetration by physical force (Table 4 & 5). As previously discussed, this result could be related to the fact that alcohol is mentioned in the definition given by the AAU survey for inability to consent. However, it is important to understand why the presence of alcohol or drugs at the time would cause women to think of their sexual assault as “not serious enough” or as a reason to not use resources.

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<sup>100</sup> *In re John Z.*, 60 P.3d 183, 128 Cal. Rptr. 2d 783, 29 Cal. 4th 756 (2003).

Alcohol has been linked to sexual assault for a multitude of reasons. Alcohol can alter a woman's perception of safety; "alcohol may impair a woman's judgment about what situations and people are unsafe"<sup>101</sup>. Further, alcohol can inhibit "motor skills that help a woman resist sexual assault"<sup>102</sup>. But alcohol use also influences potential perpetrators. Among college students, men "who report frequent heavy drinking on surveys are more likely than other men to report sexual assault perpetration"<sup>103</sup>. The perpetrator using alcohol is one way that women may have likened their assault as "not serious enough" and chosen not to use resources. A study by Karen Weiss describes how victims may "blame offenders' sexual aggression on diminished capacity, or being 'under the influence' of drugs or alcohol"<sup>104</sup>. She found that "by scapegoating these substances, victims are able to deny their partners' intent"<sup>105</sup>. This process of denying intent could play into a victim's belief that the assault "wasn't serious enough" to use resources. Further, the denial of intent also plays into reporting and resource use as "attributing their partners' violent behaviors to alcoholism or drug addiction allows victims to feel sympathy toward their offenders rather than anger or rage"<sup>106</sup>. This may also relate to why women who experienced penetration by inability to consent defined as "unable to consent or stop what was happening because they were passed out, asleep,

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101 Ford, Jessie V. "Sexual Assault on College Hookups: The Role of Alcohol and Acquaintances." *Sociological Forum* 32, no. 2 (June 2017): 381–405. <https://doi.org/10.1111/socf.12335>.

102 *Ibid.*

103 *Ibid.*

104 Weiss, Karen G. "Neutralizing Sexual Victimization: A Typology of Victims' Non-Reporting Accounts." *Theoretical Criminology* 15, no. 4 (November 2011): 453.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480610391527>.

105 *Ibid.*

106 *Ibid.*

or incapacitated due to alcohol or drugs”<sup>107</sup> had more schools with the response “I did not want to get the person in trouble” in their top five reasons. Penetration by physical force had 11 schools listing this in their top five reasons and penetration by inability to consent had 27 schools with that in their top 5 responses (Table 1 & 2). Though, this could be attributed with other factors as well. Another potential reason alcohol/drug use is given as reason for not using resources is the rhetoric around alcohol and sexual assault. Washington University St. Louis (a school in this study) describes the “rape myth”: “if women would just stop drinking so much, they wouldn’t be sexually assaulted”<sup>108</sup>. This type of rhetoric will likely discourage victims from using resources if they believe they may be partially responsible for their own sexual assault. This feeling is examined further in the discussion of shame and self-blame later in this paper.

*“I could handle it myself”:*

The AAU aggregate report found that for women who experienced penetration by inability to consent or physical force, their most common reason for not using resources and services was that “I could handle it myself” (Appendix C). Subsequently, this was also a top reason in this study. Given the prevalence of this reasoning, it is important to understand the factors as to why this is a top choice. The major factors that go into this reasoning are minimization of the assault, feelings of embarrassment, and feelings that it was not serious enough.

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107 Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, v. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf)

108 “Rape Myths and Facts.” Washington University in St. Louis. Accessed May 2021. <https://students.wustl.edu/rape-myths-facts/>.

The reasoning “I could handle it myself” is likely caused in part by minimizing personal impact. This type of minimization was illuminated in the Holland and Cortina study as they found that one of the major reasons women did not use resources was regarding “survivors’ beliefs about their reaction to the assault and feeling as though the outcomes were not bad enough to warrant or justify using formal campus supports”<sup>109</sup>. Their study discovered that based on their psychological and physical outcomes, “these survivors felt it would only be acceptable to use campus supports if the assault had a ‘severe’ or ‘extreme’ impact on their lives”<sup>110</sup>. As previously discussed, the feeling of one’s sexual assault not being “serious enough” to use resources once again comes into play because without the physical or obvious psychological marks of sexual assault, victims may minimize their experience to one they feel they can handle on their own.

The reasoning that “I could handle it myself” being such a highly ranked response can also be attributed to dealing with emotions related to reporting. A study by Fisher et al. discussed how “victims may have considered the victimization to be a private matter and may have chosen to deal with it informally” which they attribute to the possibility it stemmed from “embarrassment at having been victimized or by lacking confidence that reporting would lead to arrest”<sup>111</sup>. This could explain why many women choose to keep their assaults to themselves.

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<sup>109</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 10. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>.

*“These events seem common”:*

When a student listed “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” or “other” they were next prompted to go into further depth about why they chose that option. One of major follow-up reasonings given was “events like this seem common”, referring to why they did not feel their incident was serious enough. While problematic that sexual assault feels common, this feeling works to minimize victim’s perceptions about their experience. The study composed by Holland and Cortina found that “participants minimized the assault by interpreting the behavior as a normal part of being in college”<sup>112</sup>. One participant stated ““I didn’t consider it serious enough because it happens to girls all the time””<sup>113</sup>. They also found that this feeling of sexual assault being so frequent lead to “some survivors also believed that campus supports would be uninterested in these ‘normal’ behaviors”<sup>114</sup>. This sense that their sexual assault is just one of many takes away from their experience and the seriousness of the issue. By feeling that the university would not find their incident serious, it detracts from the victim’s experience and likens it to just one of many. This form of minimization is concerning because it highlights that the issue of sexual assault is so widely thought of as “common” that not only is it still prevalent, but it detracts from people’s sense that they can and should use resources.

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<sup>112</sup> Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. ““It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*



*“I was not injured or hurt”*:

When respondents of the AAU Campus Climate survey were asked why they did not use resources or services following a sexual assault, and they selected the reason “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources” or “Other” they were prompted to elaborate on this reasoning in another section. They were asked to select options from another menu. The overwhelming reason chosen was “I was not injured or hurt”, with 69.8 percent of women who were sexually assaulted by penetration selecting that response and 83.2 percent of women who were sexually assaulted by sexual touching (Appendix C). This was the overwhelming response in my school analysis with nearly every school listing it as one of the top reasons (Tables 4-6). But why is this such a frequent response?

The answer lies in the fact that the majority of women who are sexually assaulted are not physically hurt or injured. “Multiple studies have found that only 20-40% of assaulted women are injured”<sup>115</sup>. While it is encouraging that physical injuries are not prevalent in many cases, this can encourage minimization of assaults by victims. Specifically, because there is no physical tangible evidence, this could feed into the belief that it was not “serious enough” to use resources. Sexual assaults that are thought of as “more severe victimizations” include: “presence of a weapon, physical force, injury, peritraumatic fear, and perceived fear of death/injury during assault were associated with higher levels of reporting to the police”<sup>116</sup>. This insinuates that the

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<sup>115</sup> Eckert, Linda O., Naomi Sugar, and David Fine. “Characteristics of Sexual Assault in Women with a Major Psychiatric Diagnosis.” *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* 186, no. 6 (2002): 1284–91. <https://doi.org/10.1067/mob.2002.123731>.

<sup>116</sup> Sabina, Chiara, and Lavina Y. Ho. “Campus and College Victim Responses to Sexual Assault and Dating Violence: Disclosure, Service Utilization, and Service Provision.” *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* 15, no. 3 (July 2014): 201–26. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838014521322>.

presence of injury makes the assault seem more serious and thus more frequently taken to the police. But given the drastically underreported rates of sexual assault to police, it is important to understand how injury plays a role in using other resources as well. A study by Fisher et. al. used a “random sample of 4,446 female college students” in order to discover “the level and determinants of victims’ willingness to report their sexual victimization”<sup>117</sup>. This study found that “offenses that resulted in injury, that involved a weapon, that were perpetrated by unknown assailants, and that occurred in unfamiliar places were the most likely to be disclosed to the police”<sup>118</sup>. The relevance of injury is also present in reporting to people other than police or campus authorities as “victims’ decisions to disclose their incidents were more likely for sexual contact, when they sustained injuries, and when the offenders were known others”<sup>119</sup>. Based on these studies, we can conclude that a lack of injury during assault would reduce one’s likelihood to use resources or report their incident.

These studies indicate that experiencing physical injuries increases one’s likelihood to report to different resources. But the strong reliance on the feeling of “not being injured or hurt” playing into the seriousness of the assault relates back to the classic rape scenario: “one perpetrated by a stranger in an unfamiliar, deserted place that

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117 Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 6. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>.

118 Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 8. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>.

119 Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 30. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>.

results in obvious physical injury to the victim”<sup>120</sup>. The overwhelming response by women indicating that they did not view their sexual assault as “serious enough” because they were not “injured or hurt” highlights the fact that few sexual assaults fit the “classic rape” scenario. Further, the fact that one was not “injured or hurt” could be used as a form of minimization.

*“I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult”:*

The feeling of embarrassment being a barrier to using resources was the third highest reasoning listed on the AAU aggregate report (Appendix C). This was consistent with my data as that was a quite common response across different types of sexual assault. Feelings of embarrassment, shame or the process being too emotionally difficult stem from a multitude of reasons.

The high percentage of women saying that the feeling of embarrassment, shame, etc. was the reason they did not use resources could be related to confusion about their role during the assault and self-blame. A study done by Karen Weiss discovered that “an examination of women’s shame narratives suggests that many female victims see themselves as partially responsible for sexual victimization or anticipate that others will blame them or see them as deserving”<sup>121</sup>. “Persons who feel shame often see themselves

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<sup>120</sup> Fisher, Bonnie S., Leah E. Daigle, Francis T. Cullen, and Michael G. Turner. “Reporting Sexual Victimization To The Police And Others: Results From a National-Level Study of College Women.” *Criminal Justice and Behavior* 30, no. 1 (February 2003): 13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854802239161>

<sup>121</sup> Weiss, Karen G. “Too Ashamed to Report: Deconstructing the Shame of Sexual Victimization.” *Feminist Criminology* 5, no. 3 (July 2010): 294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343>.

as having done something wrong or dishonorable”<sup>122</sup>. This definition of shame is established in the self-blame associated with many sexual assaults. This feeling of self-blame also extends into the victim’s feeling ashamed after their assault. The victim may feel as though they “‘allowed’ the sexual assault to happen at all, even if they were frightened of serious injury or death, may also make them feel ashamed”<sup>123</sup>. Along the same lines, Weiss describes how self-blame is increased with alcohol use because “‘women who drink to the point of intoxication may feel responsible for having gotten drunk and placing themselves in vulnerable positions”<sup>124</sup>. This idea is also exemplified in Holland & Cortina’s study as one respondent said “‘I knew I shouldn’t have been drinking as much as I was at the time. It was partially my fault””<sup>125</sup>. Another form of self-blame narrative arises from “‘a woman who does not fight back aggressively, or does not resist sufficiently”<sup>126</sup>. One respondent in Weiss’ study felt “‘ashamed and felt she was partly to blame because she couldn’t stop him, even though she tried”<sup>127</sup>. Though exact reasoning on a case-by-case basis is different, it is clear there are implications of embarrassment, shame, and emotional responses that arise out of feelings of self-blame.

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122 Weiss, Karen G. “Too Ashamed to Report: Deconstructing the Shame of Sexual Victimization.” *Feminist Criminology* 5, no. 3 (July 2010): 286-287. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343>.

123 “Common Reactions of Sexual Assault Survivors.” Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence. Accessed 2021. [https://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get\\_informed/sexual\\_assault.html](https://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get_informed/sexual_assault.html).

124 Weiss, Karen G. “Too Ashamed to Report: Deconstructing the Shame of Sexual Victimization.” *Feminist Criminology* 5, no. 3 (July 2010): 294. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343>.

125 Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

126 Weiss, Karen G. “Too Ashamed to Report: Deconstructing the Shame of Sexual Victimization.” *Feminist Criminology* 5, no. 3 (July 2010): 296. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085110376343>.

127 *Ibid.*

Another factor that is related to the high percentage of women who gave “embarrassment...” as a reason they did not use resources, would be the stress of reliving and retelling an event. The Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence describes how many victims may feel embarrassed by their sexual assault because the “privacy” that humans have with their body and sexuality “has been stripped from them by the rapist”<sup>128</sup>. This feeling of embarrassment may extend into trying to find “the words to describe what happened to them”<sup>129</sup>. This may be why many women felt embarrassed and did not want to use resources following their assault. The feeling of not wanting to have to retell the events of their assault also extends to the “too emotionally difficult” portion of this reason. In Holland and Cortina’s study two respondents described how they felt reporting their incident would be too emotionally difficult because: “reporting it would cause me a lot of stress and anxiety” and “I didn’t want to be forced to relive things over and over throughout the investigation”<sup>130</sup>. Though this may not be the case for all sexual assault victims, the emotions women may feel in having to retell about their sexual assault may be partially why women listed “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult” as the reason they did not use resources following their assault.

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128 “Common Reactions of Sexual Assault Survivors.” Nebraska Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence, Accessed 2021. [https://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get\\_informed/sexual\\_assault.html](https://www.nebraskacoalition.org/get_informed/sexual_assault.html).

129 *Ibid.*

130 Holland, Kathryn J., and Lilia M. Cortina. “‘It Happens to Girls All the Time’: Examining Sexual Assault Survivors’ Reasons for Not Using Campus Supports.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 59, no. 1-2 (March 6, 2017): 50–64. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12126>.

## Chapter 5: Conclusions

The results of this study suggest women do not seek out support services because they feel: “I could handle it myself”, “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”, and “I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult”. Many of these responses seem to connect to one another as minimization and emotional responses seem to be related to one’s willingness to utilize resources. Further, the SaVE amendment to the Clery Act states that “Colleges must publish the victim’s rights and college responsibilities...written notification of available service for mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, and other available community resources”<sup>131</sup>. Yet, students are still showing uncertainty about resources as two schools under the assault category of “physical force”, one school under the assault category, “inability to consent”, and four schools under “sexual touching” had “I did not know where to go or who to tell” as one of their top five reasons given by women for not using resources. This points to a need to better inform students about resources, even if they are “published” by the university.

One of the major reasons given across all three types of sexual assault analyzed in this study was that victims felt that “I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources”. There are a multitude of reasons victims may feel this way following their sexual assault, but universities need to try to address this feeling. It could be helpful for universities to emphasize the seriousness of any type of sexual assault while also educating students about rape myths. Further, addressing and

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<sup>131</sup> “Understanding the Campus SaVE Act,” October 21, 2013.  
[https://www.nvcc.edu/support/\\_files/Understanding-the-Campus-SaVE-Act.pdf](https://www.nvcc.edu/support/_files/Understanding-the-Campus-SaVE-Act.pdf).

counteracting narratives that encourage self-blame (like excessive alcohol use) could increase resource use. Additionally, clarifying that the withdrawal of consent or not consenting to further sexual activity that was perpetrated against a student still constitutes a serious sexual assault. If universities are able to understand why their students are not using resources, they can adapt their policies, rhetoric around sexual assault, and resources to fit student needs.

There are glimmers of hope in addressing student needs. As previously discussed, the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021 has some components that are very encouraging in addressing sexual violence. Specifically, section 303 addresses “Grants to Combat Violent Crimes on Campuses”<sup>132</sup>. One particularly promising component is the emphasis on training “campus personnel in how to use a victim-centered, trauma-informed interview technique, which means asking questions of a student or campus employee... in a manner that is focused on the experience of the reported victim, that does not judge or blame the reported victim for the alleged crime and that is informed by evidence-based research on trauma response”<sup>133</sup>. This shift to a more trauma-informed and victim-centered response will hopefully alleviate some of the intimidation that accompanies going to campus resources. The emphasis on not judging or blaming the victim could address some of the concerns regarding embarrassment, self-blame, alcohol use, etc. The reauthorization will also include a report to Congress from the Secretary of Education which will

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<sup>132</sup> Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021” H.R. 1620.  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/text#toc-HA08FD405DAE045CBBB15C15BC07E8995>

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

include “an evaluation of programs, events and education materials...related to sexual assault... and an assessment of best practices and guidance from the evaluation”<sup>134</sup>.

This report will evaluate campus practices and encourage improvement. While only time will tell how effective this legislation will be, the practices put forward in this Reauthorization Act show great promise for improving and encouraging resource use.

### **Further Studies:**

This study aimed to analyze the reasons that women gave for not using resources following a sexual assault. Further research should be done to understand how race, gender, sexual orientation, etc. may have different levels of resource use following a sexual assault or different reasons for not using resources. This would allow for more specific changes to be made to meet students needs. Another important study should look at other types of sexual assault. The AAU aggregate report also addresses nonconsensual contact from “coercion; and lack of active, without ongoing voluntary agreement by the victim”<sup>135</sup>. These would be two more types of assault that could be analyzed to understand why students are not using resources. Further, conducting a more extensive survey which would analyze data from more schools outside of the AAU cohort could clarify large-scale patterns for not using resources. This idea is in some ways put forward in the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of

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<sup>134</sup> “Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021” H.R. 1620. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/text#toc-HA08FD405DAE045CBBB15C15BC07E8995>

<sup>135</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. *Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct*. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, 2. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).



2021 as section 1613 aims to “develop, design, and make available through a secure and accessible online portal, a standardized online survey tool regarding student experiences with domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking”<sup>136</sup>. This will hopefully provide a better insight into the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses around the nation.

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<sup>136</sup> “Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization Act of 2021” H.R. 1620.  
<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1620/text#toc-HFDE348DEC58E4B2BB1AEE2B4D4C4242C>

**Appendix A: University of Oregon Table 3.14 from AAU Campus Climate Survey 2019<sup>137</sup>:**

**Table 3.14. Percent of Victimization With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

Survey Item Response	Woman								Man			
	Penetration						Sexual Touching		Penetration		Sexual Touching	
	Total		By Physical Force		By Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening							
							%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
<i>Have you ever contacted a program or resource about this experience/these experiences?<sup>4</sup></i>												
Yes	31.3	3.3	40.4	5.6	25.2	4.4	13.9	3.4	S	S	26.4	14.0
No	68.7	3.3	59.6	5.6	74.8	4.4	86.1	3.4	91.5	8.1	73.6	14.0
<i>Why did you decide not contact any programs or resources?<sup>5</sup></i>												
I did not know where to go or who to tell	12.7	2.8	16.9	5.7	10.4	3.1	4.7	2.7	S	S	0.0	0.0
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	33.0	3.5	40.6	6.9	29.0	4.4	15.9	3.9	S	S	S	S
I did not think anyone would believe me	10.5	2.4	13.1	4.6	9.1	2.8	3.0	1.6	S	S	0.0	0.0
I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	40.5	3.6	33.7	7.0	44.2	4.7	54.4	3.9	29.9	14.3	34.0	20.0
I did not want the person to get into trouble	23.9	3.6	24.4	6.2	23.6	4.4	11.3	2.9	38.1	14.9	S	S
I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	16.1	2.8	26.7	6.0	10.4	3.0	3.8	2.0	0.0	0.0	S	S
I feared it would not be kept confidential	13.0	2.8	16.1	4.7	11.4	3.8	5.1	1.9	S	S	S	S
I could handle it myself	45.6	4.7	46.0	7.2	45.3	6.0	52.4	4.9	44.2	15.0	53.5	15.5
I feared retaliation	10.7	2.8	15.4	4.7	8.2	3.1	4.6	2.0	S	S	S	S

<sup>137</sup> “Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct.” UO Climate | Office of Institutional Research. Accessed 2021. <https://ir.uoregon.edu/UOClimate>.

**Table 3.14. Percent of Victimization With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup> (continued)**

Survey Item Response	Woman						Man					
	Penetration						Sexual Touching		Penetration		Sexual Touching	
	Total		By Physical Force		By Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening							
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	25.3	3.2	27.9	6.5	23.8	4.1	6.6	2.9	25.4	12.7	0.0	0.0
Incident occurred while school was not in session	7.6	2.1	9.6	4.0	6.5	2.6	3.3	1.7	0.0	0.0	S	S
Other reason	15.0	2.8	14.9	5.1	15.0	3.5	10.3	2.9	S	S	34.1	13.9
<i>You said you did not contact any of these programs or resources (because it was not serious enough/for an 'other' reason). Please review the list below and mark any of the reasons that may better describe why you didn't contact any of these programs or resources.<sup>6</sup></i>												
I was not injured or hurt	69.1	5.8	63.3	10.7	71.8	6.4	80.4	4.9	77.8	23.4	81.7	18.6
The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these programs or services	21.3	5.0	S	S	26.5	5.9	25.3	4.8	S	S	S	S
I contacted other programs or services that I felt were appropriate	5.4	2.8	16.9	8.9	0.0	0.0	S	S	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
I had trouble reaching the program or service	S	S	0.0	0.0	S	S	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
I was too busy	18.2	4.0	20.3	7.7	17.2	4.9	11.0	3.8	S	S	S	S
The event happened in a context that began consensually	46.9	5.9	52.3	10.8	44.4	7.4	20.2	5.3	S	S	S	S

**Table 3.14. Percent of Victimization With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup> (continued)**

Survey Item Response	Woman						Man					
	Penetration						Sexual Touching		Penetration		Sexual Touching	
	Total		By Physical Force		By Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening							
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood	6.8	3.0	S	S	S	S	5.7	2.9	S	S	S	S
I might be counter-accused	7.1	3.1	S	S	S	S	5.5	2.9	S	S	0.0	0.0
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	43.8	7.5	30.7	12.0	50.0	8.7	47.0	6.1	77.5	23.8	S	S
Events like this seem common	34.9	5.6	34.4	8.6	35.1	7.2	50.4	6.0	S	S	S	S
My body showed involuntary arousal	15.1	4.1	S	S	18.6	5.6	5.4	2.8	77.8	23.4	S	S
Other reason	11.5	3.6	0.0	0.0	16.9	5.5	6.9	3.0	0.0	0.0	61.9	24.4

<sup>1</sup>Respondents were asked to report on these characteristics for up to four incidents that impacted or affected them the most.

<sup>2</sup>Estimates are for victimizations reported since entering college.

<sup>3</sup>**Physical force:** incidents that involved force or threats of force against you. Force could include someone using their body weight to hold you down, pinning your arms, hitting or kicking you, or using or threatening to use a weapon against you.

<sup>4</sup>**Inability to consent or stop what was happening:** incidents when you were unable to consent or stop what was happening because you were passed out, asleep, or incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol.

<sup>5</sup>Per 100 victimizations.

<sup>6</sup>Per 100 victimizations where a program or resource was not contacted. Respondents could select multiple reasons.

<sup>7</sup>Per 100 victimizations with victims who did not think the incident was serious enough to contact any program/resource or had an 'other' reason they did not contact a program/resource. Respondents could select multiple reasons.

**Appendix B: List of Schools that Participated in the 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey and their Participation in this study<sup>138</sup>.**

University Name	Used in this Study (Yes/No)
Boston University	Yes
Brown University	Yes
California Institute of Technology	Yes
Carnegie Mellon University	Yes
Case Western Reserve University	No- Table 3.14 not posted
Harvard University	Yes
Iowa State University	No- Table 3.14 not posted
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Yes
Northwestern University	Yes
Rice University	Yes
Stanford University	Yes
Texas A&M University	Yes
The Johns Hopkins University	Yes
The Ohio State University	Yes
The University of Arizona	Yes

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<sup>138</sup> “33 Universities to Participate in AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct.” Association of American Universities (AAU), October 4, 2018. <https://www.aau.edu/newsroom/newsletters/universities-participate-aau-campus-climate-survey-sexual-assault-and-misconduct>.

The University of Chicago	Yes
The University of Kansas	Yes
The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill	Yes
The University of Wisconsin-Madison	Yes
University of Florida	Yes
University of Michigan	Yes
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	Yes
University of Missouri	Yes
University of Oregon	Yes
University of Pennsylvania	Yes
University of Pittsburgh	Yes
University of Rochester	No- Table 3.14 posted, but not in the same format as the rest of the data
University of Southern California	Yes
University of Virginia	Yes
Vanderbilt University	Yes
Washington University in St. Louis	Yes
Yale University	Yes
Georgetown University (Non-AAU University)	Yes

**Appendix C: Table 21 from the Aggregate AAU Campus Climate Survey<sup>139</sup>:**

**Table 21. Percent of Victimitizations With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup>**

Survey Item Response	Woman				Man			
	Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent		Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent	
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
<i>Have you ever contacted a program or resource about this experience/these experiences?<sup>25</sup></i>								
Yes	29.5	0.6	12.3	0.5	17.8	1.3	9.9	1.0
No	70.5	0.6	87.7	0.5	82.2	1.3	90.1	1.0
<i>Why did you decide not contact any programs or resources?<sup>26</sup></i>								
I did not know where to go or who to tell	12.4	0.5	8.7	0.4	8.6	1.0	10.0	1.3
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	41.7	0.8	18.2	0.6	27.9	2.2	18.3	1.5
I did not think anyone would believe me	16.3	0.6	7.2	0.4	14.8	1.4	8.0	1.0
I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	47.4	0.7	62.4	0.7	42.5	2.1	51.3	1.8
I did not want the person to get into trouble	24.5	0.7	13.4	0.6	22.7	1.7	20.0	1.4
I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	15.8	0.6	8.8	0.4	10.3	1.2	8.5	1.1
I feared it would not be kept confidential	17.2	0.6	8.4	0.4	15.1	1.7	7.6	0.9
I could handle it myself	48.8	0.6	51.3	0.7	60.4	1.9	55.3	1.8
I feared retaliation	11.4	0.5	6.1	0.4	10.9	1.3	5.8	0.8
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	21.9	0.6	13.0	0.5	19.6	1.7	11.2	1.2

<sup>139</sup> Cantor, David, Bonnie Fisher, Susan Chibnall, Shauna Harps, Reanne Townsend, Gail Thomas, Vanessa Kranz, Randy Herbison, and Kristin Madden. Rep. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Misconduct. Westat An Employee-Owned Research Corporation, January 17, 2020, A7-27-a7-29. [https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7\\_\(01-16-2020\\_FINAL\).pdf](https://www.aau.edu/sites/default/files/AAU-Files/Key-Issues/Campus-Safety/Revised%20Aggregate%20report%20%20and%20appendices%201-7_(01-16-2020_FINAL).pdf).

## Appendix C: Table 21 from the Aggregate AAU Campus Climate Survey

Continued:

**Table 21. Percent of Victimization With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup> (continued)**

Survey Item Response	Woman				Man			
	Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent		Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent	
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
Incident occurred while school was not in session	8.0	0.4	5.0	0.4	6.1	0.9	4.1	0.8
Other reason	9.0	0.4	8.5	0.4	9.3	1.3	12.3	1.1
<i>You said you did not contact any of these programs or resources (because it was not serious enough/for an 'other' reason). Please review the list below and mark any of the reasons that may better describe why you didn't contact any of these programs or resources.<sup>7</sup></i>								
I was not injured or hurt	69.8	0.8	83.2	0.7	67.9	2.9	79.2	1.7
The reaction by others suggested that it wasn't serious enough to contact any of these programs or services	24.8	0.9	26.4	0.7	17.4	2.0	26.0	2.1
I contacted other programs or services that I felt were appropriate	2.9	0.3	1.9	0.2	2.8	0.7	2.2	0.8
I had trouble reaching the program or service	1.0	0.2	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.6	5	5
I was too busy	22.5	0.7	18.8	0.7	23.5	2.6	19.6	1.7
The event happened in a context that began consensually	49.9	0.9	22.9	0.7	42.2	3.2	23.4	2.1
Because of the person's gender, I thought it would be minimized or misunderstood	4.8	0.4	5.0	0.3	31.3	2.6	28.7	2.0
I might be counter-accused	7.8	0.5	4.0	0.3	13.7	1.9	11.4	1.8

**Table 21. Percent of Victimization With Penetration or Sexual Touching Involving Physical Force or Inability to Consent or Stop What Was Happening When a Program or Resource Was Contacted and Victims' Reasons for Not Contacting a Program or Resource, by Gender, Type of Sexual Contact, and Tactic<sup>1,2,3</sup> (continued)**

Survey Item Response	Woman				Man			
	Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent		Penetration with physical force or inability to consent		Sexual touching with physical force or inability to consent	
	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr	%	StdErr
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	54.0	1.0	39.7	0.9	48.6	2.9	37.5	2.2
Events like this seem common	45.1	1.0	55.5	0.9	31.0	2.8	35.1	2.0
My body showed involuntary arousal	18.2	0.7	4.7	0.4	27.4	2.7	14.1	1.7
Other reason	11.7	0.6	10.1	0.5	15.0	2.6	17.3	1.7
<i>What was the most important reason why you did not contact these programs or resources at (University)?<sup>8</sup></i>								
I felt embarrassed, ashamed, or that it would be too emotionally difficult	15.9	0.5	5.5	0.3	9.2	1.2	7.4	1.1
I did not think anyone would believe me	3.8	0.3	1.4	0.2	5.8	1.1	2.1	0.5
I did not think it was serious enough to contact programs or resources	16.8	0.6	33.1	0.7	12.9	1.3	24.9	1.5
I did not want the person to get into trouble	5.2	0.4	2.4	0.2	1.9	0.4	3.2	0.6
I feared negative academic, social, or professional consequences	3.1	0.3	1.8	0.2	1.8	0.5	2.3	0.6
I could handle it myself	20.0	0.6	23.9	0.7	35.5	2.0	32.5	1.5
I did not think the resources would give me the help I needed	6.0	0.3	4.2	0.3	4.7	0.7	3.3	0.6
I was not injured or hurt	2.2	0.2	4.2	0.3	3.0	0.7	4.0	0.7
The event happened in a context that began consensually	8.0	0.4	2.9	0.2	6.6	1.2	1.7	0.5
Alcohol and/or other drugs were present	3.4	0.2	2.1	0.2	1.5	0.5	0.6	0.3
Events like this seem common	2.6	0.2	7.1	0.4	0.9	0.3	2.0	0.6
Other reason	12.9	0.5	11.4	0.5	16.2	1.3	16.1	1.4

## **Appendix D: Citations from Individual School Survey Data, Combined to Find**

### **Data for this Study:**

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