Sports Culture and Sexual Assault on U.S. College Campuses:
Is There a Correlation?

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Abstract

Sexual assault on college and university campuses continues to be a disturbing and widely studied problem in the United States. This study proposes that sexual assault may be tied to campus sports culture, which has a strong influence over hegemonic masculinity on campus and in the United States. The characteristics of hegemonic masculinity produced within sport, the influence of peer support on perpetrators, and attitudes towards intervention are all relevant aspects surrounding sexual assault, and all may be tied to sports culture. A multiple regression shows that sports culture does indeed have an independently influential association to sexual assault on U.S. campuses larger than 15,000 students that also have a strong Greek life presence. The findings of this study are useful in constructing prevention programs that target institutional norms in addition to peer norms and individual perpetrator characteristics.

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Introduction

One of the most recent statistical studies on sexual violence in the Unites States, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, found that one in five women are raped in their lifetime, and forty-one percent of those are raped by an acquaintance. Thirty-seven percent of rape victims are raped for the first time between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five. The study also found that thirteen percent of women have been coerced non-physically into having sexual intercourse and twenty-seven percent of women have experienced unwanted sexual contact (Black et al., 2011). There are varied estimates regarding the pervasiveness of sexual victimization among college women. The U.S. Department of Justice sponsored National College Women Sexual Victimization report (1997) on the prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses concluded that at any given university there will be thirty-five instances of rape per 1000 female students, with five percent of female college students being raped each year. A higher estimate is that between twenty and twenty-five percent of female college students will experience some form of sexual assault during their approximately four to five years on campus (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). Furthermore, nine out of ten rape victims know their rapist, and many completed or attempted rapes occurred while on a date (Fisher et al., 2000).

The prevalence of rape in the United States and on college campuses alone suggests that most rapists are not deranged strangers waiting in dark alleyways, they are otherwise "normal" men that most people probably would not look twice at when passing on the street. This is particularly true on college campuses, where the majority of rape cases occur between acquaintances and even friends (Kimmel, 2000). The pervasiveness of sexual violence, especially among college students, demonstrates that "violence against women rests squarely in the middle of what our culture defines as 'normal' interaction between men and women"

(Johnson, 1990, p. 145, as cited in Kimmel, 2000, p. 255). It is necessary to investigate what components exist in the United States, and specifically university environments, that enable such high rates of sexual assault.

I propose that one key component warranting further investigation is the culture surrounding organized sports at the collegiate level. Sports can be an integral part of university life and their influence reaches far beyond the scope of the stadium or locker room. Sport "connects to, reflects, and reinforces cultural values and power relations in non-sport institutional spheres of life" (Messner, 2005, p. 319), such as certain university campus environments. Boeringer pointed out that "a climate that is supportive of rape, or that neutralizes negative definitions of rape, may create a rape-fertile environment for not only rape-supportive men but also men who normally do not hold rape-supportive beliefs" (1999, p.82). I believe that this is the case on campuses with a great deal of sports culture because of the characteristics of hegemonic masculinities present that are largely produced and influenced through sports. Characteristics of these masculinities are often tied to rape-supportive beliefs. In this study, I will first describe the masculinities produced and reinforced within the culture surrounding sports and the ways they may influence perpetrators of sexual assault. I will then describe the ways in which organized sports foster segregation between the sexes and perpetuate gender inequality, which in turn creates a hostile environment towards women. Finally, I will determine if there is a significant correlation between high levels of sports culture and greater instances of campus sexual assault. My central focus is not whether athletes themselves have a greater propensity for sexual violence, although this is something I will discuss, but rather, the effects of the culture of athletics on sexual violence.

Rape and Sexual Assault on Campus

Whether they realize it or not, women as a group are affected in their everyday lives by the possibility of rape. On an individual level, the threat of sexual assault can influence the way a woman dresses, the way she walks, the things she says, where she goes and when, and various other decisions she makes. The knowledge of the possibility of rape "serves to keep all women in the psychological condition of being aware that they are potential victims" (Kimmel, 2000, p. 106). Rape culture is a term that describes this state of being, as well as the cultural justifications that exist in regards to rape. Rape and rape culture reinforce gender difference and gender inequality by positioning women as vulnerable and in need of protection and by keeping women afraid to enter designated "male" spaces (ibid). The prevalence of sexual violence on college and university campuses in the U.S. suggests that these environments can be identified as having strong rape culture. Campus rape often occurs in dormitories or fraternity houses, many times during or after parties (Ward, Chapman, Cohn, White, & Williams, 1991).

Rape is a gendered crime in that almost exclusively men commit rape. Five to fifteen percent of college men acknowledge forcing intercourse on someone, and fifteen to twenty-five percent acknowledge sexual aggression (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). One in twelve men have committed acts meeting the legal definition of rape, and perhaps more significantly, eighty-four percent of those did not consider their acts to be rape (ibid). Rape results in part from a combination of aggressive behaviors and the cultural beliefs that promote and support those behaviors, including the belief that men are "entitled" to sex, that women are "asking for it" if they dress or act a certain way, or that men cannot control themselves when it comes to sexual activity (Locke & Mahalik, 2005, p. 279). Similar "rape myths" include the belief that rape is the victim's fault and the ideology of supremacy based

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on the idea that men are completely justified when committing acts of sexual assault (Connell, 1993). Sociological studies of rapists reveal that often they are "normal" men, sometimes with wives or girlfriends. Studies on gang rape demonstrate that many perpetrators are even more "typical," and are just going along with the group (Kimmel, 2000, p. 105). Rapists and gang rapists alike often see their actions as a "sense of entitlement" (ibid) and in the case of gang rape, their actions are seen in terms of their relationships with their friends and fellow rapists.

When discussing rape and sexual assault, especially in a campus environment, it is important to note that there is much discrepancy over what constitutes as rape. Many studies done on the topic of campus rape typically use a definition similar to Estrich's, in which "sexual relations obtained against a woman's will or without her consent constitute rape regardless of the relationship between the perpetrator and victim" (Estrich, 1988, as cited in Ward et al., 1991, p. 65). This is especially important to note in the case of campus rape because of the prevalence of acquaintance and date rape. In circumstances when the victim knows the perpetrator, it may become more difficult for the victim, perpetrator, and others to recognize the incident as rape. Acquaintance rape may be less likely to be reported than stranger rape, owing to the fact that the victim might be more reluctant to label the incident as rape (Estrich, 1987, as cited in Pazzani, 2007, p. 717). Ward et al. (1991) necessarily recognized that it is the context that distinguishes acquaintance rape from stranger rape, rather than the relationship between victim and perpetrator. They introduced the term "party rape" to discribe the common situation in which victim and perpetrator may not be acquainted, per se, but meet each other in the social context of a bar or party. They further clarified that date rape occurs between people who are dating, though they do not distinguish between the various different types of dating relationships that exist.

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Similar Studies done on Campus Sexual Assault

Burt's 1980 study determined that many Americans believe in "rape myths," or "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (Burt, 1980, p. 217) and resulted in the creation of the Rape Myths Acceptance Scale, which has been extensively used in subsequent studies on sexual assault. Rape myths such as "If a woman is dressed provacatively she wants sex," "If a man pays for the date he is owed sex in return," and "She only says no because she is playing hard to get" serve as justifications to those who commit sexual assault and create "a climate hostile to rape victims" (ibid). Burt's analysis found that the belief in rape myths is highly correlated to "other deeply held and pervasive attitudes such as sex role stereotyping, distrust of the opposite sex (adversarial sexual beliefs), and acceptance of interpersonal violence" (ibid, p. 229). In other words, rape and the acceptance surrounding instances of sexual assault is an extension of these widely-held belief systems. The highest precondition for rape myth acceptance that Burt found was acceptance of interpersonal violence. Lonsway and Fitzgerald took Burt's research one step farther in their 1995 study. They contend that Burt's scales used to measure adversarial sexual beliefs, tolerance of interpersonal violence, and gender role stereotyping shared "an emphasis on hostile attitudes towards women" (p. 704). They revised Burt's measurement scales, separating hostility towards women from the other variables, and demonstrated that "the critical construct in understanding rape myth acceptance is a general hostility toward women" (ibid, p. 705). It is my belief that sports culture on campus fosters both rape acceptance beliefs and hostility towards women. I will demonstrate this by exploring sex segregation and the ways in which the feminine is devalued within certain sports. I hypothesize that environments with greater sports culture will be more hostile towards women, and therefore have higher instances of sexual assault.

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Murnen, Wright, and Kaluzny (2002) found that those most likely to commit acts of sexual aggression were those who accepted violence within relationships, who exhibited hostility toward women, who believed that men should be dominant, who believed that violence is manly, who found danger to be exciting, and who held sexually hostile attitudes regarding women. I will explain that many of these characteristics of hypermasculinity may be produced or strengthened through sports culture.

When looking at rape-prone environments such as college campuses, men's willingness to intervene in situations where sexual assault is taking place or is likely to take place is an important factor warranting investigation. McMahon (2010) recently determined that among incoming college students, those who held rape acceptance beliefs were less likely to intervene as bystanders. Her study found that among respondents, gender was the most important factor in predicting both adherence to rape acceptance beliefs and likelihood of intervention. Males were more likely to accept rape myths and less certain about intervention. Furthermore, McMahon's study indicated that student athletes and students intending to partake in Greek life, especially males of both groups, were more likely to believe rape myths, although neither more or less likely to intervene. McMahon's work is relevant to my study because by studying bystander behavior, she analyzes environmental factors contributing to sexual assault on campus. I will further discuss bystander mentality within the male peer group and the factors that influence whether or not male bystanders feel obligated to or confident enough to intervene.

A great deal of research has been done on whether or not athletes have a higher propensity for sexual assault than non-athletes. Crosset, Benedict, and McDonald (1995) found that

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Division I male athletes made up nineteen percent of reported sexual assault perpetrators[1] despite being less than four percent of the student population (as cited in Messner, 2002). Crosset et al. (1996) indicate that of reported sexual assaults, sixty-seven percent were committed by male football and basketball players, who represent only thirty percent of student athletes (ibid). This indicates that athletes involved in these two sports are more likely to commit sexual assault than other athletes or non-athletes. This is one reason among many that I have chosen to examine these particular sports in my research. I will discuss this further in Chapter I.

Locke and Mahalik (2005) surveyed male college students on demographic information, sports orientation, rape-supportive attitudes, sexual experiences, and hostility toward women in order to determine whether or not masculinity, athletic involvement, and alcohol consumption are predictors of sexual violence. The study did not find a link between athletic involvement and sexual aggression, but did identify specific components of masculinity that are associated with sexual aggression towards women, including "power over women," "dominance," and "disdain for homosexuals" (ibid, pp. 281-282). Lackie and de Man (1997) also did not find a link between athletes and sexual aggression, though they found that fraternity membership is a predictor for sexual aggression. Smith and Stewart's 2003 study of male undergraduate students indicated no correlation between athletes and sexual assault, although they did find a high correlation between competitiveness and reported sexual aggression. The study's findings indicated that whether or not respondents participated in sport, being "win-oriented" was correlated to sexual aggressiveness towards women (Smith & Stewart, 2004, p. 2). This correlation is important when discussing sports culture because sports fans can be just as competitive as athletes themselves, as is frequently demonstrated at

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[1] According to Campus Judicial Affairs

collegiate sports competitions. Their findings also indicated higher levels of aggression and acceptance of violence in contact sport athletes than in non-contact sport athletes, though they did not find higher levels of sexual aggression specifically. The significance of these findings become apparent when considering that "cultures that display a high level of tolerance for violence have a greater incidence of rape" (ibid). The acceptance of violence associated with contact sports may lead to a greater acceptance of sexually aggressive behavior in athletes and spectators alike.

Messner cites several studies that indicate that male athletes do in fact have a higher propensity for violence and suggests that this is a result of "the normal, everyday dynamics at the center of male athletic culture" (Messner, 2005, p. 317). Messner claims that within high school populations, many of the most serious and shocking acts of sexual assault are committed by white male athletes (2005) and that among Canadian athletes, white males again are the most common perpetrators. He suggests that the combination of several factors within organized sports contributes to the increased likelihood of sexual assault perpetration, including "misogynist and homophobic dominance bonding, a learned suppression of empathy for others, a 'culture of silence' within the group, and an institutional environment that valorizes and rewards the successful utilization of violence against others" (2005, p. 318). These are all characteristics whose influence may reach beyond just athletes themselves, impacting those in environments that place a great deal of emphasis on athletics. Many campuses in the United States give favor to athletes and money making competitive sports such as American football and men's basketball. I will discuss these environments in greater detail in Chapter I.

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Koss and Gaines (1993) found that membership in athletic teams and fraternities was related to sexual aggression severity. Frintner and Rubinson (1993) discovered that, according to the results of a questionnaire given to college women, perpetrators of sexual assault were members of athletic teams or fraternities in greater proportion than would be expected based on their campus proportions (as cited in Humphrey & Kahn, 2000). Boeringer (1999) found that on a Division I southeastern university campus with high levels of both sports culture and Greek life, athletes more strongly agreed with fifty-six percent more of the rape-supportive statements (created based on Burt's 1980 study) than the control group. Loh, Gidycz, Lobo, & Luthra (2005) found that fraternity membership predicted sexual assault perpetration significantly.

One of the possible reasons for certain fraternities and athletic teams being high risk is the "perceived male peer support that encourages sexual assault" (Schwartz & Nogrady, 1996; DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1995, as cited in Humphrey & Kahn, 2000, p. 1315). Humphrey and Kahn discovered that in addition to hostility towards women, high-risk individuals were more likely to report higher levels of perceived male peer support than did their lower-risk counterparts. Thus, the more strongly group members identify with their high risk group, the more at risk they are of demonstrating sexually assaultive behavior (Humphrey & Kahn, 2000). This explains the inconsistent relationship between fraternity or athletic team membership and high-risk behavior. Not all fraternities and athletic teams promote the same hostility towards women and male peer support levels that indicate high-risk environments. Many may even discourage values that promote sexual assault, thereby lowering their members' risk of committing sexual assault. However, the fact remains that "a major cause of date rape is male peer groups' support of their members' abuse of women as they seek to

uphold their masculine role" (Schwartz & DeKeseredy, 1997, as cited in Pazzani, 2007, p. 743).

These studies largely focused on individual responses regarding personal views and behaviors. Though individual characteristics in perpetrators are certainly important, it is also possible that social and environmental factors have as much influence on both whether or not a person commits acts of sexual assault and whether or not bystanders intervene. Brown and Messman-Moore found that "personal attitudes supporting sexual aggression are not as relevant to men's willingness to intervene against sexual aggression as are perceived peer norms regarding sexual aggression" (2009, p. 513). Boeringer, Shehan, and Akers (1991) used the social learning theory to examine whether or not fraternity members are more likely to commit acts of sexual aggression. The social learning theory explains that "behavior is acquired and sustained both through direct behavioral conditioning, 'differential reinforcement,' and through 'imitation' or modeling of others' behavior" (Akers, 1985, as cited in Boeringer et al. 1991, p. 59). They found that when social learning variables were controlled for, fraternity membership alone was not a predictor for sexual aggression and fraternity members were not more likely to develop rape acceptance beliefs than other male students in similar environments. In other words, high-risk behavior is learned from social environments such as, but not limited to, fraternities. Logically, these implications can be applied to athletic team membership as well. It is not, strictly speaking, athletic team membership that may make an individual high-risk for sexual assault perpetration, but rather the environment surrounding athletics. Therefore, it stands to reason that campus environments with a great deal of sports culture may reproduce attitudes produced at the core of the institution of sports.

To my knowledge, no study has been done that directly attempts to find a correlation between environments with a great deal of sports culture and sexual assault occurrence. It is my goal to do this in order to provide a more comprehensive perspective on the relationship between sports culture and rape culture at the university level in the United States. If a correlation is found, this study will bring a new dimension to rape prevention programs. Many studies have already shown the importance of targeting peer-approved norms in prevention programs (Boeringer et al. 1991; Brown & Messman-Moore, 2009; Thompson, Koss, Kingree, Goree, & Rice, 2011). Rather than target individuals or high-risk groups in prevention programs, this study would illuminate the need for changes at the institutional level.

I will begin by providing a more thorough explanation of sports culture on campus and the environment that extreme sports culture produces. Then I will examine the characteristics of masculinity produced and exacerbated within the institution of sports and the way that those characteristics promote sexually aggressive behavior. I will then explain that the sex-segregation and devaluing of femininity, or what is perceived as femininity, within the institution of sports further contributes to an environment that is hostile to women. Finally, I will conduct a multiple regression to determine if there is a statistical relationship between high levels of sports culture and sexual assault occurrence.

I. Sports Culture

The scope of institutionalized sports affects more than just the athletes involved. Many American children become involved in team or individual sports at an early age, and many continue at a competitive level through high school and even college. Spectator sports like football, basketball, soccer, and hockey are a staple in most American high schools and many colleges and universities, where interschool rivalries and spectator traditions create a sense of community among students.

It would be a mistake to assume that all sports are equal in terms of their cultural influence. Gage's 2008 investigation into the relationship between team participation and men's attitudes and behavior establishes that not all sports contribute equally to "hegemonic masculine behaviors, oppressive gender attitudes, and aggressive sexual behavior" (p. 1015). Messner (2002) points out that there is a "center to the cultural and structural gender regime of sport" (p. xviii). The center is a space comprised of the sports and athletes that are the most visible and make the most money. Messner believes the center is constructed through "(1) the routine day-to-day practices of sports participants, (2) the structured rules and hierarchies of sport institutions, and (3) the dominant symbols and belief systems transmitted by the major sports media" (ibid, p.xxi). Sports are largely considered to be a masculine institution, whose center of is "actively constructed by and for men" (ibid).

Among professional sports in the United States, the economic center revolves around football, men's basketball, baseball, and (in some regions) ice hockey (Messner, 2002). These four sports receive the most funding, sponsors, and media attention by far. Among

college athletics the economic center revolves largely football, with basketball to a lesser extent.

The impact of the values and practices surrounding the center of sport is not limited to the participants alone. Sports culture on campus refers to the community involvement surrounding certain organized sports. Sports are a central part of the American college experience for many students, athletes and non-athletes alike. This is certainly true at universities with large athletic departments and reputable sports teams, such as Duke, Penn State, or USC, but can also be relevant when talking about smaller campus environments. Many high schools in the United States have a prominent sports culture that is fostered by pep rallies, homecoming games, and awards ceremonies. College students are fresh out of that environment and are still under the influence of the hegemonic masculinity created through sports culture.

On some campuses sports spectatorship may act as a bonding ritual for the student body. Clopton and Finch (2010) found that, among students attending Division I universities that compete in the Football Bowl Subdivision, there is a positive relationship between team identification and a sense of community on campus, as well as individual social capital. Additionally, they found that attendees of sporting events possess a sense of trust of their fellow team fans that is based solely on their shared identity. In this particular study, students with stronger feelings of identification with their school's team reported having greater levels of social capital on campus, a finding "that has empirically established this relationship in sport in the United States and even more so, within college sport" (Clopton & Finch, 2010, p. 392).

Campus athletic departments at schools known for their famed sports programs are given a great deal of power and prestige. At universities where sports teams generate a great deal of revenue and attention, athletic departments may even function as a separate entity from the rest of the school. At many schools students camp out in tent cities for days before basketball and football games to ensure they get tickets, and at a few well-known schools classes are even cancelled to accommodate weekday games (Pappano, 2012). Additionally, from 1985 to 2010, the average salary for football coaches at public universities rose 650 percent, as opposed to ninety percent for presidents and only thirty-two percent for full-time professors (ibid). When the news broke in 2011 that Penn State University assistant football coach Jerry Sandusky had been accused of sexually abusing children in athletic department facilities, a Widmeyer Communications survey found that eighty-three percent of those surveyed "blamed the 'culture of big money' in college sports" (ibid) for the suspected cover-up. Many felt that the football program had too much power and influence over school and local law enforcement officials.

According to Kimmel, institutions as well as individual identities are gendered (Kimmel, 2000). Gendered normative standards have their inception through institutions, which are major reproducers of gender inequality. These gender inequalities that are produced through institutions are often assumed to be the result of individual characteristics, rather than the product of institutionalized views of gender (ibid, p. 96). The culture surrounding organized sport is no exception. In the next section I will explore the specific characteristics that are associated with individuals prone to committing sexual assault and the ways that these characteristics are produced and encouraged by sports culture.

II. Hegemonic Masculinities Produced and Enforced Through Sport

One predictor of sexual aggression is possession of rape acceptance beliefs. Many rape acceptance beliefs are encouraged by specific characteristics of certain masculinities. Locke and Mahalik state that in a number of studies done on the subject, "men's beliefs and expectations about masculinity were the most powerful and consistent predictor of their sexual violence supporting beliefs and behaviors" (Good et al., 1995, as cited in Locke & Mahalik, 2005, p. 279). Connell agrees that there is a correlation between masculinity and sexual violence against women, saying that rape is a way of asserting masculinity (1993). There are several components within masculinity that bear consideration, including various perceptions of what it means to be "masculine" and how masculinity is constructed. I will be focusing on hegemonic masculinity and the way it is constructed through the institution of sports, as well as the implications this has on sexual violence against women.

Hegemonic masculinity is not necessarily the most prevalent form of masculinity. Rather, it refers to the masculine group that assumes "a leading position" in social structures, that is "culturally exalted," and that "embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of the legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 1993, p. 77). The power of hegemonic masculinity comes from its ability to define the masculine "norm" and dictate the standards that non-hegemonic masculinities must adhere to in order to be perceived as being acceptably "masculine". Institutions such as organized sports heavily influence Western perceptions of masculinity and hegemonic masculinity. Much of the time, the masculinity exhibited in competitive sport is hegemonic (Connell, 1993). The hegemonic masculinity created through sports is not always limited to athletes, though they often become the model of hegemonic masculinity from an early age. Regardless of whether or not all male athletes share the

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characteristics of the hegemonic masculinity, they all benefit from it simply by belonging to the dominant gender.

One component of masculinities produced through sport that may influence a person's likelihood of sexual aggression is the trained use of the body as a weapon. From a young age, boys are taught the importance of being physically strong in a way girls are not. Those whose bodies do not adhere to the hegemonic masculine standard may become focused on conforming to it. In this way, the body is a central area of focus for both those who do fit in to the hegemonic masculinity and those who do not. In his evaluation of the masculinities of preparatory school boys, Swain discusses the ways in which the body and sports are connected: "Boys learn about the need to exert bodily power and the necessity of hardening their bodies to prepare them for physical challenges and confrontations. School sport embodies violent practices, and the language is often connected to the language and metaphor of war" (Swain, 2005, p. 217). While not every sport is inherently violent, contact sports such as American football, basketball, soccer, and hockey all have elements of violent practice. Kimmel points out that boys are conditioned from an early age to believe that violence is the preferred method of conflict resolution (Kimmel, 2000). Men who use their bodies forcefully in order to commit sexual assault are likely not using their bodies as a weapon for the first time.

One of the identified risk factors for male sexual aggression, particularly on college campuses, is "male sex-role socialization," as described by Carr and VanDeusen (2004, p. 281). Male sex-role socialization refers to the way men may become socialized to embody qualities of hypermasculinity, develop a belief of rape myths, and accept the use of sexual aggression. Hypermasculinity refers "to the combination of the sexual objectification of

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women and an emphasis on male characteristics, such as aggression and violence" (Warshaw & Parrot, 1991, as cited in Pazzani, 2007, p. 725). Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, and Tanaka found that a prominent characteristic of perpetrators of sexual assault or coercion is hostile masculinity and a "need for power and dominance" (Malamuth et al., 1991). College aged rapists also exhibit characteristics such as hostility towards women, lack of empathy, rigid gender views, and a higher acceptance of interpersonal violence (Voller & Long, 2010). While these may be considered at face value to be individual characteristics, it is likely that they become exacerbated in a group setting. This is significant in that "the social environment, rather than individual characteristics, provides the impetus for many rapes" (Blanchard, 1959; Gels, 1971, as cited in Smith & Stewart, 2003, p. 1).

In the United States and other "Western" countries, "real men" are those who seek power and dominance, who maintain control over their emotions, and who are competitive and aggressive (Voller & Long, 2010). The pressure that many men feel to appear invulnerable may lead to aggressive behavior toward women or other men if they feel they are unable to live up to social standards of masculinity. These men may feel that asserting their masculinity through aggressive behavior is a way of proving their manhood (ibid). Loh et al. (2005) found that men who adhered more strongly to traditional gender roles were more likely to committ acts of sexual aggression than those who did not.

A recent study by Johnson and Schiappa of college students at large public universities (2010) investigated the relationship between the viewing of televised professional sports and conformity to hypermasculine norms. The survey found significant relationships between viewers of sports, and viewers of National Basketball Association (NBA) and National Football League (NFL) games in particular, and high levels of identification with the

hypermasculine norms of desire to win, emotional control, violence, power over women, "playboy" attitudes,[2] disdain for homosexuality, and sexual prejudice (ibid, p. 72). In other words, viewers of televised professional football and basketball games are more likely to exhibit these characteristics than those who are not regular viewers. This is possibly because both the NBA and NFL perpetuate these hypermasculine notions by presenting and glorifying athletes who demonstrate these qualities themselves. As Johnson and Schiappa surveyed both male and female students, the key finding of the survey is the recognition that regardless of biological sex, "it is sports viewing associated with these masculine norms" (Johnson & Schiappa, 2010, p. 69). It suggests that the viewing of sports reinforces hypermasculine values and behavior, which is what I will attempt to show with my analysis of campuses as a whole.

Fogel, in his study of Canadian male athletes, developed the term "sporting masculinity" to describe the masculinity that is constructed within the realm of sports, particularly that of Canadian football. The characteristics he observed to be key in the type of masculinity produced in that specific context were violence, aggression, power, and dominance. Through his interviews with current and former football players, Fogel observed that they felt pressure to exude masculinity off the field as well as on. This resulted in all aspects of their lives becoming a competition. The interviews further reveal that many of the players interviewed felt the need to have "a girl" by their side at all times. They mention the need to live up to their masculine image, part of which is reinforced by acquiring and having sex with an endless string of beautiful women (Fogel, 2011). Thompson et al.'s study found that rape supportive beliefs and "peer approval of forced sex" were positively associated with sexual assault.

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[2] Playboy attitudes refer to behavior that treats women as dispensable sex objects

Though many of these qualities of hegemonic masculinity are typically thought of as individual characteristics, they may be heavily influenced by the presence of all-male communities on campus, such as athletic teams and fraternities. On campuses where athletes are held in very high esteem, it makes sense that certain rape-supportive characteristics would be more pervasive than on campuses where athletes do not represent the hegemonic masculinity. Therefore, it is my contention that one does not have to be a participant in campus athletics in order to be influenced by its culture. In the next sections I will explain the reasons for this, which include perceived peer support, bystander mentality, and the culture of silence surrounding hegemonic masculinity within male peer groups.

Peer Support

In order to make sexual assault prevention programs more effective, many researchers have begun to examine the role of peer influence on perpetrators of sexual assault. The social norms theory states that "when people overestimate negative or underestimated positive attitudes and behavior of their peers, they increase the likelihood of possessing these attitudes and/or exhibiting these behaviors as well" (Stein, 2007, pp. 77-78). Stein found that although most men in his study were personally willing to prevent rape, they perceived that their peers were less willing and held more rape-supportive beliefs than they did. His study indicated that despite a personal willingness to prevent rape, many men will act according to their perceptions of social norms (Stein, 2007). In university sub-cultures, specifically male peer groups, where rape supportive beliefs appear to be socially acceptable, men will be less likely to intervene regardless of their personal beliefs.

Messner describes the "internal dynamic of the athletic male peer group" (2002, p. 36) as if it were a target made of three concentric circles. In the center making up the smallest circle are

the leaders, those with the most status and power, "who most actively conform to and directly benefit from hegemonic masculinity" (ibid). Through homophobic and misogynist bullying, teasing, and physical confrontations, the leaders perform masculinity in a way that involves "directing their aggression toward debased feminized objects of sexual conquest" (ibid). The aggressive and sexual talk serves as a bonding ritual for many boys and men, and "the erotic bond among male athletes tends to be overtly coded as fiercely heterosexual" (ibid, p 38). The middle ring is comprised of the audience, the group that acts as a supportive audience, idolizing and providing validation to the leaders. They admire and wish to emulate the leaders, ultimately hoping to benefit from hegemonic masculinity. The outer ring is made up of "marginals," (ibid) those who are closely associated enough with the leaders to avoid being their targets, but who may also feel discomfort with the performances of the leaders. The marginals are the largest group, and it stands to reason that without their silence and complicity, the leaders would have significantly less power. The complicity of the marginals stems from both fear of the leaders and the fact that they enjoy the benefits of being associated with them (ibid). Both the audience and the marginals play a crucial role in keeping the leaders at the center of the peer group.

According to Kimmel, "rape is a crime that combines sex and violence, that makes sex the weapon in an act of violence. It's less a crime of passion than a crime of power, less about love or lust than about conquest and contempt, less an expression of longing that an expression of entitlement" (2000, p. 257). This is especially true in the case of gang rapes, specifically those involving teammates. After studying a gang rape incident at the University of Pennsylvania, Peggy Reeves Sanday concluded that "gang rape has its origins in both the gender inequality that allows men to see women as pieces of meat and in men's needs to demonstrate their masculinity to one another" (Kimmel, 2000, p. 55). Furthermore, gang

banging can be a homoerotic activity, as evidenced by one of the participant's description of the pleasure he took in feeling the other men's semen inside of the woman. In this sense, the woman was "the vehicle by which these men could have sex with one another and still claim heterosexuality" (ibid). Such an action is only possible in a society in which women are fundamentally devalued and degraded to the point where men feel entitled to use them as they see fit. Unfortunately, gang banging is not an altogether uncommon occurrence on university campuses.

Carr and VanDeusen argue that athletic groups provide "peer support for sexual aggression" through rituals such as "collective viewing of aggressive pornography, attending strip clubs, getting drunk, and participation in sexually aggressive behaviors as a groups" (Koss & Dinero, 1989; Martin & Hummer, 1989; O'Sullivan, 1991, as cited in Carr & VanDeusen, 2004, p. 281). Men who engage in group activities that condone sexual aggression and male dominance over women are likely to perceive peer support for sexually aggressive behavior. Perceived peer support renders men more likely to commit acts of sexual aggression than those who do not perceive peer support. (Malamuth et al., 1991; Loh et al. 2005).

Bystander Mentality and the Code of Silence

Bystander mentality is another factor affecting the prevalence of sexual assault on campus. It is not enough to examine individual characteristics of perpetrators and peer groups in order to thoroughly address the problem, it is also necessary to examine the environments in which sexual assault is allowed to occur with such frequency. In sexual assault and rape prone environments such as college parties, it is possible that many bystanders are aware that sexual assault is likely to take place. Many men who would likely never rape a woman have found themselves unable or unwilling to intervene in a situation in which they knew a rape was taking place or about to take place (Carlson, 2008).

In an attempt to correlate masculinity with bystander non-intervention, Carlson conducted interviews with college men regarding intervention in scenarios such as gang rape or a fight between two people. Although most respondents said they would intervene in the name of protecting the "defenseless" woman if they saw a gang rape occurring, they also admitted to understanding why many people did not. One respondent mentioned that he would feel like he was entering "another man's territory" (Carlson, 2008, p. 10). The very fact that he used the word "territory" in regards to the scenario, in which a woman was being gang raped, speaks volumes about the attitudes towards rape that exist on college campuses today. Other respondents noted that if men in the room were to stop it or even just leave the room, they would likely be made fun of for being a "pussy" (ibid). This inability to show what is perceived as weakness is a direct result of the construction of masculinity produced within sports culture.

Studies done on the topic of bystander intervention indicate that in order to effectively change the reactions and impulses of bystanders, a social norms shift would be required. Instead of being compelled to remain silent so as to not appear "weak," a social norms shift would put pressure on bystanders to react and do something (Berkowitz, 2003, as cited in Thompson et al., 2011, p. 2727). In the culture surrounding competitive sports on campus, in which actions countering the hegemonic masculinity may be perceived as weakness, intervention may seem like an unrealistic option for many men.

Similarly, a code of silence exists within the male athletic peer group between the leaders, audience, and marginals. The code of silence prohibits members of a male peer group from speaking out against actions they do not agree with and ensures loyalty. Most members of

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groups such as athletic teams or fraternities would not report their peers even if they knew they had committed acts of sexual aggression. Those who remain outside of the center of the group have learned that their complicity will be rewarded, whereas dissent will be punished (Messner, 2002). In a university environment, this code may extend beyond the male athletic peer group into the male spectator peer group.

III. Devaluing of the Feminine and Sex Segregation in Sports

Though definitions of masculinity are fluid and ever changing, one constant is that "masculinity and femininity are inherently relational concepts" (Connell, 1993, p. 44) and are defined in opposition to one another. In order to construct masculinity through sports it must be placed in opposition to femininity, which results in the devaluing of feminine values and those who possess them. Daphne Spain, sociologist and geographer, observed that in cultures that are more sex segregated women's status in society is significantly lower than in cultures without extreme sex segregation (Kimmel, 2000). Anthropologist Thomas Gregor had similar findings, declaring that extreme sex segregation is associated with gender inequality (Kimmel, 2000). These and other studies indicate that likelihood of violence against women is higher in societies where their social status is low (Kimmel, 2000).

The sex-segregating rituals Spain described are not always comparable to the institution of sports, as the sex-segregation in sports is not as extreme, but there is no denying that sports are one of the most sex-segregated institutions in the United States (Messner, 2002). Sport is "an institutional realm in which men construct and affirm their separation from, and domination over, women" (Messner, 2005, p. 314). From children's leagues to professional associations, power and resources are unequally distributed between men and women's teams. For the most part, co-ed teams cease to exist after early childhood, and some sports, such as rugby and American football, do not typically have girls' teams. Rarely do any women's teams receive as much attention as their male counterparts do, and watching sports, whether live or on television, is often thought of as a masculine activity. Feminist theorists have long pointed out that the institution of sports validates the power and privilege that men hold over women. This is done partially through the "marginalization and trivialization of

female athletes" (Sabo & Jansen, p. 171) that serves as a reinforcement of patriarchy. Furthermore, sports serve to glorify men and masculinity, particularly contact sports such as American football (Fogel, 2011, p. 12).

Fogel also reports on the hierarchy within the sporting masculinity, explaining that players who do not exhibit these characteristics are "given labels denoting their inferior masculinity or femininity" (Fogel, 2011, p. 2). Many of these labels are explicit comparisons to women/females, such as "you're a pussy, a cunt, a sissy" (Kopay, 1977 as cited in Fogel, 2011, p. 3). In this way, not only does the culture surrounding football in particular, and surely a wider range of sports as well, construct an internal hegemonic masculinity, it does so by simultaneously and explicitly degrading women. This creates an environment where men are required to prove their masculinity on and off the playing field and one in which the devaluing of women becomes ingrained in them. This results in a "tolerance for a range of damaging actions perpetrated by men" (Fogel, 2011, p. 11), including rape and other acts of sexual aggression.

Both male athletic teams and fraternities, as sex-segregated organizations, have the potential to encourage hostility towards women. Boeringer (1991) describes fraternities as having environments that value masculinity norms over women and feminine qualities, as well as promoting "sexually aggressive behavior" (p. 58). Abbey and McAuslan (2004) found that repeat perpetrators exhibit characteristics such as hostility towards women, positivity towards "impersonal sex" (p. 752), and engage in alcohol consumption, all of which may be produced or exacerbated within a male peer group whose leaders perform characteristics of hegemonic masculinity.

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The extreme polarization between traditional masculine and feminine values that may result from the culture surrounding organized sport also has negative effects on female victims' perception of sexual assault and rape. Girls are often conditioned from an early age to accept the more passive and compliant role, or that they should protect themselves from the ravenous male sexual appetite. If they are sexually assaulted or raped, girls that have embraced these traditional "feminine" values may blame themselves rather than their attackers, or fail to recognize the incident as sexual assault at all (Murnen et al., 2002).

Another way in which the viewing of sports, televised or not, can contribute to attitudes that perpetuate sexual assault is through the sexualization of women in sports. Sports media is a large part of daily life for many Americans, especially young males. Of U.S. children aged eight to seventeen, ninety-four percent partake in some form of sports media, and one third of those on a daily basis. Of these figures, boys partake in sports media at higher rates than girls (Messner, 2002). From an early age, children who consume sports media are likely to find their views on "gender, race, commercialism, and other key issues" (ibid, p. xix) influenced by sports media.

The women that are most prominently featured during televised sports, most notably basketball and American football games, are the cheerleaders for each team and the women that appear in television commercials. Cheerleaders, especially those for professional sports, typically wear very short skirts and tops that show their cleavage and stomachs. They tend to be very "feminine," with flawless hair and a great deal of perfectly applied make up. They are presented as sex objects for the enjoyment of the athletes, fans, and viewers at home. Ironically, one has to have a great deal of athletic talent as a gymnast and dancer to be a cheerleader, but they are rarely appreciated for their athletic skills. Female athletes in other fields, such as ice-skating, gymnastics, and beach volleyball often face sexualization by the

sports media, though not to the same extent. Female athletes who are conventionally attractive receive more media attention than those who are not. Sexualizing female athletes "robs women of athletic legitimacy and preserves hegemonic masculinity" (Sabo & Jansen, p. 117). The degrading of women by sexualizing and objectifying them serves to keep the world of competitive sports segregated. It reinforces the notion that within sports, women's place is on the sidelines (Messner, 2002).

The second group of women featured prominently during televised sports events is the women seen in commercials, many of which are beer commercials. Beer commercials are a consistent part of televised sports such as basketball, football, and baseball. Messner describes market research exploring the relationship between sports spectatorship in college and beer drinking and explains that beer manufacturers spend more money on their campaigns geared towards college-aged sports fans than they do on other campaigns (2002). In beer commercials women are typically presented in servile or sexual positions, their only function being to provide instant gratification to the frat boy caricatures of the men in the ads. This juxtaposition provides further confirmation to the "culturally determined idealization of male dominance" (Duncan & Hasbrook, 1988, as cited in Sabo & Jansen, p. 177) over women. The fact that these commercials are largely geared towards an audience of male, college-aged sports fans demonstrates that they are both reflecting and reinforcing gender divisions that are already in place.

How does this affect sexual assault?

In this chapter I have demonstrated that within the largely sex segregated institution of organized sports there exists a culture that places higher value on masculinity and devalues characteristics that are perceived to be feminine. Kimmel lists several characteristics

identified by anthropologists as indicators of violence within societies. Many of them are present within organized sports, including the notion of the "fierce and handsome warrior" (Kimmel, 2000, p.245) as the masculine ideal and the association of male dominance and leadership. Another characteristic is the perception that masculinity and femininity are polar opposites. The list also includes ways in which women are segregated from an early age, which is certainly the case within organized sports. These characteristics are discussed in relation to cultures and society, and organized sports are an undeniably significant part of American culture. All of the factors Kimmel mentioned are strong indicators of gender inequality, which is thus established as a significant cause of violence. Therefore, the gender inequality perpetuated by organized sports and the fan culture surrounding it can be presumed to have an impact on the propensity for violence against women, or at least indicate problematic characteristics that could lead to more frequent sexual assault.

IV. Method & Data Analysis

Sample and Variables

I will now explore the relationship between sports culture and sexual assault on campus in order to determine if sports culture has an independent association with instances of sexual assault. To do this, I collected a sample of institutions of higher education in the United States. When creating my sample, I chose to focus on one region of the United States in an attempt to have as uniform a sample as possible. I did this to control for any regional or cultural differences regarding gender relations, race relations, and sports culture. Based on Koss's finding that more men admitted committing rape in the southeastern than in the western and midwestern U.S. (Koss, 1988), I chose the southeastern United States, specifically the states Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

Using the Campus Safety and Security Data Analysis Cutting Tool, available on the U.S. Department of Education's website, I selected all four year not for profit institutions, both public and private, including only schools with 5,000 students or more. I did this in order to control for size, because campus environments of 5,000 students or fewer are very different than larger campuses. I further narrowed the sample by eliminating schools that do not have on-campus residence centers, as many campus assaults take place in residence halls and because I am investigating campus environments, which are significantly different at commuter schools. I was left with 182 institutions. As I gathered further data on my population of 182 institutions, I eliminated schools whose undergraduate enrollment fell below 5,000 because my focus is on undergraduate populations which are typically comprised of students ages eighteen through twenty-four. I did this in order to create as

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uniform a sample as possible, and because women have the highest risk of being raped between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four (U.S. Department of Justice, 2000, as cited in Gross, Winslett, Roberts, & Gohm, 2006). I was left with 143 schools. Most of the data came from the institutions' websites or the annual Common Data Set, which each institution receiving Title IV[3] funding is required to fill out. In addition to the 2010 undergraduate enrollment numbers, I recorded the percentage of female students at each institution. In two cases I was unable to find an undergraduate enrollment figure or any other relevant data and those two cases were eliminated. One institution was eliminated because the vast majority of its students were taking only online courses. I was left with 140 institutions. Because the sample includes all universities that fit my criteria, it functions as a population.

Sexual Assault Data

For my dependant variable I used the number of reported sexual assault occurrences for each university. The sexual assault data came from the United States Department of Education Campus Safety and Security Data Analysis Cutting Tool, a collection of campus crime statistics available to the general public. The data come from the Office of Postsecondary Education Campus Safety and Security Statistics website and are collected annually from all institutions receiving Title IV funding. The crime statistics reflect incidents reported to campus security and/or law enforcement agencies. For each of my institutions I recorded the number of forcible sexual offenses in 2008, 2009, and 2010. I took the numbers from 2008, 2009, and 2010 and created a yearly average for each school. This became my variable to measure sexual assault occurrences. Reported sex offenses are defined as "any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or

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[3] Title IV funding includes the following Federal Student Aid grants, loans, and financial aid programs Federal Pell Grants, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education Grants, Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant, Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership and Special LEAP Grants, Direct Loan Program, Federal Perkins Loans, and Work-Study (*Federal Student Aid - Title IV Programs*).

against that person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent" (Office of Post-Secondary Education, 2010). Offenses include "carnal knowledge, oral or anal intercourse, sexual assault with an object, and fondling" (ibid).

Although this definition appears comprehensive, it is important to remember that campus police and/or local law enforcement officials are the ones who determine which cases to report. They are the ones who determine if the offense was committed "against the victim's will" or if the victim was "incapable of giving consent." This is problematic because in cases of sexual assault the burden of proof is on the victim.

The data also likely do not include cases in which consent was given under extreme non-physical coercion. Gross et al. (2006) found that among women who engaged in unwanted sexual intercourse because "they felt their partner was too aroused to try and stop him" (p. 293) only 15% considered it to be rape and only .01% reported it to the authorities.

Another limitation with the data on sexual assault is that they reflect only offenses that have been reported. Koss and Oros (1982) estimate that only eight percent of victims report being date raped, and the U.S. Department of Justice (2002) estimates that rape is "the most underreported violent crime in the U.S" (as cited in Gross et al., 2006, pp. 288-289). Among Gross et al.'s sample (2006), fewer than .01% of all victims of sexual aggression reported the incidents to the police. Therefore, it can be assumed that the actual figures regarding rape and sexual assault are significantly higher than those available. As Abbey & McAuslan point out that due to the low reporting rate of sexual assault, "relying on criminal records only provides a very distorted view of perpetration" (2004, p. 753).

Additionally, it is not possible to compare the sexual assault reporting process of each individual campus. As of 2005, only 46% of the country's schools allowed for anonymous reporting and fewer than half informed their students on the process of filing criminal charges (U.S. Department of Justice, 2005). Crosset, Benedict, and McDonald (1995) found that sexual assault victims on campus are more likely to report the incidents to Judicial Affairs than to campus police (as cited in Messner, 2002). The reported incidents include offenses that occur on-campus, in campus housing complexes, off-campus, and on public property within or adjacent to the campus. I used all four of these categories without distinguishing between them.

Sports Culture

In order to define an institution's level of sports culture I created a variable with four levels, coded 0 through 3. Schools with no sports culture were coded as 0, schools with low sports culture were coded as 1, schools with average sports culture were coded as 2, and schools with high levels of sports culture were coded as 3. When defining sports culture, the two sports I am investigating are varsity men's football and basketball. This is because they are contact spectator sports and because in the United States, they tend to have the largest fan bases. They are also the only two college sports that actually make money ("College athletics by the numbers," 2012). Therefore, if a school did not have one of these two sports on a competitive intercollegiate level, I coded it as having no sports culture. Three schools had no sports culture.

To determine whether a school has low, average, or high sports culture, I first examined whether a school competes in the National Collegiate Athletic Association at the Division I, II, or III level. Division I is the most competitive and its schools have the largest sports

programs. To qualify for Division I, a school must have at least fourteen sports and participate in fall, winter, and spring sports seasons. Division I has the highest level of competition and the greatest cultural impact on the university community (Clopton & Finch, 2010). Division I football programs are further divided into the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) and the Football Championship Subdivision (FCS). Only forty-eight university athletic departments generated a positive net income in 2010-2011, all in the DI Football Bowl Subdivision (Jessop, 2012, March 21). Any schools in my population that were among those forty-eight schools were given a 3 on my scale, as were any schools that ranked among the top fifty revenues or top fifty most profitable football or basketball programs for that year. Schools with athletic departments that ranked among the top fifty spenders of 2010-2011 were also given a 3. Schools that ranked among the top thirty football attendance in the Division I Football Bowl Subdivision were also given a 3. Members of the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC), the two most profitable NCAA conferences, were given 3s. DI schools with basketball or football teams that have consistently performed extremely well and received national attention in the past few years were given 3s. Examples of this include football teams that play in important bowl games every year or basketball teams that consistently reach the final rounds of the NCAA basketball tournament. Thirty-four schools met these criteria.

All other Division I schools were given a 2, which reflects an average level of sports culture. Division II schools that had an average attendance that was more than half of their student body population were also given a 2, as were Division II schools that are soon transitioning to Division I. Division II schools that have recently garnered national attention or consistently won championships in their division were given a 2. Seventy-seven schools were classified as average.

The remaining Division II schools were given a 1, as were all Division III schools and schools participating in National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. Division III is the largest level of competition and the least competitive. Division III athletes are not eligible for NCAA scholarship money. The NAIA is an association of smaller athletic programs and is less competitive than the NCAA. Twenty-seven schools were classified as having low levels of sports culture.

All of the sports culture coding was done on a separate spreadsheet from other data to ensure that sexual assault numbers were not influential.

Greek life membership

There have been conflicting findings regarding whether fraternity members are more likely to commit sexual assault than non-fraternity members. However, Ward et al. (1991) found that twenty-eight percent of sexual assaults reported within their sample occurred at fraternity houses. The majority of incidents took place during or after a party, which is consistent with findings that indicate that one of the biggest indicators of a rape prone campus environment is alcohol consumption, something that often coincides with Greek life parties as well as athletic events. Humphrey and Kahn examined various factors that made certain fraternities and athletic teams more high-risk than others. They observed that parties of fraternities labeled high-risk locations for sexual assault "generally had skewed gender ratios, with either more women or men; gender segregation often occurred; and the men typically treated the women in more degrading ways" (Humphrey & Kahn, 2000, p. 1315). Therefore, whenever possible, I recorded the percentage of enrolled students involved in Greek life at each institution. This percentage was the variable I used to measure Greek life. There were twenty-

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six schools with missing data for this variable. The remaining 114 institutions had percentages of students involved in Greek life ranging from 0 to 43%, with a mean of 10.8% and a median of 7.7%. The majority of institutions were under 15%.

Race and Ethnicity

There have also been conflicting analyses of the relationship between ethnicity and risk for sexual assault. Porter and Williams' (2011) self-reporting study on underrepresented groups on campus found that students of racial and ethnic minorities, which they classified as all non-white students, are more than three times as likely to experience rape as white students. Conversely, ethnicity was also a factor in Koss' findings, with more white women reporting being raped (16% as compared to 12% of Hispanic women, 10% of black women, and 7% of Asian women) and more black men reporting committing rape (10%, as compared to 4% of white men, 7% of Hispanic, and 2% of Asian men) (Koss, 1988, pp. 11-12, as cited in Sanday, 1996). Testa and Dermen (1999) found higher rates of reporting among women with non-European heritage, and Brener et al. (1999) did not find a relationship between race and ethnicity and rape victimization (as cited in Gross et al., 2006). Gross et al. (2006) found that black women reported "higher rates of sexual aggression," (p. 295) specifically "unwanted sexual intercourse resulting from partners using physical force, emotional pressure, or perceiving their partner as being too aroused to stop his advances" (ibid).

Each Common Data Set lists the number of students according to racial/ethnic category, including Hispanic, Black or African American, White, American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. There are also options for two or more races and "race and/or ethnicity unknown." I calculated and recorded the percentage of non-white students for each institution. Seven institutions in the sample had missing data for this

variable. The remaining 133 institutions ranged from having 7-98% non-White students. The mean was 40.5% and the median 36%.

Other variables

In order to control for as many additional variables as possible, I categorized each institution as public or private and rural, urban, or suburban. I do not expect these variables to correlate significantly with sexual assault numbers. However, campuses located in more rural environments may have higher percentages of students involved in Greek life and/or strong athletic cultures because of more limited recreational opportunities.

Expectations

My central expectation is that sexual assault will be positively associated with high sports culture. Campuses that place higher value on competitive sports such as football and basketball will produce environments that are more hostile to women and promote rape acceptance beliefs.

Additionally, I expect enrollment numbers and percentage of students involved in Greek life to also draw a positive associated with sexual assault. Schools with more students are more likely to have high levels of sports culture, in addition to other high-risk situations for rape. At many universities Greek life culture has many similarities to sports culture, so at schools with a large percentage of students involved in Greek life I expect sexual assault occurrences to be higher.

Sample Characteristics

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of the data set. Table 2 demonstrates how representative the sample is in comparison to national averages. The schools in the sample have a higher average enrollment, 13,807, than the national average of 8402. This is likely due to the small percentage of private schools in the sample. Of the 2211 four-year universities in the United States, 30% (672) are public and 70% (1539) are not-for-profit private schools. However, due to the fact that private schools tend to have smaller enrollments than public schools, 79% of U.S. students are enrolled at public institutions (National Center for Education Statistics). Only 7.9% of schools in the sample are private. This is largely because I eliminated schools with fewer than 5,000 undergraduate students enrolled, most of which are likely private. The average percentage of students involved in Greek life, percentage of female students, and percentage of non-White students are all similar to the national averages. The national average reported sexual assault is considerably higher than the sample mean, due to the fact that the national average comes from the U.S. Department of Justice study, which was conducted through phone interviews and is based on self reporting.

Table 1: Means, medians, standard deviations, and ranges of variables in the models

	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Sexual Assault	2.7		140
Sports Culture	2	.7	140
% Greek life	10.8	9.8	114
Enrollment	13807	8477	140
% Female	56.2	6.8	140
% non-White	40.5	22.3	133

Source: Author's data set

Table 2: Comparison between sample institutions and national averages

	Sample	National Average
Sexual Assault[4]	.21	35
Enrollment	13,807	8402
% Greek life	10.8	10
% Female	56.2	57.1
% non-White	40.5	38
% Private (schools)	7.9	70
%Private (students)	6	21

Sources: Author's data set; Colleges & Universities by Religious Affiliation; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Home Page, U.S. Department of Education; Social Fraternities and Sororities

Within the sample the number for yearly average sexual assaults ranged from 0 to 23.67, with the mean being 2.7 and the median 1.6. Nineteen schools reported 0 sexual assaults. Only five schools had an average of ten or more sexual assaults per year. 75% of the schools had an average of 4 or fewer sexual assaults per year. The school with 23.67 is a clear outlier. In order to determine whether or not there is a positive correlation, I used a crosstabulation. Table 3 indicates that 35.3 percent of schools with a high level of sports culture have greater than five sexual assaults, as opposed to 7.9 percent of average level schools and 3.7 percent of low level schools. Therefore, there appears to be a positive relationship between higher sports culture and more instances of sexual assault.

Table 3: Crosstabulation of sexual assault and sports culture

	Sports Culture				
Sexual Assault	None (%)	Low (%)	Average (%)	High (%)	Total
≤ 2 SA	100	88.9	55.3	26.5	55.7
2.1-5 SA	0	7.4	36.8	38.2	30.7
5.1+ SA	0	3.7	7.9	35.3	13.6
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Author's data set

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[4] Per 1000 students

Multivariate Data Analysis

In order to determine if there is a correlation between any of the variables and sexual assault, I determined the correlation coefficients for each independent variable separately. Table 4 shows each correlation coefficient. There are statistically significant correlation coefficients for four of the independent variables: sports culture, Greek life, enrollment, and percentage of female students. Public or private, urban or rural, and percentage of non-White students did not have statistically significant correlation coefficients.

Table 4: Correlation coefficients of each independent variable with Sexual Assault

	Coefficient
Sports Culture	.47*
% Greek life	.34**
Enrollment	.44**
Public/Private	.06
Urban/Rural	.04
% Female	-.27**
% non-White	-.16

*Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.05
**Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.01
Source: Author's data set

I then ran a linear regression for sports culture individually in order to predict the association between the two variables. Table 5 demonstrates that there is a positive association between high levels of sports culture and sexual assault. The regression coefficient indicates that as sports culture increases one level, sexual assaults per year increase by 2. This means that from one level of sports culture to the next, the average number of reported sexual assaults per year increases by 2. A school coded as high would then have six more sexual assaults per year than a school coded as none. Considering that the mean of reported sexual assaults in the sample is 2.7, this is a significant number. The R square indicates that about 22% of variance

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in the dependant variable is explained by sports culture. Therefore, sports culture is an indicator of sexual assault within this sample.

Table 5: Coefficient (and standard error) from a linear regression. Dependent variable: sexual assaults

	Coefficient
Sports Culture	2.0**
	(.32)
Constant	-1.3
(intercept)	(.70)
R square	.22
N	140

*Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.05
**Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.01
Source: Author's data set

In order to determine the strength of the correlation when multiple relevant predictor variables are taken into consideration, I ran a multiple regression including all of my predictor variables. For this multiple regression, N=111 because twenty-six schools have missing data for Greek life percentages and an additional three schools have missing data for percentage of minority enrollment. Table 6 shows the results of the multiple regression. When factoring in enrollment, percentage of students involved in Greek life, campus location, whether the institution is public or private, percentage of female students, percentage of non-White students, sports culture no longer accounts for sexual assault at a statistically significant level. The only variables that have a positive correlation at a statistically significant level are percentage of students involved in Greek life and enrollment. The correlation coefficient demonstrates that for every percentage of students involved in Greek like, sexual assaults rise by almost .1. This means that for every 10% of students involved in Greek life, average sexual assault per year is predicted to increase by 1. The correlation coefficient of the enrollment variable indicates that for every 1000 students, the average sexual assaults per year increases by .14. Therefore, for every 10,000 students, the average sexual assaults per year will increase by 1.4.

Table 6: Coefficient (and standard error) from a multiple regression. Dependent variable: sexual assaults

	Coefficient
Sports Culture	.78
	(.55)
% Greek life	.09*
	(.03)
Enrollment	.14**
	(.04)
Public/Private	-.17
	(1.1)
Urban/Rural	.44
	(.37)
% Female	.01
	(.04)
% non-White	.01
	(.01)
Constant (intercept)	-3.6 (3.4)
R square	.34
N	111

*Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.05
**Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.01
Source: Author's data set

In order to ascertain which variable caused the most significant change to the relationship between sports culture and sexual assault, I ran a multiple regression and added each variable one by one. The relationship remained strong when I added percentage of students involved in Greek life and enrollment separately, but decreased when I added them together. Therefore, I concluded that the primary reason for the weakened relationship is a combination of the three variables.

Enrollment understandably has an impact on the number of reported sexual assault instances, as schools with more students are likely to have more sexual assault occurrences due to sheer numbers alone. To control for the relationship between enrollment and sexual assault I created a new variable to measure the relative incidence of sexual assault to enrollment by dividing the sexual assault variable by the enrollment variable. The new variable for average yearly sexual assaults ranged from .0 to 1.5, with a mean of .21 and a median of .15. To determine if there was still a relationship between sports culture and sexual assaults, I ran another crosstabulation. As indicated in Table 7, 26.5% of schools with high levels of sports

culture have greater than .39 yearly relative sexual assaults, as opposed to 10.5% of schools

with average sports culture and 11.1% of schools with low sports culture. Thus, there still

appears to be a positive relationship between sports culture and relative sexual assault.

Table 7: Crosstabulation of sexual assault and sports culture

	Sports Culture				
Relative Sexual Assaults	None (%)	Low (%)	Average (%)	High (%)	Total
≤ .17 SA	100	66.7	60.5	47.1	59.3
.171-.39 SA	0	22.2	28.9	26.5	26.4
.391+ SA	0	11.1	10.5	26.5	14.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Author's data set

I then examined the correlation coefficients with the new sexual assault variable. Table 8

shows the correlation coefficients of each remaining independent variable.

Table 8: Correlation coefficients of each independent variable with proportional sexual assaults

	Coefficient
Sports Culture	.261**
% Greek life	.564**
Public/Private	.06
Urban/Rural	.02
% Female	-.18*
% non-White	-.13

*Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.05
**Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at p<.01
Source: Author's data set

After running a multiple regression it becomes clear that changing the dependent variable has

diminished the statistical significance of all variables except for Greek life. I believe that it is

possible that the relationship between Greek life and sexual assault is not strictly linear,

rather, there may be a threshold at which Greek life becomes influential. To investigate this

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further, I created a new variable dividing Greek life into two categories: standard and high. Both the national average and sample mean are around 10%. The sample mean plus 1.5 standard deviations is 25.5%. Therefore, I considered 25% of students or more as being a high percentage of students involved in Greek life. Ten percent of the institutions were classified as high. I then ran a multiple regression including the new Greek life variable. As Model 1 in Table 9 demonstrates, the new Greek life variable was the only independent variable with statistical significance.

I also wanted to further explore the relationship between sports culture and enrollment size in order to see if there is a threshold of enrollment at which sports culture begins to independently factor into relative sexual assault occurrences. To do this, I ran the multiple regression using only schools with 15,000 students or more. Forty-nine schools had greater than 15,000 students. The public/private variable was eliminated from the regression because all remaining schools were public. Model 2 in Table 9 shows the results of that multiple regression. After narrowing the sample to only large schools and controlling for the remaining independent variables, sports culture does still have a positive relationship to sexual assaults. The R square indicates that given all of these factors, 21% of variance is explained by sports culture. None of the other remaining variables are statistically significant. When I run the multiple regression again with the original Greek life variable, the relationships remain largely the same, with increased statistical significance for sports culture and percentage of female students. Model 3 in Table 9 demonstrates this. According to Models 2 and 3, in schools with more than 15,000 students with all other factors being equal, for every level of sports culture increase sexual assaults will increase by .14. Though this is not a very strong relationship, it does demonstrate that sports culture is independently influential.

Table 9: Coefficient (and standard error) from a linear regression. Dependent variable: proportional sexual assaults

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Sports Culture	.057	.14*	.14*
% Greek life	n/a	n/a	.001
High Greek life	.33**	.10	n/a
Public/Private	.14	n/a	n/a
Urban/Rural	.03	-.02	-.02
% Female	.001	.013	.01*
% non-White	-.001	.00	.00
Constant (intercept)	-.49 (.26)	-.87 (.41)	-.82 (.42)
R square	.33	.21	.19
N	111	49	49

*Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at $p<.05$
**Indicates that correlation is statistically significant at $p<.01$
Source: Author's data set

Discussion and Significance

The purpose of this study was to determine if sports culture had a causal relationship to sexual assault. Prior to completing this study I had three expectations. My primary expectation was that campuses with high sports culture would have a higher average number of sexual assaults. Initially, I was unable to find a consistent statistically significant relationship between sports culture and sexual assault. After further controlling for size by creating a relational sexual assault variable and further controlling for high percentages of students involved in Greek life by turning it into a dichotomous variable, I was still unable to find a statistically significant relationship. One possible reason for this is that the variables for sports culture, Greek life, and enrollment were originally too highly correlated with one another. After narrowing the sample to include only schools larger than 15,000, I found a statistically significant relationship between sports culture and sexual assault. This indicates that this correlation only exists in schools that are larger than 15,000 students.

I was able to show that sports culture does have an independent influence on sexual assaults at schools larger than 15,000 students. Sports culture, Greek life, and enrollment are all highly interrelated variables, and it was difficult to determine what the effect of sports culture alone was. However, it is clear that all three have an influence on reported sexual assault. This is consistent with research that shows the importance of peer influence and perceived social norms in creating climates conducive to sexual assault.

As the sample is fairly representative of the larger population of schools in the U.S., the findings of this study indicate that in attempting to prevent campus sexual assaults, greater attention should be paid to schools with a high level of sports culture. More than just targeting high-risk individuals and groups, attention should be paid to identifying actual group norms and men's perception of the norms.

Limitations

It bears repeating that my sexual assault data, like all sexual assault data based on reported incidents alone, are far from perfect. Considering the U.S. Department of Justice's finding that 20-25% of college women are raped (Fisher et el., 2000, pp. 10-11), the fact that nineteen schools had an average of 0 reported sexual assaults in the past three years is indicative of how flawed the data are. A more in-depth study could first examine samples of students from each institution in order to come up with more accurate numbers of both reported and unreported sexual assaults.

Additionally, it is important to remember that this study was meant to examine only one component of sexual assaults on campus. There are many circumstances under which sexual

assault occurs which may have nothing to do with institutionalized sports. This study was not

attempting to explain all sexual assaults through an association with sports.

Conclusion

Rape is particularly prevalent on university campuses in the United States for several apparent reasons, including drug and alcohol use, rape myth acceptance, male sex-role socialization, and perceived peer group support. I have shown that another apparent reason is that many of the characteristics of masculinity that predispose rape on college campuses are produced or strengthened through sports culture. Masculinity and the way it is constructed through sports culture contributes to the high levels of sexual assault and the accepting attitudes towards sexual violence on U.S. college campuses. Rape culture is prevalent on college campuses partially because of rape myths such as men's entitlement and justification, and the false belief that victims are "asking for it" or somehow to blame for their own rapes. These beliefs can be attributed, in part, to masculinity, which is largely constructed through sports and the culture surrounding them. This influence comes from the fact that the masculinity constructed through sport is often the hegemonic masculinity, at least in the United States and particularly on college campuses. Some of the ways masculinities produced through sport contribute to rape culture are through the acceptance of rape supportive beliefs, the conditioned use of the body for force, the consistent devaluing of feminine values, the separation of the sexes, the marginalization and sexualization of female athletes, the fostering of the bystander non-intervention attitude, and the gender inequality that is produced through sports. These attitudes are not solely a result of athletic participation, as simply watching sports or being surrounded by sports culture can influence non-athletes.

"Men's relations within sport, and the images of masculinity projected by the sports media, are an integral part of boys' and men's relations with each other, and with girls and women, in schools, families, and workplaces" (Messner, 2005, p. 320). I have demonstrated the truth

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of this statement when it comes to men's relationship to sexual assault and sexual assault prevention on college and university campuses. I have shown that sports culture and the environment surrounding it is one component that should be examined when attempting to prevent sexual assault on campus. Prevention programs should target both men and women's perception of social norms, especially when it comes to traditional gender roles.

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