Victims are Doing it for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate

by

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ABSTRACT

VICTIMS ARE DOING IT FOR THEMSELVES: EXAMINING THE MOVE FROM VICTIM TO ADVOCATE

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Victims and survivors of sexual violence often lead the fight against sexual violence and may see themselves, or be perceived by others, as activists or advocates. However, the experiences involved in the move from victim and survivor to advocate and activist have yet to be studied. Therefore, this study asks: How do victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates? Drawing upon labeling and feminist standpoint theories, this thesis examines the parallels between primary, secondary, and tertiary deviance (Lemert 1951; Kitsuse 1980) and primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization following sexual violence (Kenney 2002). Tertiary deviance, in which those who have been shamed, silenced, and marginalized demand recognition and rights, can explain victims’ move to advocacy (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). Furthermore, feminist standpoint theory explains how victims of sexual violence have been silenced and stigmatized and how they use their agency to resist primary and secondary victimization and stigmatization (Harding 1987; Harding 1991; Riessman 2000a). Narrative interviews captured participants’ experiences of victimization, their disclosures and reactions to these disclosures, and their subsequent involvement in advocacy or activism. The study found that participants became advocates and activists through five main processes rather than a single event and that primary and secondary victimization are linked to their advocacy involvement in many important ways. Many continue to work through their victimization experiences as they advocate. Future research should expand on the concept of tertiary victimization.
DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the 25 individuals who took the time to share their experiences with sexual victimization and becoming anti-sexual violence advocates and activists with me. This study would not have been possible without your participation. I am honoured that you chose to trust me with your stories and I hope that, in turn, I have honoured your voices and histories in these pages. As I read and reread the transcripts of each of your interviews, I am grateful for the work you do to combat sexual violence and cognizant of the fact that your path to this work was far from easy. Thank you for providing me with countless learning opportunities in our conversations and for allowing me to offer that learning to others.
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Chapter 1. Introduction

“For narratives to flourish there must be a community to hear; that for communities to hear, there must be stories which weave together their history, their identity, their politics.”
(Plummer on rape stories 1995:87)

1.1 Background

Conversations about sexual violence were front and center throughout 2016 in both Canada and the United States (U.S.). That year, there were allegations of sexual violence raised by multiple victims against celebrity personalities, such as Jian Ghomeshi in Canada and Bill Cosby in the U.S. (Carter 2016). There were also a multitude of stories of campus sexual assault, as highlighted in the documentary The Hunting Ground aired by CNN at the end of 2015, which catapulted sexual violence into the limelight (Cole 2016). Sexual violence also seized the cultural imagination throughout 2016. A few examples include the Oscar-winning film Spotlight about the Catholic Church’s cover-up of sexual abuse of children, the made-for-television film Confirmation about the sexual harassment allegations raised by Anita Hill against the then-nominated and now sitting Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, and the depiction of male sexual assault in the 2016 season of John Ridley’s American Crime television drama.

The fight against sexual violence has also taken a political turn in the last few years. In 2014, the White House launched the It’s On Us initiative to help bring awareness and an end to sexual assault on campus (Somanader 2014). In 2015 in Canada, the Ontario government committed $41 million to curb sexual violence through the It’s Never Okay program following the allegations against Ghomeshi and concerning reports about the lack of sexual assault policies in post-secondary schools (Mathieu, Benzie, and Poisson 2015; Benzie 2016). The Ghomeshi case also led the Ontario government to pilot a program offering victims of sexual assault free legal advice (Benzie 2016; Ministry of Attorney General 2016).
The above cases share a noteworthy characteristic that has perhaps allowed them to garner significant public attention. The voices of their victims\(^1\) have not only been raised, but it is these voices that have fueled the North American conversation around sexual violence. Moreover, many of the victims have characterized themselves or have been characterized by journalists as activists or advocates\(^2\) for coming out publicly about their victimization, such as two of the women in the Ghomeshi case (Brothers 2016; Houpt 2016). Similarly, many of the victims who appeared on stage after U.S. Vice President Joe Biden at the 2016 Oscars described themselves as anti-sexual violence activists or advocates, two of whom have created a network of activists on campuses throughout the U.S. to combat sexual violence (Kort 2015; The Hunting Ground 2016; Yashari 2016).

Victims who go on to raise awareness about sexual violence are not a new phenomenon, however. For example, Jane Doe who was raped in Toronto, Ontario in 1986 after police failed to warn the public that a rapist was on the loose has been involved in advocacy ever since through her lectures, organizing, fundraising, and writing (Griffiths 1999; Sheehy 2012). But often, the voices of survivors who raise awareness about sexual violence are characterized as belonging to victims even though the act of calling out their perpetrators, as well as other activities they engage in to address sexual violence, can be viewed as acts of advocacy or activism. Similarly, survivors of sexual violence have generally been studied through a ‘victim’ centered lens while anti-sexual violence advocates and activists have been studied through an

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1 Throughout this study, the terms victim and survivor are used interchangeably. The debate around the terminology for victims and survivors is discussed in Chapters 2 and 3. When discussing specific participants, the terms used are the ones they have chosen for themselves.

2 Throughout this study, the terms advocate and activist are used interchangeably or stated as advocates and activists or advocates/activists other than when explaining how they differ in Chapters 3 and 6. When discussing specific groups of survivors who have become advocates or activists in Chapter 3, the terms used are the same as those in the literature discussing each group. When discussing specific participants, the terms used are the ones they have chosen for themselves.
‘advocacy and activism’ lens (Sheehy 2012; Wood 2017). Each of these lenses neglects to inquire about the former’s potential advocacy and activism and the latter’s potential history with victimization (Wood 2017).

While not all victims of sexual violence become involved in advocacy or activism, this study used labeling and feminist standpoint theories together with narrative feminist research methodology to study victims of sexual violence who have become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. Its goal was to explore the processes and experiences through which this occurs and understand the co-existing identities of victim/survivor and advocate/activist in participants. This population was interviewed because of the wealth of knowledge that they hold because of these identities, making them uniquely positioned to speak about the difficulties that victims face as well as the ways in which they try to create change around sexual violence. They are also able to speak about the issues of power, silence, and voice and how these concepts are interrelated and embedded in acts of, and discussions about, sexual violence.

1.2 Research Question

The processes and experiences involved in the move from, and between, victim to advocate and activist have yet to be studied. Therefore, this study was guided by the following research question: How do victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence activists or advocates? The study focused on sexual violence to examine how participants navigate victimhood/survivorship and advocacy/activism. It inquired into the experiences participants faced following victimization and how these experiences shaped their advocacy/activism.

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3 As is explained in chapters 3 and 4, anti-sexual violence advocates and activists can fill many roles. Since the use of voice and actions are key to both advocates’ and activists’ pursuit of change, to be included in this study participants had to currently be, or have been, involved in advocacy work that addresses the issue of sexual violence or how it is perceived, discussed, or addressed, whether through speaking, writing, artistic, and survivor-focused endeavors. The study sought participants who work with or on behalf of survivors, as well as those who are engaged in drawing attention to and combatting sexual violence.
journeys, positions, and roles. It heard from victims/survivors who are also advocates/activists from the general population as well as those from religious communities. This is in line with Infusino’s (2014:76) suggestion that research into victims’ disclosures examine “factors like religious affiliation and collectivist cultural norms.”

The labels advocate and activist attributed to victims who engage in such activities fails to capture what happens in between victimization and participating in anti-sexual violence work. It also underestimates the struggle that victims may experience in finding their voice to disclose privately and/or publicly following victimization. Though it is the noise around crime that is generally studied, such as the actions of perpetrators and victims that can be seen or heard, silence is a major feature of most crimes (Hallsworth and Young 2008). The various forms of silence that victims confront in the aftermath of sexual violence may make it difficult for them to speak out and be heard. These forms of silence can include a code or culture of concealment, silence, or complicity (Hallsworth and Young 2008; Skolnick 2010; Gutierrez and McLaren 2012; Hartill 2013; Madfis 2013). In some religious communities or groups, the silence and cover-ups in response to victimization are referred to as “a holy hush” (Nason-Clark 2000:74; Pyles 2007; Clark 2009; Crisp 2010; Gutierrez and McLaren 2012). Furthermore, victims may have to deal with the privileging of professional forms of knowledge, such as by police, lawyers, therapists, and academics whose interpretations about sexual violence differ from and silence their own (Breckenridge 1999; Romito 2008).

Since “walls of silence” are built by offenders, control agents, bystanders, and victims, it is important to understand how survivors who have become advocates/activists confront,

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4 In this study, 32 percent of the sample consisted of participants who were victimized by religious figures in their religious communities or groups. The study’s interest in how people victimized in religious communities or groups become advocates and activists stems from my previous research on crime committed in religious and insular groups by and against community members (Benchimol 2013).
challenge, and overcome them (Zerubavel 2006; Hallsworth and Young 2008:149). This includes hearing whether and how silence was used against them as a means of social control or whether and how they were silenced when they tried to protest against powerful people or institutions (Bruneau 1973; Tannen and Saville-Troike 1985; Glenn 2004). The fact that the silencing of victims relegates them to the status of ‘non-person,’ which allows for the indifference and “moral disengagement” of the public or bystanders, is evidence of the many challenges that victims may need to overcome when they become advocates and activists (Bruneau 1973; Romito 2008:51). Furthermore, these silences can make it difficult for victims to listen and trust their own voices. They may construct “a double wall of silence” when they deny their experiences to themselves and keep it a secret from others (Zerubavel 2006:50).

Therefore, victims’ silence about sexual violence is rational and justified (Romito 2008). It may stem from feelings of fear, pain, or shame or as a result of the power of the perpetrator who would otherwise punish them for speaking out (Bok 1989; Zerubavel 2006; Romito 2008). Unfortunately, however, victims’ silence is often interpreted as a sign of weakness and deceit. For example, victims are often blamed for their silence against the perpetrator when they fail to disclose or report sexual violence and their silences in the courtroom, such as pauses or hesitations, are read as signs of dishonesty (Tannen and Sauville-Troike 1985; Breckenridge 1999). In hearing from individuals who have both experienced and raised awareness about sexual violence, an experience in which the silence is particularly loud, this study asked about what silence, both participants’ own and that of others, meant to them and analyzed its role on their path into advocacy/activism (Chubin 2014). It also analyzed how participants dealt with attacks on their credibility to ensure that they would not be heard (Breckenridge 1999; Romito 2008; Breckenridge 1999; Crisp 2010). This, too, extends to their role as advocates and activists.
because, like victims, silence breakers may be resented, discredited, and doubted (Zerubavel 2006).

Voice can be an effective mechanism to produce change and to address a “climate of silence” where it is believed that it is both dangerous and futile to speak up (Bowen and Blackmon 2003:1400; Bell et al. 2011). While it is risky to do so, those who speak out against violence have “powerful convictions” that “overcome the fear, anxieties, feelings of resignation, distractions, and hesitancy” associated with making their voice heard (Bird 1996:171). Just as power is central to both silence and violence, it is also central to the issue of speaking out against violence. In making the experience of sexual violence “part of the public discourse,” silence breakers need power or else they will be ignored (Zerubavel 2006:63; Kurasawa 2009). Since speaking out about sexual violence, which is one of the things that anti-sexual violence advocates/activists do, can break the hold that silence has on them, it is important to understand the move from silence to voice and what made it difficult and possible (Lister 1982). Therefore, this study asked about silence and voice from the standpoint of the powerless victim and the empowered advocate/activist. It outlines the ways in which victims have been silenced by various people, including themselves, and how they use various forms of voice to engage in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism which can assist in regaining power (Hallsworth and Young 2008).

The concept of victims and survivors becoming advocates/activists may sound dramatic or heroic and news coverage about these individuals can make the process seem easy or commonplace. The many forms of silence that victims must overcome, however, suggest otherwise. The lack of research into the process of victims/survivors becoming advocates/activists hides the silences they confront as well as their resistance efforts in
overcoming that silence and other challenges they face. Therefore, it is the spaces in between victimization and advocacy/activism that this study captures in order to better understand the experiences of victims and survivors who have become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

This study used feminist standpoint theory and labeling theory to explore the process through which victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. Feminist work on patriarchy and male dominance highlights how female victims in particular are labeled. Because a defining feature of patriarchy is that men exert control and power over women’s reproduction and sexuality, feminist theory concerns itself with the power relations of sexual oppression (Sydie 1987). While the ways this oppression occurs may differ over time, the control of men over women “is seen as a historical constant” (Sydie 1987:117). Therefore, the feminist movement brought attention to the way in which men determined who is labeled a sexual offender and victim as well as decided the fate of offenders while neglecting to consider the well-being and interests of their victims (Karmen 2007).

Feminists fought for female victims’ protection and support and “exposed a legacy of injustice, institutionalized neglect, and routine abuse” (Karmen 2007:243). They rejected the idea that women must ensure their own protection against sexual violence by following rules that focus on teaching them how to survive in a world that belongs to men, such as minding what they wear (Karmen 2007). They also rejected rape myths that view rapists as overwhelmed by uncontrollable desires (Karmen 2007; Suarez and Gadalla 2010). A useful tool in challenging these myths was Liz Kelly’s (1988) model of the “continuum of sexual violence.”

In its call for participants, this study sought out those who had experienced sexual violence including child sexual abuse and sexual assault. Therefore, the study’s conceptualization of sexual violence includes both acts that lie on
being “a single event that disrupts one’s life,” sexual violence exists on “a continuum of various forms of violence, routinely punctuating the lives of women in particular sociocultural and political situations” (Loney-Howes 2018:31). The continuum model points to “the limitations of dualistic constructions of sexual violence” (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:4) and resists simplistic ideas about seriousness, such as the ranking of various acts of sexual violence according to their severity (Kelly 2012). Additionally, the continuum highlights how patriarchal gendered relations shape how people think about both consensual and non-consensual sexual behaviours (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:4). Feminists explained that sexual violence is a tool of control, intimidation, subordination, exclusion, and power and a desire to dominate and humiliate (Karmen 2007).

Though acts of sexual violence may take on different forms, the goal is to “deny or circumscribe” the bodily-autonomy of the victim (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:4). Feminist scholarship, therefore, challenged why only some instances of sexual violence are considered to be real or legitimate (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:5).

Feminist theorists also highlighted the limitations in the knowledge produced from viewing sexual violence solely from men’s worlds or social realities (Harding 1991). In making room for the voices of survivors, feminist activists and activism also led to a shift in how rape was understood and discussed in the media, popular culture, and by the public (Serisier 2018). For example, in the 1980s, feminist activists pushed for women to identify themselves as survivors as an act of empowerment which accomplished three things: It transformed women from silent victims to “heroic activist[s] and speaker[s]” (Serisier 2018:55). In telling their stories publicly, survivors could also comfort others, show them that they were not alone in their experiences, and potentially inspire them to speak out as well (Serisier 2018). Finally, survivors’ the continuum of sexual violence but may not be characterized as a crime as well as sexual violence crimes (Walklate 2014).
public stories challenged the prevailing myths and attitudes about sexual violence (Serisier 2018). Collective resistance such as this allowed women and feminists to “challenge existing power structures and norms”, such as “the structural sources of male privilege” (Swank and Fahs 2017:1). Understanding that social structures have contributed to and shaped the subjugation of women, and that “being held back by social forces” is a common experience of women, is a crucial element to one’s engagement in feminist activism and this is known as “a feminist consciousness” (Swank and Fahs 2017:7). The activism and storytelling of women and survivors in the 1980s were acts of feminist consciousness raising and the politicization of women’s personal experiences (Serisier 2018). By reframing these experiences as political problems, feminists turned sexual violence into a problem that demanded collective action. In addition to highlighting the pervasiveness of sexual violence, feminist activists also called attention to the psychological and physical impact sexual violence can have on the lives of survivors (Loney-Howes 2018). This, too, has “transformed cultural and political discourse” in considering sexual violence’s emotional cost (Loney-Howes 2018:51).

Because of its social construction and the stigma attached to it, crimes involving sexual violence are one of the most underreported crimes (Grubb and Turner 2012). “This pattern of underreporting is embedded in legal, cultural, and social conditions that reward silence and submission in the service of maintaining the status quo (Alcoff 2018)” (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:1). For example, in 2014 only “one in 20 sexual assaults were reported to” Canadian police (Statistics Canada 2017). Feminists understood and explained women’s silences following sexual assault.

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6 Despite the continuum model of sexual violence, Serisier (2018:60) notes some of the limitations and problematic practices of feminist activists during this time regarding the attention they drew to sexual violence. “Feminist activists in this period were far more successful in gaining sympathetic media attention for survivors of stereotypical ‘real’ rapes than they were in using survivor narratives to contest the denial and victim-blaming associated with ‘simple’ or acquaintance rapes (Estrich 1987). The restriction of popular survivor narratives to cases of real rape, and particularly cases of white women raped by black men, allowed feminists and survivors to make use of existing cultural fears to generate media attention and public sympathy.”
violence and that in general, those that are “gendered feminine (or weaker) have been systematically muted, if not silenced” (Glenn 2004:10). Rather than accept victims’ silence as a sign of consent, feminists explained that women failed to report because they were discriminated by race, class, and gender by the men who controlled the criminal justice system (Karmen 2007). In doing so, feminists presented sexual violence as both a political issue and social problem instead of a personal tragedy that required new ways of thinking about gender, perpetration, and victimization (Harding 1991; Karmen 2007). They also redefined how sexual violence was perceived and explicitly acknowledged and named some of the crimes and other acts that are included in sexual violence such as marital rape, date rape, acquaintance rape, and more committed by many men who were not being held accountable (Karmen 2007; van der Bruggen and Grubb 2014). In naming these acts, feminists lifted the veil of silence that surrounded sexual violence and its victims and demonstrated how quickly victims are labeled suspicious and untrustworthy. They also reflected on who is able to recognize and speak out about one’s experiences of sexual violence and be heard.

Though labeling theory is focused on the societal labeling of offenders, it can be useful in understanding how victims, and particularly victims of sexual violence, are labeled. This is because the negative labels that are applied to victims of crime depend on the individuals involved and on which crime is in the spotlight (Johnson, Mullick, and Mulford 2002; Karmen 2007). When sexual abuse or violence are involved, the negative labeling of victims is more keenly present (Walklate 2014). Labeling theory explains that the labels applied to deviants serve to solidify their identity as such (Lemert 1951). Similarly, when labels are applied to victims of sexual violence they serve to solidify or reinforce the victim’s identity as blameworthy. For example, victims of sexual violence face questions about their credibility by both the public and
the law as well as speculation about whether or not they were deserving of the violence or whether they are legitimate victims (Frohmann 1991; Karmen 2007; Randall 2010; Walklate 2014). Using labels to blame victims also involves shaming, stigmatizing, and dehumanizing them and these acts are justified through the labels themselves (Goffman 1963). Victims’ identities and self-concepts are greatly determined and affected by the labels applied to them by others and their identities can become enmeshed with the labels (Kenney 2002). For example, victims may use the labels applied to them by others and other silencing mechanisms to blame themselves in ways that reject the victim identity or to accept the identity of the responsible party.

Therefore, the study applied Lemert’s (1951) concepts of primary and secondary deviance in labeling theory to the victimological ideas of primary and secondary victimization, especially as they relate to sexual violence (Kenney 2002; Karmen 2007). It also explored whether the extension of the deviance labeling phases to include a tertiary one is appropriate and applicable for victims who become advocates and activists (Kitsuse 1980; Lemert 2000; Kenney 2002). In the tertiary phase, the advocacy or activism of stigmatized individuals are important because it is how they challenge, “counter and neutralize” their stigmatization by others and demand protections and privileges (Kitsuse 1980:11). Similarly in feminist standpoint theory, agency and resistance are key concepts but some professionals who work with victims “and the general public” often overlook, or silence, agency and resistance in accounts by or about victims (Lamb 1999b:126). In upholding the values of feminist standpoint theory, such as seeking to

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7 Another way in which the concept of secondary victimization is used is to explain the victimization that family members of the primary victim endure when adjusting their lives to assist the victim and tertiary victimization as the victimization that more distant associates and relatives of the primary victim experience (Karmen 2007; Knudten 1989). Its relevance will be discussed in Chapter 3. However, labeling theory in its original conception does not consider how deviance affects offenders’ families or friends.
understand experiences from the perspective of the marginalized who have been most impacted by those experiences (Hartsock 1983; Smith 1990; Harding 1991, 1993; Hill Collins 1991), the study examined how victims have become drivers and agents of change around sexual violence through their advocacy and activism. It viewed survivors of sexual violence who are anti-sexual violence advocates and activists as experts who bring with them the experiences of both victimization and change-making through anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism.

1.4 Relevance of Research

This research contributes to the sociological and criminological literature on sexual violence by extending labeling theory and its conceptualization of stigma to victims of sexual violence and considering the impermanence of stigmatization (Riessman 2000a). Specifically, it investigates the under-examined concept of tertiary deviance while simultaneously developing a parallel theory of tertiary victimization (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). In exploring how people who experienced sexual violence become advocates/activists, this study demonstrates the various ways that the stigmatization and labeling by others and oneself can be transcended or transformed by showing how victims can and do move out of victimhood to more positive identities. It links labeling theory together with feminist standpoint theory, as well as narrative feminist research methodology, to more fully capture the experiences of those most affected by sexual violence as well as those who engage in anti-sexual violence work. By intentionally including participants of all genders, the study challenges the ways in which particular victims may sometimes be overlooked and unheard.

The study also addresses the fact that while the subject of silence has been examined within the disciplines of religion and philosophy (Tannen and Saville-Troike 1985), it has been ignored by criminologists as “an independent variable in its own right,” even though it is one of
the most central features of crime (Hallsworth and Young 2008:132). Furthermore, criminologists have largely ignored crimes committed within religious institutions and crimes committed by religious elites (Shupe et al. 2000). Sociologists, who have generally ignored secrecy, have only recently begun to pay attention to these crimes (Paoli 2003; Shupe and Iadicola 2000). Therefore, this study looks at the various ways that silence impacted victims’ process into becoming advocates and activists. It counters collective silences by listening to a collective of voices belonging to those who have been affected by sexual violence.

Additionally, whether research is conducted with an insider or outsider perspective significantly impacts knowledge (Merton 1972). The works of hooks (2003) and Ellis, Adams, and Bochner (2011) on the marginalized themselves as creators of ethnographic or autoethnographic work highlight the absence of research conducted by academics who disclose that they have been touched by sexual violence. Though this study is neither an ethnography nor autoethnography, as a researcher who has experienced sexual violence and participates in anti-sexual violence advocacy, it is my contribution to this gap.8

Moreover, as highlighted in the cases mentioned above, this study is also both timely and relevant because the conversation around sexual violence remains in the public eye. For example, the Canadian government is seeking ways in which to assist victims of sexual violence and universities in Canada and the United States continue to face damaged reputations and lawsuits because of sexual assault on their campuses (Gray 2015; Mathieu et al 2015; Ferguson 2016). Furthermore, Ontario continues to debate how best to investigate and address sexual violence committed by health care professionals and previous recommendations for patient

8 My position as someone who shares some of the experiences of the participants in this study and how I handled it are discussed in the methodology chapter.
protection have been ignored (Donovan 2016; Gallant 2016; Porter 2016). Initiatives to address sexual violence in other sectors such as the hospitality sector are supposed to follow (Ferguson 2016).

Moreover, mid-2017 and 2018 saw increasing and intensified discussions around sexual violence in politics, the media, law, and numerous industries as well as the raising of many victims’ voices (Rushowy 2017; Deckman 2018; The Canadian Press 2018). While it was preceded by the 2016 leaked tape of then-presidential candidate Donald Trump bragging about committing sexual assault, the #MeToo movement, originated by Tarana Burke in 2006 but made popular in 2017 following the allegations against film producer Harvey Weinstein, drew attention to the prevalence of sexual harassment and assault around the world in many industries as well as communities of faith (Wang 2016; Smartt 2017; Center for Religion and Civic Culture 2018). Both these incidents sparked millions of women, and some men and non-binary individuals, to speak publicly about their experiences with sexual violence (Santiago and Criss 2017; Burke 2018). While the idea for this qualitative study on victims of sexual violence turned anti-sexual violence advocates and activists came on the heels of Ghomeshi’s 2016 acquittal in Toronto, Ontario, participant recruitment began after Trump’s comments were leaked, and many of the study’s chapters were written, and data analyzed, as the #MeToo movement was unfolding. As the study neared completion, a grand jury report about abuse by Roman Catholic priests in Pennsylvania highlighted decades of sexual victimization and cover-ups (Scolford and Levy 2018).

While the stories of sexual violence are not new, the attention being paid to them feels different, as does the fact that it has led to men being held accountable for their actions because some of them were dismissed after the revelations made by their victims. Understanding how
victims/survivors become advocates and activists may shed light on the reasons for the outpouring of victims’ stories as well as understanding what they went through in order to be able to tell their stories. It can also capture the aftermath of coming forward and its impact on their advocacy/activism.

1.5 Outline of Study

The next chapter more fully outlines the theoretical framework with specific reference to labeling theory and feminist standpoint theory. These theories guide the study’s inquiry into what the process into becoming advocates and advocates entails and the ways in which victims of sexual violence who become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists can be considered tertiary victims. Labeling theory explains how deviants are labeled and how they understand the labels that are applied to them (Lemert 1967). Feminist standpoint theory explains how victims of sexual violence, especially female victims, are silenced and stigmatized as well as how they understand and respond to the acts committed against them (Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Weiss 2011). The concept of stigma, which features prominently in both the deviant labeling process and the secondary victimization process, is also discussed (Lemert 1967; Kitsuse 1980; Taylor et al. 1983; Weiss 2011). Furthermore, the chapter examines the extension of the deviance labeling process to include a tertiary phase and argues that a similar extension can be made to the phases or process of victimization (Kitsuse 1980).

Chapter 3 reviews three bodies of literature that are central to this study’s inquiry: (1) the literature on individuals who can be considered tertiary deviants; (2) the literature on survivors of various life events who go on to become advocates and activists related to that life event; (3) and the literature on victims of sexual violence and their participation in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. These bodies of literature are reviewed because survivors of sexual
violence who become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists are examples of tertiary deviants or, as this study argues regarding survivors of sexual victimization, tertiary victims (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). They are also an example of survivor advocates and activists. This chapter, therefore, explains how some deviants engage in tertiary deviance and how some survivors become advocates and activists, including the advantages and challenges they encounter in doing so.

Chapter 4 presents the research design of this study and outlines the processes for participant recruitment, data collection, and analyses. It explains the qualitative narrative feminist approach that was used to analyze the narrative interviews of participants. It also provides a description of the sample of participants in the study together with descriptive statistics regarding their socio-demographic information. The methods of analyses and interpretation include individual narrative analyses on each interview and comparative thematic analysis on all of the interviews. The validity, reflexivity, and the relationship between researcher and participant are also discussed. A discussion on the ethical considerations that were required and adhered to when conducting research of this nature and on this topic is presented.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the individual narrative and comparative thematic analyses that were conducted on the data. It outlines and describes the quantitative data that were gathered from participant narratives. It then presents and explains the five main themes that emerged from the interviews about participants’ processes into becoming advocates and activists. This chapter also groups together the participants’ whose initial pathway into advocacy or activism was the same and compares and contrasts them to each other. Participant quotes are used to illustrate each initial pathway and explain how it led to the involvement in advocacy and activism of the participants in each group or category. In Chapter 6, the relevance of the three
stages of victimization and feminist standpoint theory are layered onto the five main themes presented in the results chapter. This is followed by the discussion and conclusion in Chapter 7 which discusses the implications of the findings, recommendations, limitations, and several directions for future research.
Chapter 2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Chapter Overview

This study draws upon labeling theory and feminist standpoint theory to explore how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. This chapter outlines these theories and also points to their limitations in providing for a more complete understanding of the range of victims’ experiences of, and reactions following, sexual victimization. It also argues that the concept of tertiary victimization can address these limitations in a similar way that tertiary deviance has for offenders and deviants.

Drawing upon labeling theory, a theory centered on the societal labeling of offenders, this chapter examines the parallels between primary, secondary, and tertiary deviance and primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization (Lemert 1951; Kenney 2002). Primary and secondary deviance can explain the process of becoming a victim through the conceptual counterparts of primary and secondary victimization (Taylor et al. 1983; Karmen 2007; Weiss 2011). Tertiary deviance, in which those who have been shamed, silenced, and marginalized demand recognition and rights, can explain victims’ move to advocacy and activism and help develop a theory of tertiary victimization (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). Additionally, feminist standpoint theory’s goal of constructing “stories and analyses” that can reframe or interrupt the negative labeling of victims, such as victim blaming, are similar to the goals of tertiary deviance which is to interrupt stigma (Allen 2011:39).

Feminist standpoint theory also highlights how secondary victimization involves the negative labelling of victims of sexual violence, especially females who make up the majority of victims (Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Weiss 2011). It generates emancipatory research by attaching individual “lives to social structures” which is what Mills (1959) believed to be the power of ‘the
sociological imagination’ (Allen 2011:39). For example, it highlights how rape myths are reflections of the pervasiveness of gender inequality and explores how one’s gender, as well as race and class, affect one’s experiences of primary and secondary victimization and one’s ability to resist stigmatization (Harding 1987; Riessman 2000a; Suarez and Gadalla 2010). More importantly, feminist standpoint theory begins with the lives of victims and their experiences and listens to what they tell us about their lived experiences as well as their insights into power (Harding 1991). At its core, it is about allowing for the voices of the oppressed to be heard by believing them, legitimizing their perspective, and exploring how they move to positions of power and what that power looks like (Hartsock 1983; Harding 1987; Breckenridge 1999; Romito 2008).

Because stigma is a feature in both the labeling process and a feminist understanding of sexual violence and its aftermath, the concept is also discussed. In this way, the concept of stigma integrates the two theories. For example, tertiary deviance from labeling theory and the concepts of resistance and agency from feminist standpoint theory are particularly useful in understanding how individuals reject, resist, and overcome labels and the stigma attached to them (Osborne 1974, Kitsuse 1980; Riessman 2000a). Stigma resilience or transcendence and destigmatization are discussed as ways to explain tertiary deviance or, as this study argues, tertiary victimization of which advocacy and activism are examples (Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980; Lamont 2016). Each theory and its relevance to this study are expanded upon below.

2.2 Labeling Theory

Labeling theory focuses on the negative labels that are applied to those who deviate from social norms and those who are “defined and treated as deviant by others” (Lemert 1951; Kitsuse 1980:2). Victims, especially victims of sexual violence, can be included in this group because
they are often labeled, presented as, or perceived to be deviant (Kenney 2002; Karmen 2007). While labeling theory has generally been applied to offenders, recent work extends the theory to understand the label of victim and how victims are evaluated before, during, and after being victimized (Kenney 2002; Policastro and Payne 2013). For example, as will be explained further, the rejection and stigmatization of deviants that follows labeling, as well as the internalization of stigma and how they have been defined by others, also happens to victims.

Labeling theory can be applied to victims who become advocates and activists by examining whether there are parallels in the deviant labeling process and the victim labeling process (Kenney 2002). Primary and secondary deviance are the strongest parts of labeling theory that can explain the process of becoming a victim and its parallels are primary and secondary victimization (Taylor et al. 1983; Karmen 2007; Weiss 2011). Tertiary deviance can explain victims’ move to advocacy and activism (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). This process is not linear and as with deviants, a victim who experiences primary and secondary victimization may not necessarily also experience tertiary victimization. The main features of tertiary deviance and victimization, as well as the reasons one may not be considered a tertiary victim after experiencing primary and secondary victimization, are explored in this study.

Labeling theory can also be applied to victims who become advocates and activists through a closer examination of the undertheorized phase of tertiary deviance in the larger labeling process (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002). One can examine whether victims’ involvement in advocacy and activism is a response to having been victimized, or having been labeled and stigmatized, as well as how this response offends or violates what others see as the expected or appropriate response to victimization (Thoits 1990; Kenney 2002). Like Becker’s (1963) work on deviant behaviours covering several non-criminal but alternative lifestyles such as dance
musicians, victims’ involvement in anti-sexual advocacy and activism is not criminal but may nevertheless go against the norms that have been dictated for them by society (Kitsuse 1980). For example, victims who speak out against their perpetrators may be considered deviant compared to the popular image of the silent victim. This study sought out the parallels in the deviant and victim labeling process with a special focus on the tertiary phase of that process.

*Primary & Secondary Deviance*

Drawing from the writings of Mead (1934) on identity theory and Tannenbaum (1938:19) on “the dramatization of evil,” Lemert (1951; 2000) distinguished between the concepts of primary and secondary deviance that are part of the labeling process. Primary deviance is the initial offending act which, while departing from social norms, does not lead to a stigmatizing or negative label (Lemert 1951). Secondary deviance is the role one takes in response to the social reaction to his\(^9\) behaviour or continued deviance (Lemert 1951). Therefore, the deviance labeling process is as follows: an initial or primary act of deviance is committed and repeated, and eventually the label of evil or deviant is applied by society to the one who committed the offending acts (Tannenbaum 1938; Lemert 1951). The deviant aligns himself, and subsequently behaves in a manner that is consistent with, the way society has defined him and is then set apart from society (Lemert 1951). This rejection and social stigmatization leads the deviant to develop a new master status and most often, he joins a deviant subculture or group (Lemert 1951; Becker 1963). The deviant then commits more frequent and intense acts of deviance (Lemert 1951).

The labeling process underscores how labeling theorists understood deviance as a label applied to a criminal act rather than the definition of the act itself (Becker 1963). Moreover, it is

\(^9\) While male and female victims experience the same type of secondary victimization including insensitive treatment, disbelief, and blaming, women make up the majority of sexual violence victims (Karmen 2007; Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Weiss 2011). Therefore, the remainder of this chapter will apply female pronouns to victims and male pronouns to perpetrators and deviants.
the combination of the labeling of the act and actor as deviant and the internalization of that label that increases the likelihood that those behaviours will continue or increase (Matsueda 1992). In this way, the label becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy because secondary deviance leads to an alignment of oneself with others similarly labeled and to joining a subculture that is outside of societal norms (Merton 1948; Lemert 1951). Therefore, secondary deviance is about constructing and understanding one’s identity based on the evaluation of others. This explains why labeling theory is related to symbolic interactionism which places primacy on the definitions and meanings ascribed to actions rather than the actions themselves, including how meanings shape individuals’ sense of self and their relationship to others (Blumer 1969; Weiss 2011). Similarly, the labels applied to victims involve an interpretive process, one based on the meaning of the crime and the parties involved (Weiss 2011). For example, not everyone who experiences sexual violence will feel shame, though they may feel humiliation if they are treated with disdain due to their victimization (Alcoff 2014). The fact that the meanings and interpretations society ascribes to objects may change might explain why there may be variation to how and whether victims are blamed (Blumer 1969; Lamb 1999b; Randall 2010). It may also explain the debate around which acts are considered to be sexual violence and whether it includes “sexual coercion, harassment, and sexual abuse” and other cloudy or grey experiences (Alcoff 2014:448). This is because what many consider to be benign acts are often not included in dominant constructions of sexual violence (Alcoff 2014).

2.3 Labeling and Sexual Violence

While labeling theory explains the labeling process that occurs primarily for deviants or offenders without outlining the specific labels that are applied other than evil, deviant, or criminal, the labels applied to victims of sexual violence are not always negative (Tannenbaum
Some people apply clearly negative labels to victims, while others label victims more positively, in a neutral way, or in non-negative terms. This explains why Kenney (2002) understands the labels applied to victims as having the potential to be adaptive or maladaptive. The non-negative labels include blameless, innocent, powerless, ideal, and deserving of support (Lamb 1999b; Furnham 2003; Karmen 2007). The negative labels include deserving of misfortune, having no value, blameworthy, damaged goods, chronic, illegitimate, responsible, or self-inflicting (Heider 1958; Lamb 1999b; Kenney 2002; Furnham 2003; Karmen 2007; van der Bruggen and Grubb 2014).

When sexual violence, or abuse in a sexual relationship, are involved the negative labeling of victims and a vague or neutral labeling of the sexual violence act is more keenly present, such as labeling the victim ‘blameworthy’ or avoiding the term rape when it applies (Smette, Stefansen, and Mossige 2009; Walklate 2014). Furthermore, the concepts of responsibility and agency are front and center in discussions of sexual violence. For example, the need to determine culpability affects all aspects of a sexual assault case because people inquire as to how the victim contributed to their own assault (Karmen 2007; Smette et al. 2009). However, speaking about the victim’s responsibility renders that of the perpetrator invisible and the victim is perceived to be a part of the problem (Johnson et al. 2002; Smette et al. 2009; Randall 2010; Policastro and Payne 2013). Primary and secondary victimization can explain how the labeling of victims as responsible, among other negative labels, and the labeling of sexual victimization as inconsequential take place, as well as how these labels impact victims.

**Primary & Secondary Victimization**

Primary victimization is the event in which a victim is victimized and secondary victimization is the negative reaction of others to the victim, as well as the rejection and
stigmatization that can follow (Taylor et al. 1983; Grubb and Turner 2012). Some refer to secondary victimization as a “second wounding” or secondary trauma or injury (Ahrens 2006; Loney –Howes 2018:33). Secondary victimization occurs when victims’ disclosures are not received well by others, including friends, family members, clergy, and health care providers, such as when the victim is blamed (Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012). The negative treatment victims may receive from members of the criminal justice system is another example of secondary victimization that can increase already existing feelings of shame (Kenney 2002; Grubb and Turner 2012). Generally, the more negatively victims are characterized or labeled, the more they experience secondary victimization (Kenney 2002). Many of the elements of secondary deviance in the labeling process can be found in secondary victimization, two of which are myths and stigma (Kenney 2002). These elements are linked in that myths perpetuate stigma and stereotypes thereby impacting the societal response to the stigmatized (Lemert 1951).

2.4 Parallels in Secondary Deviance and Victimization: Myths and Stigma

Myths

At times, secondary deviance involves the building up and passing along of myths intended to justify rejecting a deviant (Lemert 1951). Similarly, secondary victimization following sexual violence involves the upholding of rape myths in which false, prejudicial, or stereotypical ideas about sexual violence, victims, and perpetrators create a hostile environment for victims (Burt 1980; Bohner et al. 1998; Suarez and Gadalla 2010). These myths “define how a real victim behaves”, thereby setting up the terms for who is and is not a legitimate or ideal victim (Smette et al. 2009:368; Randall 2010). Examples of rape myths include believing that a victim’s silence is a sign of consent, that intoxicated perpetrators are not at fault and that intoxicated victims are, and holding the victim responsible for the victimization (Karmen 2007;
Randall 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012). These myths shift responsibility to victims of sexual violence, exonerate perpetrators, and encourage a culture of victim blaming (Boehner 1998; Grubb and Turner 2012).

Like deviants who internalize what is said about them, victims may internalize these myths. They utilize particular strategies to do so including “denying criminal intent, denying serious injury, denying victim innocence, and rejecting a victim identity” (Weiss 2011:445). In denying the consequences of victimization, these strategies lead victims to internalize how they and the sexual violence they have experienced have been labeled (Randall 2010). Though they lead to self-blame or shame, the messages from these strategies can assist victims in dealing with the cognitive dissonance they feel if they decide to stay with a perpetrator they are in a relationship with or choose not to report them (Karmen 2007; Weiss 2011). This explains how the labels noted above that are applied to victims of sexual violence can have specific consequences on both the emotional states and behaviours of victims (Taylor et al. 1983; Kenney 2002).

*Stigma*

Myths are just one component of secondary deviance that lead to the internalization of negative messages which affect one’s identity. Stigma, however, is a more fundamental feature of secondary deviance because secondary deviance involves “processes which create, maintain, or intensify stigma” (Lemert 1976:41). Stigmatization has negative consequences on the lives of the stigmatized and Link and Phelan (2001:379) identify three mechanisms that produce discriminatory results: “individual discrimination, structural discrimination, and discrimination that operates through the stigmatized person’s beliefs and behaviors.” Like secondary deviance, secondary victimization affects victims’ sense of self because their identities can become
enmeshed with the labels applied to them as a result of internalizing those labels (Lamb 1999b; Kenney 2002). Sexual violence, including acts that are viewed as ‘less severe’ by some such as sexual harassment, become “known and knowable” through disclosures (Fileborn 2018:4). However, rather than being individuals who have experienced victimization, survivors who disclose may become known as victims (Link and Phelan 2001). In both secondary deviance and victimization, the heightening of stigma can lead to self-alienation, self-blame, or self-stigmatization which can alter and cement one’s status in a way that is difficult to change (Lemert 1967; Kitsuse 1980; Taylor et al. 1983; Weiss 2011). For example, victims may be affected by “stigma consciousness” (Pinel 1999:114) and fear that people will interpret everything they do as stemming from the fact that they are a victim, which is also known as ‘secondary labeling’ (Taylor et al. 1983:24; Link and Phelan 2001). Never knowing whether they will be received, identified, or defined by others in terms of their stigmatized ‘victim’ status is similar to those labeled ‘deviant’ from whom society desires and expects consistent behaviour with the way he has been defined (Tannenbaum 1938; Goffman 1963:14).

Like the strategies used by victims to understand the myths said about them and their victimization, Goffman (1963:101) outlines several interpersonal strategies or techniques that stigmatized individuals use to manage stigma and their relationships, one of which is disclosures. Disclosures are central to understanding stigma’s impact because they are the key strategy stigmatized individuals use to control the information that is known about them (Goffman 1963:42). For example, stigmatized individuals may choose not to tell anyone about their stigmatized condition or to control who knows what about them, as well as how much they know (Goffman 1963:64). Similarly, survivors of sexual violence may decide to only disclose to some
or to not disclose every experience of sexual violence that they have had (Fileborn 2018).¹⁰ Because disclosing one’s stigma affects one’s relationships and interactions, the stigmatized divide their social world into those they have disclosed their stigmatized status or condition to and those they have not (Goffman 1963:95). Furthermore, their relationships with those to whom they have disclosed become divided into a before and after regarding knowledge about the stigmatized condition or identity, like victimization (Goffman 1963:83).

Stigmatizing, too, involves dividing or separating individuals from the masses and othering them, which begins with labeling (Link and Phelan 2001). Post-disclosure, the stigmatized may be treated differently or act defensively and then, negative treatment is justified (Goffman 1963:6). Therefore, stigma can be understood more broadly as co-occurring with, and including the components of, “labelling, stereotyping, separation, status loss, and discrimination” and are shaped by the power of the stigmatizer and the stigmatized (Link and Phelan 2001:363). When stigmatized individuals are treated in these ways it is called “enacted stigma” and these components of stigma demonstrate that social structures, rather than an individual’s “personal tragedy” or shame, allow for the stigmatized to be disadvantaged and oppressed (Scambler 2006; Scambler 2016). Furthermore, much like the internalization that occurs for deviants discussed above, if the stigmatized feel unaccepted it can lead to shame and self-hate (Goffman 1963:7). This explains why the fear of being seen as an outsider or a failure leads many people to keep their stigma a secret (Goffman 1963:4). The shame they feel about their stigma and the fear they have about how others will treat them is called “felt stigma” (Scambler 2006; 2016). However, it is important to note that whereas deviants are more likely to self-segregate, victims are not

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¹⁰ The disclosure practices of victims and survivors of sexual violence are discussed at length in Chapter 3.
generally the ones who choose the isolation that follows victim labeling, blaming, and shaming (Becker 1963; Link and Phelan 2001).

2.5 Tertiary Deviance and Tertiary Victimization

Labeling theory elucidates the prominent place of stigma in secondary deviance which is also strongly present in, and part of the process of, secondary victimization. As noted above, Lemert (1951) explains that whether or not secondary deviance follows primary deviance and whether or not their behaviour is labeled ‘deviant’ depends on how others perceive the deviant, which is the basis on which the deviant builds his identity or self-concept. In his work on stigma, Goffman (1963) similarly suggests that stigmatized individuals are not only cognizant of their place in the eyes of others, but also tasked with managing their identities and relationships and strategizing ways to gain acceptance. In doing so however, Goffman overlooked deviants who seem unconcerned with social acceptance or rejection based on their deviant or stigmatized status (Osborne 1974). Moreover, by focusing on how to manage stigma and allay its consequences, Goffman neglected to consider those who “insist on drawing attention to their stigma and attempt to transform their base lives” (Osborne 1974:6). Therefore, Osborne’s (1974:80) interest lies in the stigmatized person who “totally accepts his societal rejection.” This type of person accepts, intensifies, and transcends his stigma and sees stigma as a solution (Osborne 1974). In fact, in extending the labeling process to include a tertiary phase, Kitsuse (1980) draws on Osborne’s discussion about the process of stigma transcendence which goes beyond the simple evasion of stigma. This explains why tertiary deviance and stigma transcendence share similarities which are explained below.

According to Kitsuse (1980), labeling theorists saw deviants as over-socialized and overly invested in what others thought of them with little consideration to other ways in which
they may respond to how they are labeled. In secondary deviance, the deviant is a casualty who succumbs to the process of stigmatization and not one who can overcome it (Kitsuse 1980). However, both the stigmatized’s and deviant’s engagement in social, political, and legal activities demonstrates the limitations in labeling theory which did not consider how deviants can and do fight back against how society has defined and treated them (Kitsuse 1980:11). Their involvement in addressing social problems, as advocates and activists have been doing for years, is evidence that the passive deviant offered up by labeling theorists including Lemert, Matza, Goffman, and Becker is inadequate (Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980; Scambler 2004). These limitations led Kitsuse (1980) to add a third phase, tertiary deviance, to the labeling process.

Tertiary deviance is “the deviant’s confrontation, assessment, and rejection of the negative identity embedded in secondary deviation, and the transformation of that identity into a positive and viable self-conception” (Kitsuse 1980:10). The very notion of tertiary deviance is the difference between ‘deviant as actor’ as opposed to the originally conceived of ‘deviant as reactor’ (Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980). No longer satisfied with being tolerated or having to make taxing accommodations, tertiary deviants demand recognition and rights and reject “the mark and status of the oppressed” (Kitsuse 1980:11). They challenge the shame, guilt, and stigmatization that they have internalized and that have silenced them, which necessitated the management of their marginalized lives (Kitsuse 1980).

For victims, tertiary devian’s conceptual counterpart is tertiary victimization (Kenney 2002). Tertiary victimization is when victims convert the victim role into “something positive, meaningful, and socially efficacious” such as becoming an advocate or activist (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002:254). This is in contrast to adopting helplessness that is in line with the victim identity which can become solidified in secondary victimization (Lamb 1999; Kenney 2002).
Like tertiary deviants, tertiary victims refuse to be labeled outsiders and believe that the “costs of accommodation” are unfair, unacceptable, and unwarranted (Kitsuse 1980:8). Therefore, understanding the cost of stigmatization on the stigmatized must come with a discussion of who is allowed to speak and whose voices are included and recognized (Lamont 2016). Whether one has or is afforded the power to speak and be heard is also a crucial conversation regarding the voices and stories of sexual violence survivors (Ahrens 2006; Loney-Howes 2018; Serisier 2018). This allows for the examination for the rarely examined sociological process of destigmatization (Clair, Daniel, and Lamont 2016; Lamont 2016).

In addition to ignoring the resilience of deviants, labeling theory also fails to address the structural problems from which negative labeling stem. It also does not recognize stigma’s dependence on “social, economic, and political power,” in the ability to stigmatize, to be stigmatized, to resist stigmatizations, and the effects of that resistance on overcoming stigma (Link and Phelan 2001:378). Similarly, while the “social causes of stigma” and the way it is produced have been studied, little attention has been given to the processes that enable destigmatization which is “the reduction of societal-level stigma over time.” (Clair et al. 2016:223). For example, “changing cultural constructions of groups” and removing blame may lead to their destigmatization (Clair et al. 223). Understanding this process can help foster social resilience in those who are stigmatized. Though the framework for destigmatization outlined by Clair et al. (2016) examines the work of various social actors including activists, it does not focus on the engagement of those who have been stigmatized in destigmatization unless they are of a “high-profile” or “high-status,” or visibly prominent people (Clair et al. 2016:226). Brown’s (2006) “shame resilience theory,” however, outlines specific strategies and processes for women who have overcome shame. These include recognizing and accepting one’s vulnerability,
understanding how one’s feelings of shame are linked to cultural and social structures, forming “mutually empathic relationships,” and learning the language to speak about and deconstruct shame (Brown 2006:8).

Moreover, feminist scholarship has explained the links between the specific labels applied to victims of sexual violence, the ways in which these labels are stigmatizing, how victims internalize those labels, and the social structures that perpetuate such labeling. These include a patriarchal culture, male aggression, and anti-feminist biases (Lamb 1999; Grubb and Turner 2012; Walklate 2014). While labeling theory limits the reaction of the labeled to internalization, stigmatization, and the joining of a subculture, feminist standpoint theory more specifically explains why hearing from those most affected by sexual victimization and the labels applied to them in the aftermath are central to understanding their responses to it. It also demonstrates how listening to victims who have been labeled can reveal how they have resisted, rejected, or overcome labels and their accompanying stigma through their involvement in advocacy and activism. This is similar to Kitsuse’s (1980) concept of tertiary deviance which suggests that deviants’ standpoint may differ from how society views them. The links between sexual victimization, labeling, and feminist standpoint theory are outlined below.

2.6 Feminist Standpoint Theory

The work of feminist theorists strengthens the idea that victims, or victimhood, are created or maintained through a similar process that occurs for deviants in the primary and secondary phases of labeling discussed above. Feminist research is especially useful in explaining how secondary victimization solidifies the victim identity through particular labels, especially for female victims. More specifically, feminist standpoint theory goes beyond exploring how gender affects experiences of primary and secondary victimization because it
examines how race, class, sexuality and other axes of identity are informed by and intertwined with gender. Feminist standpoint theory also provides a window into how these aspects of one’s identity affect one’s ability to resist stigmatization (Harding 1987; Riessman 2000a). It also provides a more representative language to capture the complexity of the process involved in overcoming stigma, such as victimization, by incorporating the concepts of rejection and resistance which, as noted above, are central to tertiary victimization and stigma transcendence (Riessman 2000a). In contrast to Goffman’s “language of interpersonal management strategies,” this language highlights the transformation that can occur in “everyday resistance practices” as well as the contradictions in some of these practices (Riessman 2000a:122,131).

Furthermore, feminist theory has linked gendering, especially feminization, to the silencing and stigmatization of victims of sexual violence (Glenn 2004). For example, male victims who come forward may be labeled feminine or homosexual when the majority of these victims are not gay (Karmen 2007). Additionally, feminist theory links the rape myths discussed above to gender inequality, showing how the former are perpetuated by the latter (Suarez and Gadalla 2010). Therefore, feminist standpoint theory explains that it is crucial to involve women in shaping scientific discourse about themselves and the acts of violence committed against them, such as sexual violence (Anderson et al. 1987; Gilligan 1987; Harding 1991; Smette et al. 2009). Women must also be involved in efforts to understand their resistance to marginalization, including their advocacy and activism around sexual violence (Anderson et al. 1987; Gilligan 1987; Harding 1991). Similarly, in exploring the struggle against oppression and exploitation that victims engage in, feminist standpoint theory demonstrates that people are shaped by both what they accept and reject (Harding 1991). It is, therefore, a crucial theory to study sexual

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11 These are discussed further in the chapter.
victimization and advocacy and activism involvement because it examines the social order from the worldview of the oppressed thereby revealing things that are, or have been made, invisible (Harding 1991).

2.7 Revealing the Silences and the Silenced

Silencing Sexual Violence and Silencing Female Victims

In addition to putting women’s experiences and voices at the center of discussions about those experiences, feminist standpoint theory is particularly useful in uncovering that which is taken for granted or silenced regarding sexual violence, the labels applied to victims, and the stigma that accompanies those labels. It is, therefore, important to acknowledge and understand that language and labels are used in ways that systematically reflect, reinforce, and also hide relations of power and social domination (Randall 2010). For example, the way in which sexual violence itself is labeled and defined is problematic because it focuses on female victims and not on male perpetrators, making men’s agency invisible and obscuring the agency and resistance of women (Smette et al. 2009; Randall 2010).

Romito (2008) discusses how feminist scholarship has also been effective in acknowledging and addressing many of the silencing methods used to distract from discussions of sexual violence. For example, it has counteracted the method of separating “various forms of violence” which presents them as distinct and hides how they are linked (Romito 2008:84). It demonstrates the “continuity between various forms of oppression and violence,” for example, by linking individual acts of sexual violence to the institutions that have allowed them to persist (Romito 2008:87). It has also shown how discourse, or speech, is used to silence discussions about sexual violence or pretend that these conversations are happening by using inaccurate definitions, imprecise vocabulary, euphemisms or metaphors, and a narrow understanding of the
source of sexual violence (Jordan 2000; Shupe et al. 2000; Cozzens 2002; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003; Romito 2008; Khau 2011; Fyke and Luca 2013; Hartill 2013; Chubin 2014). This can impact victims who often do not know how to refer to sexual violence committed by an acquaintance or spouse or to sexual violence committed by and against men (Khau 2011; Fyke and Lucas 2013).

For example, the relationship between a female victim and the clergy who abused her may be described as ‘consensual’ (Flynn 2008). Additionally, a common response to child sexual abuse in institutions is to invoke evil (Hartill 2013). However, doing so connotes the simple need to get rid of the few self-interested individuals and conceals the “long history of the culturally sanctioned exploitation and abuse of children” within the organizations (Hartill 2013:250). Furthermore, in the case of the sex abuse scandal at Pennsylvania State University, the terms substituted for male sexual assault were ‘horsing around’ and ‘horseplay.’ This erased criminality and sexual violence from the act making the pursuit of further action, such as whistle-blowing or internal dissent, unnecessary (Fyke and Lucas 2013). Focusing narrowly on victim blaming and female victims or offender blaming and male aggression ignores important ideas around relationships and gender roles, gender inequalities, as well as how sexual violence is culturally supported (Karmen 2007).

Feminists, therefore, argue that a sociological examination of problematic social structures including patriarchy, female exploitation, male aggression, and gender socialization would make room for the consideration of a wider range of victims, offenders, and relationships between them (Karmen 2007). In doing so, it challenges androcentrism by highlighting its limits and showing how women’s experiences and their interpretations of those experiences have been ignored or marginalized (Harding 1991; Fraser and MacDougall 2016). For example, women’s
interests allow for the reading of a situation to be considered sexual violence whereas from a man’s perspective it may simply be “normal and desirable social relations between the sexes” (Harding 1991:126).

The silencing methods noted above occur through the labeling of, or the manipulation of language to label, female, male, LGBTQ+, child, and other victims. Negatively labeling these victims is another way in which sexual violence is disregarded and misunderstood, which allows for the maintenance of the status quo regarding gender relations (Walklate 2014). For example, labeling female victims, especially young girls, as responsible for their victimization speaks of “the double standard for judging female and male sexual behaviour” (Smette et al., 2009:367). Additionally, female victims have been labeled ‘silent,’ ‘consenting,’ ‘extremely desirable’, or an ‘acquaintance,’ which are terms that cast doubt on their claims against their perpetrators (Karmen 2007; Grubb and Turner 2012; Walklate 2014). Moreover, particular types of women are judged, blamed, or deemed unworthy of justice including victims of marital rape, sex workers, intoxicated women, and women labeled seductive (Scully and Marolla 1994; Randall 2010; Schwartz and Gibbs 2010; van der Bruggen and Grubb 2014). Many of these labels ignore the uncomfortable truth that sexual violence is a real threat and an act of aggression, hatred, anger, and control (Karmen 2007). Even the labels applied to victims in the aftermath of sexual violence linking body disorders to victimization overlook how institutional practices including “male violence, privilege, and objectification of women” have contributed to the relationship between women and their bodies (Lamb 1999:113). However, special attention must be given to the most common labels of victim and survivor which also decentered gender as the fundamental issue in sexual violence (Lamb 1999b).
2.8 Victim and Survivor Labels

In writing about the labels victim and survivor, Lamb (1999a; 1999b) wonders what kind of language is needed to be able to acknowledge various forms and degrees of victimization that also makes space for women’s strength and agency, as well as the nuance in victimization narratives and their responses to victimization. She explores the meaning behind the language, recognition, and treatment of abuse and its associated practices (Lamb 1999a). For example, she believes that grasping onto the labels of victims and survivors hid the “male hostility, objectification, and exploitation of women” that women had been resisting (Lamb 1999b:120). This led to a narrowed focus of particular types of abuse instead of to discussions about the reshaping “of gender relations in society” (Lamb 1999b:110).

While adopting the survivor label helped some individuals avoid the negative associations of humiliation and vulnerability that come with the term victim, others felt alienated by this term that did not match their experiences (Lamb 1999b). For example, some whose lives were not at stake during victimization felt inauthentic using the term survivor (Lamb 1999b). However, resistance towards the term victim persists due to its perception as shameful, its evocation of powerlessness, weakness, passivity related to being a woman, and because it is a stigmatized identity (Lamb 1999b; Hallsworth and Young 2008; Walklate 2014). Additionally, the term victim presents a dysfunctional image and tells only one part of the story, leaving out the combination of strength and vulnerability that may exist for many people who have experienced victimization (Lamb 1999b). However, just like the ability to stigmatize or destigmatize depends on power (Link and Phelan 2001; Clair et al. 2016), so does the ability to name someone or oneself a victim as does the ability to call something rape (Lamb 1999a). As Loney-Howes (2018) explains, power is central to maintaining rape as unspeakable and if
victims want to speak about it, they must present their testimony in a way that will be recognized
and heard. This is because there are rules that govern the scripts about rape that will be
acceptable and accepted (Loney-Howes 2018). The power not only stems from men or the
patriarchy alone, but also from women who are “imprisoned in cultural constructions of their
victimization imposed from within as well as from without” (Lamb 1999a:4). Since voice and
silence are tied to privilege and oppressions, “to speak and be heard is to have power over one’s
life. To be silenced is to have that power denied” (Ahrens 2006:263).

Lamb (1999b) also believes that the labels used to discuss victimization and those who
experience it ignore victims’ voice and resiliency which is similar to the way in which deviants’
resistance to stigmatization and negative labeling was overlooked. For example, she thinks that
claims by “psychologists, researchers, therapists, feminists, victims' rights organizations, the
media, activists, and survivor groups” about victims being “tragically wounded for life” have
been exaggerated (Lamb 1999b:232; 1999a:1). These exaggerations include the idea that anyone
who has experienced victimization views themselves as a victim or survivor (Lamb 1999a),
Therefore, like deviants who are in some ways created by the societal labeling of their actions,
Lamb (1999b) sees the cultural understandings of the word victim as contributing to the making,
or maintenance, of victims through specific social practices and gender relations. Because “the
term victim is a product of social relations, culture, and language,” she encourages an
understanding about the shifting nature of victim categories, labels, and definitions that depends
on context and on who is using the label and why (Lamb 1999a:3).
2.9 Professional Silences: Academic, Media, and the Criminal Justice System

**Academic and Media Silences**

Research can also lead to the silencing of victims and their perspectives and contribute to victim labeling, which can reproduce the victim blaming rhetoric that is steeped in cultural ideas about gender (Smette et al. 2009). For example, not all studies on sexual violence have inquired into victims’ perspective and some that have, were damaging (Harding 1991). This is similar to social scientists’ discussions of their findings on stigmatized populations that may further stigmatize their subjects as researchers articulate the constraints that stigma has posed on their participants’ lives (Link and Phelan 2001). Furthermore, studies can lead to discriminatory social practices against female victims’ whose behaviours post-victimization may be medicalized, pathologized, and psychiatrized (Harding 1991; Lamb 1999b; Kenney 2002). Explaining the mental health impact that sexual violence can have on survivors is important to understanding their silence about their experiences as well as their various reactions to it (Loney-Howes 2018). However, transforming sexual violence into a mental health issue ignores victims’ resiliency and deemphasizes the pervasiveness of sexual violence in women’s lives (Lamb 1999; Randall 2010). This can happen when discussions about victimization’s effects focus on psychological distress instead of on power and domination, decreasing the centrality of gender in sexual violence, emphasizing victims’ powerlessness and agency, and reinforcing the idea that women are more prone to mental illness (Lamb 1999).

While extending the list of potential negative symptoms experienced in the aftermath of victimization and using highly emotive language is part of the truth-telling about abuse, not all victims will experience those symptoms and those that do will not experience them in the same way (Lamb 1999). In perceiving victims as “continually reacting to their abuse,” mental health
professionals specifically held victims accountable for their reactions to victimization which they saw as victims’ primary life circumstance to which nothing can compare (Lamb 1999:116). As noted above, the same occurs for deviants who are labeled in particular ways and are expected to behave in alignment with those labels (Tannenbaum 1938; Goffman 1963:6). For example, mental health professionals working with victims often discuss the aftermath of sexual violence in a similar way to how those working with stigmatized individuals tell the stigmatized how and what their new identity will be (Goffman 1963:124; Lamb 1999b). Associating victims with the negative symptoms that may arise in the aftermath of victimization is an example of the secondary victimization that victims experience when they disclose. The fear of such association may also silence them or prevent them from disclosing.

Additionally, female victims’ emotions and voice have been missing from some studies conducted on how they are labeled or the media coverage about them which sanitizes their narratives by writing anger “out of the story” (Harding 1991; Lamb 1999b:127). For example, stories on women who kill violent partners focus on self defence but neglect to report on how anger that built up over years of mistreatment led them to act out in this way (Lamb 1999). There has been research on, and media coverage of, sexual violence that frames victims using dichotomous labels, such as strong or vulnerable, instead of providing victims with opportunities for reflection and the ability to choose labels for themselves (Anderson et al. 1987; Gilligan 1987). Questions that force women to choose between preconceived labels do not recognize that just like there are a range of acts of sexual violence and consequences to these acts, so might there be a range of labels that women apply to themselves (Lamb 1999; Walklate 2014). Media and television coverage may also ignore victims’ agency and resilience or insist on reporting on particular types of victims while ignoring others, or represent sexual violence in “extreme,
inaccurate, and exaggerated” ways (Lamb 1999b). For example, survivors may find that journalists reduce them to being “a news source rather than” allowing them to be “the authoritative teller” of their stories (Serisier 2018:56). Similarly, in television interviews, survivors may be “denied the status of experts on their own experience” (Serisier 2018:56).

Criminal Justice System Silences

The way in which the criminal justice system applies labels to sexual violence and its victims is also particularly damaging. For example, sexual violence has been socially constructed and labeled in stigmatizing ways which is a contributing factor to it being one of the most underreported crimes (Sable et al. 2006; Randall 2010; Johnson 2012; Grubb and Turner 2012; Conroy and Cotter 2017). As discussed above, secondary victimization through labeling makes sexual violence difficult to address since it can lead to victims’ silence and the employment of various denial strategies, where victims maintain that what happened is not serious enough to report or that it will not be taken seriously if they do (Randall 2011; Rotenberg 2017). However, feminist standpoint theory has highlighted the ways in which secondary victimization occurs in the criminal justice system when victims do report (Karmen 2007; Randall 2010).

Because police have much discretion in how they deal with sexual assault complaints, the labels they apply to victims may impact whether or not justice is served. For example, when police apply the labels ‘promiscuous’ or ‘substance user’ to victims, they may ignore complaints of sexual violence because they view victims bearing these labels as “less deserving of the law’s protection” (Randall 2010:243). Additionally, rape kits may not be offered by police who label victims as not credible or they may sit untested for long periods of time (Randall 2010).

Police may use both acts of omission and commission to blame and label victims when deciding whether or not their complaints are founded or unfounded including labeling them
‘coerced’ or ‘consenting’ and ‘stoic post-assault’ or ‘hysterical’ (Karmen 2007; Randall 2010). Victims may also be blamed for failing to report sexual violence soon after it occurs or be considered untrustworthy based on their demeanour (Breckenridge 1999; Randall 2010). Furthermore, prosecutors and police work together to discuss victims’ allegations and decide whether or not to move a case forward based on how they have labeled the victim (Frohmann 1991; Randall 2010). This demonstrates that the myth of the ideal victim persists in the criminal justice system and is bolstered by the belief that there is a particular response that victims should have (Randall 2010). Like others noted above, the criminal justice system fails to understand the variability in the consequences of and responses to victimization (Randall 2010).

This explains why Garfinkel’s (1956:420) understanding of court actors as “professional degraders” involved in a “status degradation ceremony” of offenders can be applied to victims, because it is inside courtrooms that individuals, like victims, can be publicly denounced and reconstituted. Even though Canadian and United States laws have made some reforms regarding consent in sexual assault, “the onus of proof and credibility of consent in practice remains with the victim and plays out in often harmful and discriminatory ways” (Randall 2010:423; National District Attorney’s Association 2007). Female victims in particular have borne the brunt of these damaging burdens and the criminal justice system’s management of sexual violence such as de-contextualising and de-gendering the “judicial and legal response to sexual assault” reinforces the ways in which gender inequality has been entrenched (Randall 2010:414).

Therefore, in her examination of what has been taken for granted in both the extent and nature of sexual violence against women, Walklate (2014) considers the legal framework used to define sexual violence as well as feminist thought. The latter takes an individual’s definition of the sexual violence committed against them and explains why the introduction of the “continuum
of sexual violence” was pivotal in revealing how victims’ interpretations of their experiences differ from the legal definitions of the same acts (Walklate 2014:74). This highlights the need for feminist standpoint theory in understanding sexual violence because how victims see themselves, their experiences of victimization, and the labels that have been applied to them and their experiences may vastly differ from the views of the criminal justice system, media, professionals, and the public. Feminist standpoint theory provides a way for victims to reclaim their narratives from those who have hijacked the discourse on sexual violence to speak about it in ways that better resemble and reflect the reality of their experiences (Breckenridge 1999). It allows them to be seen as active rather than reactionary (Lamb 1999b). Therefore, central to feminist standpoint theory is the concept of agency which broadens previous perceptions of victims as being helpless, naïve, and dependent (Karmen 2007).

2.10 Agency and Representation

Both the media and the criminal justice system may sensationalize victims’ stories and generate and reinforce particular images of victims (Frohmann 1991; Karmen 2007; Smith Maguire and Matthews 2014). For example, some female victims are often presented as “innocent, young, thin, attractive, and from the middle class,” who are ashamed and tearful when recounting their attack (Lamb 1999:117; Randall 2010). These representations reinforce the message that women need special protection and may generate public sympathy (Lamb 1999; Randall 2010). Lawyers use these ideas to help prepare child and adult victims for testimony to ensure their appearance will not contradict these popular images and impressions of their suffering, which could impact court settlements (Lamb 1999). Victims, too, have seized or capitalized on particular labels and images during the criminal trials against their perpetrators by playing “the role of victim” in an effort to determine the outcome, such as ensuring the
conviction of the perpetrator (Konradi 1996; Lamb 1999b:117). For example, Konradi’s (1996) interviews of victims found that women shopped for appropriate clothing prior to trial, and were careful to appear composed, deferential, and polite. They also used tears and anger to appear like ‘ideal’ or ‘real’ victims before juries (Konradi 1996; Lamb 1999b:117).

However, the focus on the secondary victimization that occurs in the legal system outlined above also rarely accounts for how victims use their agency in the courtroom. Therefore, rather than simply look at the different ways that women have been categorized, feminist standpoint theory seeks to understand what women think of these categories and the meanings they ascribe to them by inviting and involving them in knowledge creation and asking them directly about their experiences (Sydie 1987). It asks that women’s lives are considered in the terms they have chosen to use; not just because they are different but with a view towards how that difference opens up a new way of understanding the social world (Intemann 2010).

Women, youth, and LGBTQ+ individuals have a higher risk of sexual victimization (Conroy and Cotter 2017). However, though their experiences of victimization may differ, female, male, LGBTQ+, and other victims may all experience insensitive treatment, disbelief, and negative labeling following their disclosures of sexual victimization (Karmen 2007; Coston 2014). Therefore, feminist standpoint theory urges sociologists to remain curious about the possibility that various victims have much to contribute to the research around sexual victimization. The fact that many victims, such as females, have historically been considered outsiders in scientific discourse gives them an advantage to be able to tell their stories in ways that can contribute to the science around sexual violence because their standpoint is relevant to the research topic and because it has been “systematically obscured or made less visible as a result of power dynamics” (Harding 1991; Intemann 2010:791). This gives them an “insider-
outsider” perspective (Hill Collins 1991). Male victims, too, may be considered outsiders as evidenced by the fact that it took special attention to identify that they have been impacted by sexual violence and to name the acts of sexual violence they have experienced (Fyke and Lucas 2013).

In its belief that the unit of analysis should be “the person and her/his subjective experiences,” feminist standpoint theory makes space for victims to explain how they understand the messages delivered to them through secondary victimization as well as whether and how they internalized, accepted, rejected, or overcame the labels applied to them post-victimization (Millman and Kanter 1987:31). This is important because victims are the witnesses to their own suffering and should be permitted to speak for themselves should they choose to do so. But they often experience voxicide which is the muting of “the voices that aim to talk back or ask for help” (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003:602). Feminist standpoint theory creates space for women to assert their experiential validity of the world and incorporate those experiences into how reality is named and defined (Sydie 1987).

Feminist standpoint theory also explains why studies which include victims as participants, such as this one, are important. Including women and victims in academic studies adds a political and moral dimension to its scientific study because it considers the impact and power of female and other silent and silenced voices in shaping scientific discourse (Harding 1991; Intemann 2010). It also adds depth to the questions surrounding sexual violence victimization including what can be counted as knowledge and whose voice is to be heard (Walklate 2014). In this way, it not only uncovers the silences around sexual violence, but it also uncovers the individuals who have been silenced by inviting them to speak and giving them the space to create questions, answers, and categories that better define them than those that were
created without considering their lives in the first place (Gilligan 1987). But is not enough to ‘add women and stir’ to address existing gaps in the research about sexual violence (Bunch 1987). In addition to incorporating a knowledge that takes women’s direct experiences from their world into account, feminist standpoint theory also respects the diverse experiences of individuals while highlighting perspectives, strategies, and patterns that these experiences have in common (Smith 1990; Allen 2011).

2.11 Listening to Diverse Voices

Race, class, and marginalization come into play in sexual victimization and its aftermath when certain victims are considered less deserving of justice or being believed and heard (Randall 2010). Speaking out is often not enough because it does not ensure that survivors are heard (Serisier 2018). Whether or not a survivor is heard may depend on several factors including a survivor’s and perpetrator’s race and the relationship between victim and perpetrator (Serisier 2018). For example, female sex workers and Aboriginal and black women often have their legitimacy undermined when coming forward about victimization because they do not represent the ideal victim (Williams 1986; Randall 2010). The process of being recognized as a legitimate victim or survivor is often “situated within the interplay between what happened, and who it happened to” (Fileborn and Phillips 2019:3). This is because “processes of recognition” are “mired in structural inequalities, with the experiences of white, middle class, cisgender, heterosexual women more likely to be constructed as legitimate” (Fileborn and Phillips 2013:3). This is evident in the fact that the voices and concerns of women of colour who experienced sexual violence have been dismissed (Ullman 2010).

Feminist standpoint theory, therefore, goes beyond starting from women’s lives and strives to consider women in all races, classes, and cultures to understand their interpretations of
their lives and struggles as well as how their social environments influence their individual responses to these struggles (Harding 1991; Intemann 2010; Allen 2011). In this way it recognizes identities beyond or in addition to gender, how they affect one’s experiences, and how standpoints can capture the interaction between various identities and experiences (Intemann 2010; Etherington and Baker 2016). This is important because sexual violence and gender are “shaped in and through factors such as race, class, and sexuality” (Fileborn 2018:2). Furthermore, focusing primarily on gender can lead to essentialist ideas that sees men as “inherently violent perpetrators and women as helpless victims” (Ullman 2010:32). This does not explain the variation in male perpetration and female victimization, as well as the fact that “both men and women can be perpetrators or victims, and rape can occur in same-sex relationships” (Ullman 2010:32).

Studying victimization and listening to victims’ stories through an intersectional lens can shed further light on the reasons for victims’ silence, disclosures, or resistance. For example, survivors who are privileged in terms of race and class may be more able to downplay their experiences or the harms caused by them (Fileborn 2018). An intersectional approach can also highlight how “stigma exists as a matter of degree” and how different types of victims are stigmatized in ways that produce different outcomes (Link and Phelan 2001:377). In line with feminist standpoint theory’s desire to examine resistance and resistance’s centrality to tertiary victimization, diverse voices can explain how they interpret and respond to stigmatization as well as how their efforts at destigmatization, or those of others, have produced alternative stereotypes or stigma (Clair et al. 2016; Lamont 2016).

For example, female African American victims of sexual assault may not disclose because they do not characterize their experiences of sexual assault as such (Tillman et al. 2010).
They may also be silent because they believe that it is their job to protect African American men from the unfair treatment they would receive were they to be apprehended by the criminal justice system (Tillman et al. 2010). Additionally, embracing the persona of the “Strong Black Woman” may silence them because this persona teaches that this type of woman is independent, self-sufficient, and does not need assistance to overcome life’s difficulties (Tillman et al. 2010:64). Therefore, their gender, racial, and self-identities may combine to keep them silent and consideration must be given to how and whether one’s position makes it easier or more difficult to disclose, especially when it comes to race (Fileborn 2018). Furthermore, focusing on gender primarily while ignoring other important features of sexual violence such as race “can be read within a history of feminist tendencies to remove race from the history of rape” (Serisier 2018:58). This occurred because of the “racial bias of second-wave White feminists” which led to the faming of sexual violence “as a political problem based on gender, without a critical analysis of racial oppression and how it intersects with gender oppression to contribute to rape” (Ullman 2010:41). The result was that the ways in which Black women have been impacted by sexual violence have not been adequately addressed. These include “the history of institutionalized rape of Black women by White slave owners, racist sexual stereotypes of women of color, economic circumstances that make women of color more vulnerable to sexual assault in their communities, and blaming reactions” (Ullman 2010:41).

Religious victims, too, stay silent for various reasons. Many have been silenced by their leaders, or remain silent to preserve the group’s honour and reputation, or in order to keep the family together in cases of incest or child sexual abuse (Pyles 2007; Crisp 2010; van de Bunt 2010; Haboush and Alyan 2013). Religious values or texts may be part and parcel of the sexual crimes committed in religious communities, which may also affect victims’ desire and ability to
disclose as do religious ideas about fate or god, for example if they believe that God allowed for their abuse as a way to draw them close or that their victimization was God’s will (Fontes and Plummer 2010). Religious ideas together with ethnic or cultural values may also suppress disclosures (Fontes and Plummer 2010). These include shame, laws or customs around taboo and modesty, women’s honour and virginity, gendered sexual scripts, obligatory violence, and filial piety and patriarchy (Alaggia 2004; Fontes and Plummer 2010:496).

Furthermore, the emphasis on female virginity and the favoring of heterosexual relationships leads to the gendered and sexist stigmatization of female, male, and LGBTQ+ victims who may decide not to come forward in these groups (Alaggia; 2004; Fontes and Plummer 2010). Feminist standpoint theory attempts to incorporate these and other diverse voices into understanding sexual violence and victims’ perspectives. This is important because sexual violence “has continued to be viewed as an individual problem” despite the critiques that challenge scholars and others “to attend to differences based on race, class, gender, and other identities” (Ullman 2010:42). Feminist standpoint theory also interrogates the silences that are replete in the discourse around sexual violence, victims, and the responses to having been victimized.

2.12 Applying the Theoretical Framework to the Research Question

Applying the originally offender-directed labeling theory to victims of sexual violence sheds light on how victims are negatively redefined and recast by others and themselves, for example as the blameworthy and responsible party for their own victimization. However, Kitsuse’s (1980) addition of tertiary deviance to the labeling process, Osborne’s (1974) work on the ability to overcome stigma, and the work by Clair et al. (2016) and Lamont (2016) on destigmatization are evidence that there is more for those who have been negatively labeled and
stigmatized than accepting those labels and remaining in that state. Similarly, Lamb’s (1999b) emphasis on the metaphors of voice and silence and how victims’ resiliency and resistance have been overlooked makes the need for this study clear. Therefore, this study suggests that the labels applied to victims of sexual violence and the stigmatization they experience has precluded consideration of the ways that victims overcome or resist labels and their accompanying stigma. It also argues that the fact that victims have gone on to become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists is evidence that they are tertiary victims\(^{12}\), like tertiary deviants who become involved in advocacy and activism (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002).

Tertiary victimization, which suggests the impermanence of stigmatization, is a necessary concept in exploring people’s move from victim to advocate or activist. Since both victim/survivor and advocate/activist are identities based on a role or experience, the concept of tertiary victimization allows for an investigation of how individuals may reject, resist, or transcend the stigmatized victim identity (Osborne 1974). Furthermore, inquiring about the process involved in moving from or between victimhood and advocacy or activism, such as their work to overcome the processes set in motion by the various phases of victimization, involves understanding the ways in which participants have resisted marginalization which is key to feminist standpoint theory (Harding 1991; Riessman 2000b). Rather than wonder what victims think about their experiences, the labels applied to them and their identities, and in line with feminist standpoint theory, this study asked victims directly about the labels and identities they have chosen for themselves, recognizing that they straddle the worlds of victimization and

\(^{12}\) Though the discussion above and in Chapter 3 outline some of the problems with the victim label, I continue to use the term ‘victimization,’ as opposed to survivorship in examining a possible tertiary form of victimization that is about resistance and advocacy. This is because it is the term Kenney (2002) uses when explaining that tertiary victimization is survivors’ counterpart to tertiary deviance. It is also because tertiary victimization follows what the literature refers to as primary and secondary victimization and not primary and secondary survivorship.
advocacy or activism. In so doing, it attempted to demonstrate the ways in which they confront multiple and, at times, competing master narratives, identities, or labels; that of victim or survivor and that of advocate or activist (Hammack and Cohler 2011).

Applying feminist standpoint theory to a study about sexual victimization and advocacy or activism involves including victims as participants to be “the authoritative speakers of” their experiences, making them visible by allowing them to speak and be heard in their own voice, and offering a perspective of their experiences from their standpoint (Harding 1987; 1991; 1993; Smith 1990:28). Feminist standpoint theory makes space for the inclusion of those who have been othered, such as non-white, non-male identified, and non-upper to middle class individuals, to understand their resistance to marginalization, their fight for inclusion, and their achievements (Smith 1990; Harding 1991; Fraser and MacDougall 2016). Therefore, it is a crucial theory in understanding how participants in this study including women, men, boys, girls, members of the LGBTQ community, and victims from religious groups who have experienced sexual victimization have gone on to become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. Moreover, it allowed for the study of transformational knowledge by examining how social change regarding sexual violence is enacted by victims themselves as well as by reflecting on their process of enacting such change (Millman and Kanter 1987). Feminist research explores women organizing as women and developing their own power bases and this study similarly asked about victims organizing as victims and the role of power in their road to advocacy and activism (Hartmann 1981; Sydie 1987).

Harding (1991:40) states that “whoever gets to define what counts as a scientific problem also gets a powerful role in shaping the picture of the world that results from scientific research.” This is why feminist standpoint theory in particular is important when thinking about the lives of
victims of sexual violence because it allows for voices that may not be aligned with traditional, male-oriented science to be heard (Harding 1991). Furthermore, when women and other marginalized people are taught that their voices are discredited because their experiences do not provide them with reliable “information about the world,” their consciousness can become bifurcated (Smith 1990:16). This study recognizes the bifurcation as part of what makes participants better poised to speak about victimization and advocacy or activism. In other words, it asked participants to integrate their experiential knowledge of victimization, which is a form of oppression, as well as of advocacy and activism, which are forms of empowerment, and discuss their standpoint. In doing so, it invited them to bridge potential gaps in multiple or competing identities by asking about the particulars of these identities including, and especially, how they went from victim to advocate or activist roles, and what the trajectory entailed such as silence, disclosures, stigma, internalization of that stigma, and anything else they may want to offer.

While anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism can involve the move to public or speaking roles, the silences and silencing in primary and secondary victimization often happen in private. This study further upholds feminist standpoint theory by asking about the spaces and experiences that have been surrounded in silence, such as whether participants struggled to disclose or whether and how the reactions to their disclosures silenced or stigmatized them. In this way it makes room for the interplay between the private and public, or the visible and invisible, in order to correct the distortions made about victims’ experiences (Millman and Kanter 1987). This links together labeling, stigmatization, silencing, disclosures, and resistance efforts.

Asking about the process of advocacy and activism involvement puts the focus on victims’ agency and resistance to labels and stigmatization which, though important to feminist
thought, is something that has not been widely identified and examined.\textsuperscript{13} Examining the standpoint of those who bear the labels victim/survivor and advocate/activist, as well as their disclosures and responses to those disclosures which incorporates secondary victimization, can better explain victims’ engagement in tertiary victimization, or their process of becoming an anti-sexual violence advocate or activist.

Gilligan (1987) emphasizes that women’s deference or their inability to speak up, which has been understood as weakness may, in fact, stem from their strength in valuing relationships, moral concern, and sensitivity to and assuming responsibility for others. Seen in this light, feminist standpoint theory can also help explain how and why victims turn specifically to advocacy and activism, activities that prioritize others’ experiences with sexual victimization and their needs in its aftermath. In this way, it applies a gendered lens not only to victimization but to advocacy and activism too.

\textbf{2.13 Chapter Summary}

This chapter drew from labeling theory and feminist standpoint theory to understand how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. These theories provide a framework to apply and extend the sociological and criminological ideas about how deviants are labeled and stigmatized, as well as how they internalize those labels, to examine whether and how this happens for victims. Primary and secondary deviance explain the process in which labeling and stigmatization takes place and the chapter pointed to its parallels in primary and secondary victimization. Stigma, too, was discussed because of its importance in the labeling process and in understanding the contributions of feminist standpoint theory in

\textsuperscript{13} Scambler (2012), however, examines agency and resistance regarding health inequalities. Tyler’s (2018) research on the resistance of racial stigma by Black people, including scholars, artists, and protestors, also examines important questions that Goffman neglected to consider, such as how stigma is resisted.
highlighting how victims of sexual violence, especially female victims, are stigmatized in secondary victimization. Most importantly, in applying the extended tertiary deviance phase of the labeling process to victims, this chapter sets the stage to inquire whether and how victims go beyond stigmatization and internalization in their response to victimization to become advocates or activists (Kitsuse 1980). Examining all three levels of victimization, as this study does, creates the space to examine the continuum of victim responses to victimization and to explore whether and how advocacy and activism are factors.

Furthermore, the combination of labeling theory and feminist standpoint theory highlighted the many silences in how sexual violence and its victims are labeled. It also showed what each theory overlooked. Labeling theorists ignored the possibility that deviants may accept their deviant status and challenge society to accept them as they are. Goffman overlooked the fact that many stigmatized individuals are unconcerned with or overcome their stigmatization and may do so by focusing on their stigma. And at times, research conducted in the area of sexual violence lacks nuance, overlooks the commonness of sexual victimization, and decenters patriarchy from its discussion (Lamb 1999b).

The chapter showed how victims are made to disappear in the facts created about them by explaining how they have been left out of these conversations which do not recognize the need to understand victimization as those who experienced it do (Smith 1990). The added layer of examining their move to advocacy and activism can highlight the work they have done to make themselves visible which, based on labeling theory, may include overcoming stigma and shame and based on feminist standpoint theory, includes resistance and agency. Together, these theories demonstrate the problems that have persisted in both naming the acts of sexual violence, adequately identifying victims and survivors, and self-identifying as one who has experienced
victimization. Understanding, as Lamb (1999b) did, the possibility that a combination of strength and vulnerability exists in the people affected by victimization is key to this study. In applying these theories to victims who have become advocates and activists, this chapter has clarified the importance in understanding the labels applied to sexual violence, its victims, how victims understand those labels, and the labels victims prefer to use. This chapter focused on how and why particular labels are applied to victims of sexual violence. The following chapter reviews the literature around how and why tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists label themselves in particular ways.
Chapter 3. Literature Review

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter reviews the literature that is relevant to this study’s inquiry into how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. It is divided into three sections each dealing with different bodies of literature. The first section reviews the literature on individuals who engage in tertiary deviance. The second section reviews the literature on survivors of various life events who become advocates and activists around an issue related to these events or experiences. The third section reviews the literature on victims of sexual violence and their anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. These bodies of literature are linked because survivors of sexual violence who become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists may be examples of tertiary deviants or, as this study argues regarding survivors of sexual victimization, tertiary victims (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2010). They are also an example of survivor advocates and activists.

Each section also discusses stigma because engaging in tertiary deviance through advocacy and activism is one way to manage or resist stigma and because the stigma that some survivors experience leads them to become advocates and activists (Kitsuse 1980; Knous 2006; Ussher et al. 2006; Chavaria 2012). Whereas the previous chapter discussed the various labels applied by society to tertiary deviants and victims of sexual violence, in line with feminist standpoint theory\(^\text{14}\) this chapter focuses on the perspective of the specific group being discussed (Sydie 1987; Smith 1990; Harding 1991). This is in contrast to many studies on deviance which have been conducted from the viewpoint of those who do the labeling or stigmatizing (Becker 1963; Blumer 1969; Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980). It is also in contrast to the literature on

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\(^{14}\) Additional influences of feminist standpoint theory on the literature appears in Sections II and III of this chapter.
survivors who become advocates and activists that is often focused on their advocacy role while neglecting to inquire about their role as survivors, such as the literature on survivors of domestic and sexual violence (Wood 2017). Therefore, in grounding the literature review on empirical studies focused on the perspectives of various tertiary deviants as well as survivors turned advocates and activists, the study draws from their specific experiences to consider the ways in which victims of sexual violence might be considered tertiary victims or survivor advocates/activists. In doing so, it privileges their standpoint and authority to be the best speakers of their experiences (Smith 1990). It also allows for an examination of stigma’s impact on both structural and individual issues (Link and Phelan 2001).

Section I

3.2 Tertiary Deviance & Deviants

This section reviews the literature on the movement of tertiary deviants through the three phases of deviance. As explained in Chapter 2, in breaking with how deviants were understood Kitsuse (1980:10) explained that while secondary deviants attempt to control or hide their deviance from public view, tertiary deviants insist that their deviance should not preclude them from “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” Rather than live lives of shame, guilt, and embarrassment, Kitsuse (1980:8) saw deviants as “coming out all over.” In doing so, they transform their deviant identity “into a positive and viable self conception,” which he called tertiary deviance (Kitsuse 1980:10).

While the term ‘coming out’ is generally used to describe the experience of self-identifying as a member of the LGBTQ community, the concept of closeting, upon which coming out is based, is used to describe the hiding of other stigmatized identities, such as having
epilepsy (Schneider and Conrad 1980). Closetsing an aspect of one’s identity creates the possibility of escaping stigmatization and provides individuals with some semblance of control over information about their stigmatized condition (Schneider and Conrad 1980). However, closetsing can also lead to negative outcomes such as stress, self-hate, and “the alienation of self” (Goffman 1963; Kitsuse 1980:8). For Kitsuse (1980:1), however, coming out and closeting have more to do with “social affirmation of the self” than they do with secrecy and disclosure.

Tertiary deviants profess who they are, advocate for the values expressed in the lives they lead, and demand equal rights, freedom, privileges, and protections (Kitsuse 1980). Therefore, tertiary deviance is more than the mere acceptance of the deviant and stigmatized identity; it is the proclamation that the identity is worthy, valuable, and deserving of societal acceptance (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006).

Many stigmatized individuals and groups can be considered tertiary deviants and Kitsuse’s (1980) examples include people who are fat, blind, paraplegic, and gay, as well as rape victims. The tertiary deviants discussed in this section are people with both visible and invisible stigmas and include LGBTQ+ individuals, redheads, and overachieving students (Heckert and Best 1997; Knous 2006; Sorensen and Siemsen 2006; Shoenberger, Heckert, and Heckert 2015). These groups help explain how people move from or between primary, secondary, and tertiary deviance. Their movement sheds light on key features of tertiary deviance including self-acceptance, disclosures, and identity and behaviour transformation. The literature on these groups also clarifies that while becoming an advocate or activist is one way of engaging in tertiary deviance, not all tertiary deviants, whether stigmatized or not, engage in advocacy and activism (Kitsuse 1980). Additionally, the literature on women living with a sexually transmitted
disease (STD) is reviewed because it highlights the factors that prevent people from becoming tertiary deviants (Nack 2000).

Self-Acceptance and Disclosures: LGBTQ Community and Individuals

Studies on the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) community show how individual deviants from different groups come together to create social change and social movements (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). Some of these studies focus specifically on the advocacy and activism element of tertiary deviance (Knous 2006; Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). Their engagement in collective tertiary deviance can explain how individuals come together to form group identity movements whose purpose it is to assert “citizenship within society” (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006:45). In this way, tertiary deviance lies as a “base for radical social movements” which can only exist in a community of individuals with shared identities and experiences who see their resistance behaviours as a choice (Weitz 1985:155).

For example, historically, LGBTQ individuals have gone from stigmatization and punishment within heteronormative society, to closting and hiding their identities, and then, to participating in activism and discourse focused on “the deviant identity” (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006:49). Though they tried to conform to societal norms and used various accommodation strategies to do so, the emergence of the “gay liberation movement” shifted the ideologies about members of the queer community from tolerance and assimilation to acceptance and freedom (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006:45). The formation of their collective identity politics marked their move from secondary to tertiary deviance (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). In banding together, LGBTQ individuals redefined their personal problems as social ones, and created “political strategies based on those definitions” (Weitz 1985:160). Additionally, “in coalition with other
social groups,” especially the feminist movement, they engaged in acts of resistance including demonstrations and sit-ins (Sorense and Siemsen 2006).

One can also examine how the tertiary deviance process happens for individuals in the LGBTQ community. For example, Knous (2006) traced the three phases of the deviance labeling process to understand the bisexual identity formation process. In the primary phase, the individual does not necessarily identify as bisexual even after a same sex encounter (Knous 2006). In the secondary phase, where disclosing one’s sexual orientation or coming out takes place, individuals are labeled by others or themselves as bisexual or another term that they prefer (Knous 2006). Language and agency are key to self-identification because the work involved in choosing the correct label, as well as fighting against or changing derogatory and oppressive ones, is important for the embracing of one’s identity (Knous 2006).

The secondary phase is also where stigma management begins, allowing individuals “to normalize and affirm their behaviour” in a society that tells them otherwise (Knous 2006:49). Bisexual individuals found various stigma management techniques helpful to overcome the stigma that comes from self-judgment and that of others (Knous 2006:52). These include leading double lives or passing, voluntarily disclosing one’s bisexual identity to others, and participating in support groups or “community stigma management” (Knous 2006). Of these, support networks were the most significant factor in the move towards tertiary deviance and identity acceptance because it is through encounters with people like themselves that rebellion against the stigmatizing label and full self-acceptance can be achieved (Knous 2006). Perhaps this can explain Jordan’s (2000) preference for metaphors of silence and speech to ones of visibility and

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15 Disclosures, however, may come at various points and times to select individuals rather than happening at one time by all tertiary deviants or stigmatized individuals to all who know them.
invisibility, like the closet, for the LGBTQ+ community. The closet shields others from seeing and hearing those hiding inside it as well as prevents those who are hiding from speaking and being heard (Jordan 2000). In support networks and groups, however, LBGTQ+ individuals can be both seen and heard.

The tertiary phase of identity formation for bisexuals, to which stigma management extends, is where one’s bisexuality is accepted and embraced by the deviant and by society (Knous 2006). It can only occur after one discloses or comes out, and is also where one is proud of their identity, rebels against bisexual prejudice, and participates in building the bisexual community (Knous 2006). All of the participants in Knous’s (2006) study embraced their identity, but only a small percentage reached the tertiary phase. Those that did, did not experience stigma when they came out, but in line with the advocate and activist role of tertiary deviants, actively chose to be involved in bisexual rights, identity politics, or the larger bisexual community (Kitsuse 1980; Knous 2006). This supports the idea that a shared identity and experiences can lead individual deviants to engage in collective tertiary deviance and form “collective identity groups and movements” (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006:50). However, whereas Weitz (1985:155) understands tertiary deviants as working “for change outside the social structure,” for Knous (2006) tertiary deviance is about rebelling against, contesting, disclosing, and accepting one’s deviance in the hopes of gaining societal acceptance. Studies on other tertiary deviants, like redheads and overachievers, hone in on other elements of tertiary deviance.

**Transformation of Identity & Behaviour: Redheads and Overachievers**

As opposed to focusing on the advocacy and activism element of tertiary deviance, studies on redheads and overachievers focus on the positive transformation of identity and behaviour that takes place in this phase (Heckert and Best 1997; Shoenberger et al. 2015). In
their study on redheads, Heckert and Best (1997) conclude that transforming a negative self-concept into a positive one is the underlying idea of tertiary deviance. Though they agree with Kitsuse (1980) that activism defines tertiary deviance, for Heckert and Best (1997) tertiary deviance is about how labels negatively impact identity and how a negative identity can be transformed into a positive one. They found that the stigma and negative labels, such as wild, hot tempered, and weird that are applied to red-haired children was transformed into a positive experience in adolescence or adulthood (Heckert and Best 1997). As they got older, redheads were able to appreciate their previously stigmatized hair and how it shaped their sense of self (Heckert and Best 1997). The transformation that occurs is paradoxical in that the very characteristic that contributed to negativity and stigma becomes a positive one and contributes to positive feelings of self (Heckert and Best 1997). Though they do not discuss the stigma management techniques that redheads use, they suggest that redheads’ dichotomization of other redheads into “the extraordinarily ugly and the extraordinarily attractive” is a way for them to “save face by seeing themselves as the exception” (Heckert and Best 1997:371).

A study by Shoenberger et al. (2015:474) on overachievers, or high achieving students who are “rate busters,” similarly highlights how labels can produce positive identities as well as positive behaviours, which they call positive deviance. It explains that overachievers are positive deviants in that they received positive attention and labels from teachers and parents for overachieving, consistent with primary deviance, and continue overachieving in the face of negative stigma from peers, consistent with secondary deviance. However, rather than understand tertiary deviance as one possible outcome following primary deviance, while secondary deviance is another as Heckert and Best (1997) do, Shoenberger et al (2015) believe that a continuum lies between secondary and tertiary deviance. In their view, becoming a tertiary
deviant involves both persisting in the primary deviant behaviours as well as self-identifying as one who behaves as such even, or especially, in the face of stigmatization (Shoenberger et al. 2015). Therefore, not every deviant reaches the tertiary phase. For example, overachievers who did not reach tertiary deviance continued to overachieve but hid their academic status and abilities due to peer stigma (Shoenberger et al. 2015). Hiding their abilities from others or denying their achievements to themselves was a way to manage their stigma (Shoenberger et al. 2015). The way in which stigma management techniques are employed by deviants helps explain their process into the tertiary phase as well as how particular techniques preclude them from becoming a tertiary deviant is explained below.

*Evading the Tertiary Phase of Deviance: Women with STDs*

Whether or not people disclose a deviant and stigmatized identity or make use of support groups, as bisexual individuals do, may explain their movement through the phases of deviance or the lack thereof. For example, Nack’s (2000) study on women living with an STD demonstrates how and why not disclosing one’s deviant or stigmatized status allows for denial and prevents some stigmatized individuals from moving to tertiary deviance. For the women, having an STD was too stigmatizing to join a group whose benefits did not outweigh its costs of making public to some what they wanted to keep hidden from most (Nack 2000).

For these women, primary deviance was completed with a doctor’s diagnosis of an STD that they had unknowingly contracted which radically changed their perception of their sexual selves. The secondary deviance phase began as women wondered how to handle the stigma of having an STD in their lives outside of the doctor’s office. But because their diagnosis was only known to them and their doctors, it was easy to deny. They, therefore, used several stigma management strategies to avoid the consequences of internalizing the deviant label that comes
with having an STD and to avoid disclosing. For example, lying, passing, or covering allowed them to hide their diagnosis and neither accept nor internalize stigma. They also transferred or deflected the stigma onto “past and present partners” by blaming them for the STD or assuming they were infected (Nack 2000:106).

Nack (2000) clarifies the interactive element between disclosures and self-acceptance. She explains that women used stigma management strategies for fear of the rejection and ridicule that may follow their disclosures, showing that people’s lives and behaviours are impacted by the stories they do not tell about themselves as much as the ones they do (Nack 2000). Avoiding disclosures also helped the women ensure that the discreditable stigma of having an STD did not take centre stage in their lives, sparing their self-perceptions and concepts (Nack 2000). But when they eventually disclosed their diagnosis to friends, family, or intimate partners, a narrative in which their sexual selves were tainted was confirmed (Nack 2000). Furthermore, every time they disclosed, they revised who they were based on the responses of others to their disclosures, such as being viewed through the lens of having a sexual disease (Nack 2000). Disclosing, then, helped them accept the reality that they had an STD but it impacted their identities (Nack 2000).

In comparing Lemert’s (1967) linear labeling model of deviance to the experiences of these women, Nack (2000:116) notes that the combination of their stigma management strategies and their initial lack of disclosures prevented the women from fully moving through secondary deviance, where a deviant identity is “integrated into one’s core self-concept.” Since the subculture in secondary deviance is where the deviant identity is embraced and where deviants collectively learn how to manage their stigma, not joining a group allowed women to resist seeing themselves as fully deviant and to reserve the deviant label for only the sexual or sensual part of their identity (Nack 2000). Therefore, the compartmentalization of their deviant or
stigmatized identities is, for Nack (2000:119), “the ultimate stigma management strategy,” making the three-phase model of deviance limited in its application to the experiences of these women. The suggestion that the compartmentalization of the stigma by non-disclosure and isolation from social supports prevented a deviant identity from taking hold of the women completely, bolsters the findings in the literature on tertiary deviance which explains how primary and secondary deviance, and the self-acceptance and disclosures they involve, are related to tertiary deviance in which identity transformation is achieved. In other words, it is not enough to identify and know one’s own stigma. Instead, tertiary deviance demands self-acceptance and disclosures as well as social support and engagement.

Section I Summary

Using several examples of tertiary deviants, this section highlighted key features of tertiary deviance including self-acceptance, disclosures, and identity and behaviour transformation. It has also shown how stigma is central to a discussion of tertiary deviance and that the process involved in becoming a tertiary deviant, where a negative identity is transformed into a positive one, involves persisting and self-identifying with primary deviant behaviours, internalizing deviant labels, and employing various stigma management strategies. The strategies where one accepts one’s deviant identity or where the deviant finds those similarly stigmatized, such as in a support group, are more likely to lead to tertiary deviance than strategies that employing lying, deflecting, or compartmentalizing stigma.

Some stigmatized identities of tertiary deviants, like redheads, are visible and do not require disclosures. In reviewing several stigma management techniques of deviants with concealable stigmas, however, this section also demonstrated the importance of disclosing one’s stigmatized identity on, and in, one’s own terms and language. Disclosing in this way is key to
the self-acceptance and identity formation and transformation that are part and parcel of tertiary deviance. Disclosures and social supports, such as peer groups, solidify one’s deviant and stigmatized identity as well as assist stigmatized deviants in rebelling against the stigmatizing labels that are applied to them (Kitsuse 1980; Nack 2000; Knous 2006). The fact that not all deviants disclose their stigmatized identities explains why not all deviants make it to the tertiary phase, as does the idea that tertiary deviance is just one possibility following primary deviance (Heckert and Best 1997; Nack 2000; Knous 2006). Furthermore, while advocacy and activism are defining features of tertiary deviance, the concept of a continuum that lies between the secondary and tertiary phases of deviance may explain why not all deviants become advocates and activists (Kitsuse 1980; Heckert and Best 1997; Knous 2006; Shoenberger et al. 2015). This chapter now turns to the literature regarding survivor advocates and activists.

Section II

3.3 Survivor Advocates and Activists

Though the literature on tertiary deviants discusses their involvement in advocacy and activism, it does not outline what they do in these roles. This section, therefore, reviews the literature on individuals known as survivors who become advocates and activists and examines the process for their engagement and involvement in advocacy and activism. Specifically, it reviews the literature on survivors of crime, serious injury, cancer, and mental illness who have become advocates and activists. Just as the rights movement led Kitsuse (1980) to extend the labeling process to include a tertiary phase, so too, several of the survivor advocates and activists

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16 Depending on the group that is being discussed, the literature uses the terms survivor advocate, survivor activists or hyphenated terms such as survivor-advocate. Sometimes, in the same journal article, these terms are used interchangeably. When discussing each group, this section will use the terms that are used in the literature to discuss that group.
discussed below recognized the possibilities in various rights movement that they could use to positively impact their lives and the lives of people like themselves.

Survivorship as a concept has been borrowed from the literature on terminal illnesses and the term ‘survivor’ includes people who have lived through life changing events, such as trauma or other illnesses (Wood 2017). In addition to considering people directly impacted by these events as survivors, the literature categorizes their loved ones as survivors too. Therefore, survivors may be those who have survived a life-threatening experience, such as injury, serious illness like cancer, and drunk driving, as well as those whose loved ones have been seriously injured or killed, or have experienced illness (McLoughlin and Fennel 2000; Kenney 2002; Lythcott, Green, and Brown 2003; Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Dorius and McCarthy 2011).

The literature on survivors who have become advocates and activists, also known as consumer advocates or activists, after having lived through these events is extensive (Lythcott et al. 2003; Chavaria 2012; LeFrancois, Menzies, and Reaume 2013; Hoffman and Stovall 2016). Moreover, like the literature on survivors which incorporates loved ones, it considers both direct and secondary survivors who may, like the tertiary deviants discussed above, transform their identity or life’s mission to that of advocate or activist, working on an issue that has become important to them due to personal experience. While not all survivor advocates and activists experience stigmatization and marginalization, they all channel their experiences of survivorship to advocacy and activism purposes, often to prevent others from suffering as they have (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Thus, the literature on the process they followed to become advocates and activists can inform this study and allow for an examination into whether and where parallels exists in the process that victims of sexual violence undergo when becoming anti-sexual violence advocates and activists.
The fact that the family and friends of direct survivors may be considered survivor advocates and activists intersects with the research on crime victimization (Knudten 1989; Smith and Huff 1992; Karmen 2007; Englebrecht et al. 2014). This is because primary victimization is a term used to refer to the experiences of individuals directly impacted by victimization while secondary victimization encompasses the victimization that family members of the primary victim endure when adjusting their lives following the crime (Knudten 1989; Karmen 2007). Secondary victims often become advocates and activists, especially after the loss of the primary victim. Primary and secondary victims of crimes, including homicide and domestic violence, as well as the relatives of crime perpetrators have become involved in survivor advocacy and activism.

The loved ones of murdered individuals, also known as “co-victims,” are considered survivors of vicarious or secondary victimization and these individuals may become advocates and activists following the homicide (Smith and Huff 1992; Armour 2002; Gekoski, Adler, and Gray 2013; Englebrecht et al. 2014). Similar to the way in which labels and language are significant to the process of becoming a tertiary deviant, Kenney (2002) explains how the labels applied to homicide survivors impact how they are treated, how they feel, and what they do. For example, they may find the very label of victim stigmatizing, inhibiting them from discussing their experiences (Kenney 2002). Alternatively, they may be labeled deviants and stigmatized and blamed for their predicament or rejected because of how they respond to being a survivor of crime, such as asking for sympathy for an extended period of time (Kenney 2002). This leads to secondary victimization or a second injury, similar to that of secondary deviance, where survivors become isolated and lose their friends (Kenney 2002). The isolation and loss of social
supports may push these survivors to join support groups where they can share their bereavement with others who identify with their experiences, like deviants who join subcultures (Armour 2002; Armour 2003; Kenney 2002).

Other times, the label of victim can lead to being deemed worthy of sympathy and blamelessness. This can help homicide survivors maintain connections with their social supports, sometimes even making it unnecessary for them to join a support group. This may happen when the primary victim or their family are well known or when the homicide receives wide media coverage (Kenney 2002). The media coverage of survivors’ fight for change and protests can lead to communal and public support and to their developing positive identities (Kenney 2002). Survivors who have received such support have come to be involved in or founded organizations focused on victims’ rights, making them examples of tertiary victims as well as examples of survivor advocates (Kenney 2002).

Recent memoirs by the relatives of crime perpetrators makes one wonder whether they can also be considered secondary victims of the crimes their loved ones have committed. Their stories illustrate how they, too, are impacted by the labels applied to them and how they may also be encompassed in the concept of crime survivor advocate and activist. For example, Sue Klebold, the mother of one of the perpetrators of the 1999 Columbine High School massacre, explained that she carries a lot of shame over her son’s crime. Though she saw herself as one of the victims after her son’s murder-suicide, she understood that the public did not view her this way (Klebold 2009). However, feeling like a victim was the beginning of her process of advocacy involvement, followed by feeling like a survivor, and then reaching out to other survivors (Heller 2016; Klebold 2016). Together, these survivors formed support groups where their feelings could be shared (Heller 2016). After some time, they became advocates helping
others by making a difference and creating change for the better (Heller 2016). Klebold is now a brain health advocate linking suicide and homicide to mental health.

Furthermore, advocacy and activism involvement can be a response to the marginalization and exacerbation of grief some victims of crime, their loved ones, or perpetrators’ relatives have experienced through their encounters with the criminal justice system (Armour 2003; Malone 2007; Gekoski et al. 2013; Englebrecht et al. 2014). For example, though he did not act against her, Shannon Moroney considers herself one of the victims of her now ex-husband’s crimes of sexual assault and kidnapping (Moroney 2011). This is because as the wife of the offender, she was left with the burden of stigma to deal with (Moroney 2011). While joining a bereavement group helped meet her emotional needs in dealing with the loss of her husband to prison and the end of her marriage, her process of becoming an advocate was a direct outgrowth of seeing and experiencing the lack of resources in the Canadian criminal justice system for crime victims and for family members of offenders (Moroney 2011). She is currently a restorative justice advocate and speaks internationally on the wide-ranging effects of crime (Moroney 2011).

Like the bisexual individuals discussed above who use support groups before advocating for their community, both Klebold and Moroney turned to support groups to deal with stigma and also became advocates. Similarly, survivors of domestic violence helped build the movement fighting interpersonal violence (IPV), which emphasized peer-support and empowerment, by reaching out and providing services to other survivors of domestic violence (Wood 2017). Both service provision by survivors to survivors as well as being part of a larger social movement are central to IPV survivor-advocates’ work (Wood 2017).
However, though survivors may make up a large part of the IPV advocacy workforce, the actual number of survivors in it is hard to estimate because they are sometimes encouraged to keep their survivorship status hidden (Wood 2017). Furthermore, not much is known about IPV survivor-advocates themselves including their motivations for advocating, the benefits and challenges of this work, or their experiences as advocates (Wood 2017). In recognizing the co-existing identities of survivor and advocate that her participants held, Wood (2017) found that the benefits to their advocacy included post-traumatic growth, where “positive psychological change” is experienced by a person who has gone through trauma. This is in line with the idea of positive tertiary deviance discussed above where a negative stigma or identity is transformed into a positive one (Heckert and Best 1997; Shoenberger et al. 2015; Wood 2017:325). Another benefit was that their work in advocacy agencies provided them with the language to name their own experiences with violence and become more self-aware (Wood 2017). The challenges, however, included triggering, boundary setting, and finding work-life balance (Wood 2017).

Moreover, Wood’s (2017) study illustrates how IPV survivors integrate professional and personal knowledge in their advocacy work which is in line with how the advocacy of other crime victims or survivors is rooted in their lived experience with victimization. For IPV survivor-advocates, the key factor impacting their advocacy approach and perspective is their histories, or that of a mother or grandmother, with IPV or other forms of intimate violence (Wood 2017). Another motivation for their advocacy includes social justice concerns, such as a desire to see and enact change regarding the lack of available and effective resources (Wood 2017). The merging of the personal with the professional is a factor for other survivor advocates, such as those working to prevent serious injury (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000).
Injury Survivor Advocates

Like the survivors of homicide and domestic violence who become advocates and activists, the advocacy and activism of survivors of injury or their loved ones often stems from a life changing event, such as near death (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Like crime survivor advocates, injury survivor advocates raise awareness about their cause, push for legislative action, and support survivors by establishing support groups (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000; Dorius and McCarthy 2011). Their advocacy begins with identifying a problem, attempting to find or collect data on the issue, participating in media coverage of their story, and focusing the coverage on the issue they are advocating for (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Though not previously engaged in the area of injury prevention, these survivor advocates use the knowledge that industry changes to regulations of products have saved lives to work on an issue, or to the founding of an organization focused on an issue related to how they nearly lost their lives (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Examples include groups working to prevent firearm injuries such as Handgun Control, those seeking to improve infant crib standards such as “The Danny Foundation,” and groups advocating for the prevention of drunk driving (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000:167; Dorius and McCarthy 2011). Their compelling personal stories, which they combine with the arguments of professionals and experts in that area, force people to realize that the cause they advocate for is real (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Immersing oneself in advocacy through one’s personal story about survival is also seen in the advocacy work of many cancer survivors.

Cancer Survivor Advocates

Cancer survivors may become involved in advocacy as a way to integrate their personal experiences with the disease into their lives (Rechis, Arvey, and Beckjord 2013). Other reasons
for their advocacy include the realization that the excellent care they received is not afforded to other survivors or as a way to demand better or holistic care for themselves and others (Rechis et al. 2013). Overall, cancer survivors’ advocacy is about improving their lives and the lives of their peer survivors. For example, some cancer survivors, such as those from ethnic communities, use their insight about the barriers between their communities and the healthcare community to advocate for patients and survivors in a way that is culturally sensitive (Lythcott et al. 2003).

Cancer survivor advocates’ skills in information seeking, communication, problem solving, and negotiation make them effective in helping survivors communicate with healthcare professionals (Hoffman and Stovall 2006).

Like injury prevention advocates, cancer survivors and their loved ones have founded, or partnered with, organizations and promote education about cancer through outreach, survivor support, and consultation (Lythcott et al. 2003; Hoffman and Stovall 2006). They have done this work long before either of the words ‘survivor’ and ‘advocacy’ were widely used in the cancer community (Hoffman and Stovall 2006). The rise of advocacy in many areas such as women’s rights, civil rights, and human rights empowered survivors to become active in demanding agency and voice regarding cancer treatment and improvement of “their quality of life” (Hoffman and Stovall 2006:5156). In fact, the word consumer, which is used in addition to survivor in the cancer community, highlights their agency in becoming informed and vocal about treatment options and their desire to make their own decisions (Hoffman and Stovall 2016).

Furthermore, as opposed to the relegation to the side of peer survivor advocates in domestic violence shelters to make room for mental health professionals (Wood 2017:311), cancer survivor advocacy was eventually embraced by professional cancer organizations (Hoffman and Stovall 2006). For example, in the late 1980s, the National Coalition for Cancer
Survivorship argued that individuals diagnosed with cancer should be free to self-identify as survivors from the moment of diagnosis and for the rest of their lives (Hoffman and Stovall 2006). They helped medical professionals recognize patients and their loved ones as survivors, acknowledging that cancer’s impact extends broadly and that living with cancer is an ongoing process which can include living with it, through it, or beyond it (Lythcott et al. 2003; Hoffman and Stovall 2016).

But the root of cancer survivor advocacy lies in peer support groups whose two most significant outcomes are “increased empowerment and agency” (Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Ussher et al. 2006:2565). The peer support group model, known as the “shared cultural model of illness,” helps cancer survivors reevaluate their identity into one that is positive (Ussher et al. 2006:2574), similar to identity transformation in tertiary deviance (Kitsuse 1980; Heckert and Best 1997; Shoenberger et al. 2015). While support groups’ challenges include their focus on illness and meeting participants who might die, benefits include survivors advising each other about how to deal with healthcare professionals, the side effects of treatment, and educating one another about cancer and new treatment developments (Ussher et al. 2006). Survivors’ also benefit from groups which allow them to freely express feelings they are often discouraged to amongst family and friends who dismiss, reject, and stigmatize them and by being able to openly discuss death or cancer (Ussher et al. 2006). This is why peer support groups give survivors a sense of community and belonging, providing friendship, empathy and mutuality in the construction of a narrative that is shared due to survivors’ similar experiences (Ussher et al. 2006). The peer support group model is also at the core of mental health survivor advocacy which shares other similarities with cancer survivor advocacy, such as how stigma impacts
members of both these groups and how the degree of that stigma may vary (Link and Phelan 2001).

*Mental Health Survivor Advocates*

Like cancer survivor advocates who were inspired by the rights movement, the survivor activist, consumer survivor, or user survivor movement in the area of mental health began in the ‘70s and was influenced by feminism and the gay and civil rights movements (Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Chavaria 2012; LeFrancois et al. 2013). Mental health patients who were once institutionalized felt silenced, stigmatized, and discredited by those in the medical field and began discussing the violation of their rights, hoping to end involuntary hospitalization (Chavaria 2012). They advocated for the rights of patients against the oppressive and paternalistic medical model of mental health care and psychiatry (Chavaria 2012; LeFrancois et al. 2013). They also resisted the negative and shameful stereotypes attached to mental illness, many of which stemmed from the medical model’s focus on chronicity, dysfunction, and deficit (Chavaria 2012). Therefore, in advocating for a better and different model of treatment, those with mental illness resist and actively challenge the stigma inherent in both the label ‘mentally ill’ or “mental patient” and the stereotypes attached to this label (Link and Phelan 2001:369). They do this through practicing “anti-sanist politics” (LeFrancois et al. 2013:25). Through their support of the recovery model, mental health survivor activists sought improvements in perception, treatment, and governance of those with mental illness (Frese et al. 2001; LeFrancois et al. 2013; Noorani 2013). Central to the recovery model are opportunity, agency, control, and choice as well as the space for services delivered by peers (Frese et al. 2001; Repper and Carter 2011; Chavaria 2012).

As with cancer survivors, language is important because the labels used by both survivors and others impacts how they are treated and whether they are stigmatized (Chavaria 2012;
Noorani 2013). The language used can both perpetuate oppression and make space for resistance (LeFrancois et al. 2013). For example, the term “madness” has been invoked by those with mental health conditions as a “critical alternative” and resistance to the naming of neurodiversity that was seen to be disordered (LeFrancois et al. 2013:10). Doing so allows them to reject degrading clinical labels and also “acknowledge and validate” the human experiences of a diverse group of individuals who experience madness or are ‘mad activists’ (LeFrancois et al. 2013:10). Additionally, the specific use of the term survivor in mental health helped draw attention to mistreatment and dehumanization from the medical system and its focus on forced treatment (Chavaria 2012; LeFrancois et al. 2013). Later adoption of the term consumer, or user, reflected the choices and agency of people with mental illness as it did with the cancer survivors above and there continues to be tension around the best terms to use in the activist community (Chavaria 2012; LeFrancois et al. 2013). Today, survivor activists and advocates, or consumer-survivors, work to defend themselves and others as they move from passivity to resistance and the finding of a new voice, which is tied to both stigmatization experiences and creating social change (Chavaria 2012).

Their call of “nothing about us without us”¹⁷ is noteworthy because of how it talks back to the component of stigma in which a label separates those who are considered ‘us’ from those who are othered by being labeled ‘them,’ and often treated inhumanely (Link and Phelan 2001; Chavaria 2012:56). This call explains why, under the recovery model, services delivered by peers is key (Frese et al. 2001:1463). Peer services draw on the experiential authority of people with mental illness, offering reciprocity and egalitarianism in their relationships with others with mental illness (Repper and Carter 2011; Noorani 2013). Like cancer survivor groups, the peer

¹⁷ This motto has been taken up by many rights movements from the disability rights movement (Chavaria 2012).
model makes room for “collective meaning-making” (Noorani 2013:31), is a way to connect and share experiences, and can create knowledge that can contest that of the medical world, getting survivors involved in the process of decision making and policies that directly affect them (Chavaria 2012). Peer services, then, are a transformation of the mental health service delivery by consumers of the mental health care system, created by the belief that those with similar experiences can offer more validity, empathy, hope, and understanding than professionals do (Repper and Carter 2011; Chavaria 2012). It also supports the idea that recovery is possible (Repper and Carter 2011; Chavaria 2012).

Like tertiary deviants’ identity transformation from negative to positive, the advocacy and activism of consumer-survivors is about interrupting negative stereotypes and highlighting the positive aspects of previously considered negative attributes (Chavaria 2012:107). For example, working as a peer support worker provides a survivor activist with the new identity of a support person instead of a patient (Repper and Carter 2011). Advocacy and peer-services can be a way to address the status loss, discrimination, and disadvantages, such as lack of effective mental health services that come with being part of the stigmatized mental illness community (Link and Phelan 2001). Working in peer services also removes the isolation that often accompanies mental illness and allows survivor advocates to openly disclose their mental health issues in an environment that is supportive (Repper and Carter 2011). Like with other invisible stigma, disclosing that one has a mental health condition can be complicated and dangerous and the information can be used against the discloser (Frese et al. 2001; Chavaria 2012). This demonstrates the links between structural and individual stigma and the need to address them (Link and Phelan 2001; Francois et al. 2013). For example, individuals with mental illness may fear the personal application of the way in which society views, discusses, and responds to their
personal stigma (Link and Phelan 2001). Therefore, stigma management techniques used by those with mental illness include managing the information others know about their illness including when, how, and whether to disclose, all of which are draining (Chavaria 2012). This is why pushing for inclusion and helping to create a world that is less stigmatizing is a key priority of consumer advocates’ work towards social change (Chavaria 2012).

Peer services themselves are a way for consumer-survivors to resist discrimination and stigma and to recover power (Chavaria 2012). In fact, when interviewed, consumer-survivors discussed how their push for social change involves their resistance to each of the five elements of stigmatization in the stigma model outlined by Link and Phelan (Chavaria 2012). As mentioned in Chapter 2, the model suggests that “stigma occurs when labeling, negative stereotyping, separation, and status loss and discrimination co-occur within a context of unequal power” (Link and Phelan 2006; Chavaria 2012:187-188). Examples of consumer survivor resistance to these elements include challenging how they are diagnosed and labeled; challenging by whom and how labels and diagnoses are defined; choosing the labels and terminology they prefer; separating diagnosis from identity or personhood; and the normalization of illness to which everyone is vulnerable (Chavaria 2012). Therefore, like feminist standpoint theory exhorts, the studies on ‘madness’ must present hope for the future in the mental health field for and from those most affected by its damages (LeFrancois et al. 2013). They can do this by being grounded in “the standpoint of those who encounter power and privation in their rawest form” and in their everyday struggles and by co-producing knowledge with them (LeFrancois 2013:18). In this way, the research can bridge the divide “between scholarship and activism, theory and practice” (LeFrancois et al 2013:17).
Section II Summary

The literature on various survivor advocates and activists has highlighted several ways they may be considered tertiary deviants. Like many tertiary deviants, stigmatized and negatively labeled survivors, such as cancer survivors and mental health consumers, were empowered by various rights movements to become advocates and activists. Like tertiary deviants, survivor advocates and activists offer support to their peers and turn a negative experience, and for some a stigmatized identity such as victim or patient, into a positive one, like advocate or activist. The labels and terms both tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists use are important to them and are one way they resist stigma. Additionally, the research on tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists has shown the benefits and challenges to disclosing one’s deviant or survivor identity. While disclosures may come with self-acceptance, they can draw positive and negative attention to an individual or his or her story. Therefore, depending on the issue, disclosures may be complicated or dangerous for tertiary deviants and survivor advocate and activists.

However, tertiary deviance is about more than advocacy and activism because it involves stigmatization, self-transformation, and identification. Furthermore, contrary to tertiary deviants, where stigma is heavily involved, survivor advocates’ and activists’ transformation and identification revolves around, or comes about because of, their advocacy and activism, and not all survivors are stigmatized. Additionally, whereas the process of becoming a tertiary deviant involves the movement through three phases of deviance, for survivors, the process of becoming an advocate and activist begins with a life changing experience.

Therefore, the why, when, and how of survivors’ advocacy and activism are relevant to their process of becoming an advocate and activist for the causes they care about. Their lived
experiences, or the lived experiences of those they care about, may be what sparks their advocacy and activism. The process can also begin with accepting and acknowledging a label, such as victim or survivor, or by reaching out to those with similar experiences and labels. Advocacy and activism can also stem from the desire to address a gap in a system, such as the criminal justice, social service, medical, or mental health care systems, with which one has personal experience. Some advocates and activists liaise between the system and those like oneself who are affected by the gap and others come to formally work for a system where they can directly provide services to other survivors. This element of peer support in survivor advocacy and activism is also a stigma resistance technique which creates a shared narrative by and for survivors over the ones that outsiders, like doctors, employ. In this way survivors advocate and are involved in activism both as a way to manage stigma and as a way to create social change. The chapter now turns to the literature on victims of sexual violence and how they engage in advocacy and activism.

Section III

3.4 Sexual Violence Victimization & Anti-sexual Violence Advocacy

Victims of sexual violence who become advocates and activists are examples of both tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists (Kitsuse 1980; Wood 2017). Therefore, in reviewing the literature on sexual violence victims’ involvement in advocacy and activism, this section relates the significance of the ideas discussed above to this group. Specifically, it discusses labeling and terminology, the actions and goals of victims’ advocacy and activism, and the relationship between stigma and sexual victimization as well as stigma resistance and advocacy and activism. It also discusses the ways that silence and disclosures manifest following
sexual victimization and the role of peer support in both disclosing and being an anti-sexual violence advocate or activist.

Feminist standpoint theory has greatly informed the literature reviewed in this section because many of the empirical studies noted here are grounded in the experiences of victims of sexual violence or anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. For example, Infusino’s (2014) study on the public disclosures of sexual violence survivors involved interviewing female victims to understand if their disclosures were therapeutic to their recoveries. Weiss (2011) examined the accounts of victims who did not report to police to appreciate how they understood and neutralized the victimization, and rationalized and benefited from not reporting. Her work is an important contribution to the area of “unreported and unacknowledged rape” because it considers how accounting or not accounting for victims’ lived reality regarding victimization and disclosure experiences, which is key to feminist standpoint theory, impacts the necessary attitudinal and behavioral shifts that are needed regarding sexual violence (Smith 1990; Weiss 2011:445).

Fileborn (2016) considers street harassment victims’ participation online, including their disclosures, to determine whether and how they seek justice there. This contributes to the knowledge around “victim’s justice needs” (Fileborn 2016:1482). Loney-Howes (2018) and O’Neil (2018) also examine how survivors come out online as well as how they use online forums. Similarly, the research of Andalibi et al. (2016) on the relationship between social media disclosures, anonymity, and support seeking is informed by sexual abuse survivors’ online disclosures. Additionally, Alaggia’s (2004:1213) face-to-face interviews with child sexual abuse survivors allowed her to identify “previously undefined dimensions of disclosure.” The voices and experiences of victims who have been ignored are raised by Flynn (2008:236) who turns to
women who experienced sexual victimization by clergy members to understand their post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms and their responses to the “soul wound” they experienced because of their victimization. Understanding the transformation these women experienced is important to feminist research that seeks to go beyond explaining the status-quo in search of a “more just and humane society” (Millman and Kanter 1987:34; Flynn 2008). Sheehy (2012) and Gotell (2012) turn to feminist lawyers, scholars, activists, and those engaged in policy work to acknowledge the systemic marginalization of female victims of sexual violence and the activism of feminists. These studies tell “the stories of survivors” and advocates or activists and highlight areas that require further research through the voices of survivors and advocates as feminist standpoint theory demands (Smith 1990). They also add to the understanding of how victims resist victimization and stigmatization in ways that include and exclude advocacy.

However, just as the literature on domestic violence is missing the voices of its survivor activists and advocates, the literature on sexual violence does not focus on victims as advocates or activists (Wood 2017). While there is some literature on how survivors advocate following an experience of sexual victimization, largely, advocacy in relation to survivors of sexual violence is discussed in reference to outside helpers, like professional advocates, who assist victims through various services (Sheehy 2012; Wood 2017). For example, Doe (2012) differentiates between ‘experientials,’ or women who have experienced sexual violence, and ‘key informants’ who work with them and advocate on their behalf, though these groups may not be mutually exclusive. Moreover, while Wood (2017) acknowledges that sexual violence may be a form of violence that IPV survivor advocates have experienced, the focus of their advocacy and her study
is on domestic violence. By and large, the literature fails to incorporate whether or not anti-sexual violence advocates or activists themselves have experienced sexual victimization, how this informs their work, how survivors of sexual violence become advocates and activists, and what they do in these roles. This explains why Loney-Howes (2018) states that reading the accounts of survivors who use online anti-rape forums must consider both of their standpoints; that of activist and that of victim-survivor.

*Labels Chosen by Victims and Survivors*

As outlined in chapter 2 and similar to the victims of crime discussed above, victims of sexual violence may be labeled in supportive or stigmatizing ways by different people. Just as the terms used by the tertiary deviants and survivors above to refer to themselves are important and impact their self-concept, the same is true for victims of sexual violence who may use the word victim or survivor (Lamb 1999b). Some prefer the term survivor because it evokes heroism, independence, strength, and resiliency and can assuage feelings of humiliation and vulnerability at having been victimized (Lamb 1999b; Weiss 2011). It may also help them reject the label of ‘passive victim,’ which many associate with victimization (Lamb 1999; Walklate 2014). Furthermore, substituting the term victim for survivor leads many victims of sexual violence to come together to collectively solve their problems as a result of their common experiences (Taylor et al. 1983; Lamb 1999b). Male victims may also prefer the label survivor because it portrays them as strong and allows them to “reclaim their masculinity” (Weiss 2011:459). Victims may also label themselves in ways that prevent the sympathy or pity of others from being directed their way (Heider 1958). However, there are those that insist on the

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18 This is similar to the speculation that the presence of sexual violence in femicide, a form of IPV, is treated less seriously and to the fact that sexual violence in IPV that results in homicide lacks contextualization (Dawson 2016).
term victim because they believe that the word survivor should only be used in the worst of sexual violence cases or because they do not feel like they have survived their victimization (Lamb 1999b). Nevertheless, the labels victims choose for themselves or accept from others represent a way for them to bear witness to their own oppression (Lamb 1999b).

*Sexual Violence Survivor Advocates and Activists: Goals and Actions*

As noted in Chapter 2, sexual violence is underreported and it is an experience in which silence reigns supreme (Saradjian and Nobus 2003; Fileborn and Phillips 2019). Advocacy and activism are about breaking that silence through voice and/or action. Just as victims of crime can be driven to advocacy through several channels, including community support or by having the advocacy role instilled in them by the media, there are several ways victims of sexual violence may become advocates and activists (Kenney 2002). Their work varies and can include providing victims with legal advice before they go to court (Houpt 2016), working on policy reform (Kort 2015), and advocating for reform in the criminal justice system such as teaching police to better address and receive victims’ complaints of sexual violence (Henry 2008; Donnelly 2016). Furthermore, the ways they advocate are tied to the goals of their specific advocacy and activism avenues. For example, victims may advocate because they do not feel that police will keep them or others safe and advocacy and activism are roads to empowerment (Sheehy 2012). Through advocacy and activism, they can challenge the victim blaming that the media and police engage in following a sexual violence and expose the flaws in the system (Sheehy 2012). Their advocacy and activism may involve decentering the criminal justice system that made them passive or failed them (Gotell 2012). In fact, the anti-rape movement that was borne from feminism prompted many activist activities specifically unconnected to the criminal
justice system including self-defence courses, marches such as Take Back the Night, the creation of hotlines, and awareness raising campaigns (Gotell 2012).

Therefore, survivors may advocate by participating in events that raise awareness about survivors and victimization, such as Slutwalk, because of its goals to prevent victim blaming and slut shaming due to the clothing one wears (Infusino 2014). They may also participate in research about sexual violence as a form of advocacy because, in sharing their experiences about seeking therapy or disclosing, they may strengthen others to do the same (Infusino 2014). Activism or advocacy through theatre allows survivors to raise awareness by challenging people, creating empathy, and showing sexual violence in all of its complexities (Infusino 2014). Others may turn to art or writing to tell their stories or advocate together with other professionals like researchers, legal scholars, and educators, similar to the advocacy of injury survivors (Sheehy 2012). This shows how their individual and collective advocacy goals and activities are linked.

*Sexual Violence Survivor Advocates and Activists as Tertiary Victims*

From their actions, it is evident that advocacy and activism are both collective and individual ways for victims of sexual violence who have been silenced to take power back (Gotell 2012). Like the tertiary deviants who were “coming out all over”, more and more survivors of sexual violence are coming “forward as activists” (Kitsuse 1980:8; Infusino 2014:32). Although Kitsuse (1980) included victims of sexual violence in his examples of tertiary deviants, he did not explain how they reject societal norms or demand rights and protections. However, sexual violence victims who become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists engage in acts of resistance and may even pay a price for doing so through discrimination and stigmatization (Sheehy 2012; Fileborn 2016). Resistance is “the transformative action” initiated by individuals “to press their own claims in relation to others
who discriminate against them” (Riessman 2000a:113). In this way, the involvement of survivors of sexual violence in advocacy and activist work is similar to the work of tertiary deviants and they can be considered tertiary victims (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002).

Furthermore, there are several similarities in the process into, and engagement of, LGBTQ+ individuals as tertiary deviants and that of sexual violence victims who have become advocates and activists. In addition to the negative labeling they experience, the similarities include the concepts of having an invisible identity, closeting, coming out, being outed, and managing or resisting stigma. These concepts are also associated with other tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists described above and more specifically related to speech and silence. It is, therefore, important to understand the move from silence to voice through disclosures of sexual victimization and speaking out about “invisible forms of identity,” where one can choose whether or not to publicize a hidden identity (Bowen and Blackmon 2003:1400).

Silence and Disclosures about Sexual Victimization

Whether or not victims are stigmatized, being a victim of sexual violence is to have a stigmatized identity that is concealable (Andalibi et al. 2017). It is invisible in that others may not be aware that a person is a victim unless he or she identifies oneself as such. But at times, and contrary to stigma theory’s suggestion that invisible stigmas can be hidden or voluntarily disclosed, people feel forced to disclose even invisible stigmas, such as their status as a victim or survivor (Goffman 1963:73; Riessman 2000a). Though all anti-sexual violence advocates and activists speak openly about sexual violence, not all anti-sexual violence advocates and activists who are also survivors of sexual violence choose to speak openly about their victimization or even disclose it. This is understandable because many people never disclose their experiences
with sexual victimization, and those that do may wait until adulthood or later in life (Alaggia 2004; Andalibi et al. 2017).

Because sexual victimization is often unspeakable for victims and too horrible to be uttered, it is important to consider the profound relationship of both silence and speech to deprivation, degradation, and subjugation (Breckenridge 1999; Glenn 2004). Victims may deny or minimize the violence due to the humiliation at having been victimized, an unwillingness to relive the pain through speaking about it, or due to the internalization of blame attributed to them by others (Breckenridge 1999; Romito 2008; Tillman et al. 2010). They may also remain silent to manage bearing the stigmatized identity of ‘victim’ (Hallsworth and Young 2008). Furthermore, disclosing can be emotionally laborious which may outweigh both the benefits to doing so as well as the “perceived harm of the incident” (Fileborn 2018:9).

Additionally, just like sexual violence must be viewed through intersectionality, so must disclosure practices (Fileborn 2018). This can shed light on the many decisions that are made in order to disclose including what to say, in what context, “to whom and whose experiences become visible” (Fileborn 2018:3). Disclosing is therefore not a neutral act; the intersectional positions of those who disclose and those who are disclosed to shape it (Fileborn 2018). Not everyone feels free to disclose because aspects of their identity may impact whether or not they feel or are safe in the aftermath. Additionally, depending on the experience, disclosing one’s experience about sexual violence may also mean disclosing other aspects of one’s identity that they are not yet comfortable sharing, like one’s sexual orientation (Fileborn 2018). Therefore, while disclosing may help some victims regain power this may not be true for all victims (Fileborn 2018).
Whether victims silence themselves or are silenced by others, they may experience “a push-pull dialectic” where they vacillate between the need to deny what happened to them and feeling compelled to speak about it (Flynn 2008:219). The problem with this double-bind is that it conveys the message to “keep silent, or speak and be shamed,” and the question of whether or not to speak can become tormenting (Glenn 2004:59; Flynn 2008). In fact, when victims who were silent come to share their trauma for the first time, they may “experience genuine terror,” in part due to the fact that they were silent for so long (Lister 1982:875). The difficulty in speaking also lies in the fact that while feminist activists in the 1970s helped put sexual violence on the social and cultural agenda, they spoke about sexual violence in ways that differed from the experiences of many survivors (Loney-Howes 2018). Therefore, speaking out is difficult when one’s experiences of sexual violence do not fit popular ideas about what ‘real’ sexual violence looks like or when one’s narrative is not clear, linear, and coherent (Loney-Howes 2018; Serisier 2018). The decisions around whether or not to speak, therefore, come with considerations about whether one will be heard and believed. Therefore, the literature on the disclosure practices of survivors suggests that disclosing is an ongoing, iterative process about which survivors make context-based decisions. For example, like LGBTQ individuals, survivors may come out as a victim of sexual violence fully to some, partially to others, and not at all to still others (Loney-Howes 2018).

Other considerations that survivors make around disclosures include a selection process around whom to tell as well as how much of one’s story to relay (Fileborn 2018). Survivors may also assess whether those they want to disclose to would respond supportively because they may have experienced negative reactions, such as being blamed or dismissed, when disclosing in the past (Fileborn 2018). However, speaking out is a momentous and defiant act which can help
victims gain power as well as break the perpetrator’s hold on them that was kept alive through silence (Lister 1982; Alaggia 2004:1224; Hallsworth and Young 2008). While some may speak out about their stigmatizing experiences of victimization as an act of rebellion or defiance, others have had it dragged out of them such as that which occurs when members of the LGBTQ community are outed or sexual orientations revealed (Kitsuse 1980).

Some victims prefer to disclose anonymously because disclosing, as noted with tertiary deviants and survivor advocates, comes with social risks (Andalibi et al. 2017). Disclosing anonymously can enable resistance and allow victims to represent “anywoman and everywoman” (Gotell 2012:260). One venue for anonymous or semi-anonymous disclosures is online because it allows for a balance between hiding and vulnerability that feels safe (Andalibi et al. 2017). However, while disclosing anonymously can curtail criticism, embarrassment, and retaliation, it can also cause others to question a victim’s credibility and trustworthiness, influencing the decision to offer support (Andalibi et al. 2017). It is, therefore, important to consider that when victims are silent, it is not that they have “nothing to say” but that they lack a “public voice and space in which to” speak (Glenn 2004:10). For example, women whose parents did not discuss sex with them in a positive and frank manner were less likely to disclose that they were victimized (Smith and Cook 2008). Additionally, some victims and survivors, especially those who experienced child sexual abuse, may only disclose or hint to their victimization through their behaviours, such as engaging in substance abuse and eating disorders (Alaggia 2004).

While there may be benefits to speaking out about one’s sexual victimization this is not the case for everyone who discloses. Often, there are negative consequences and some may feel worse after disclosing (Ahrens 2006). As noted in chapter 2, these negative reactions can be
detrimental to survivors and lead them to experience further trauma, known as secondary victimization (Ahrens 2006) or a “second wounding” (Loney-Howes 2018: 33). This can occur when victims are doubted or blamed, or well-meaning reactions are experienced by survivors as negative (Ahrens 2006). Additionally, the negative reactions from support providers such as legal or medical service personnel, family, or friends have led some survivors to no longer talk about their experiences (Ahrens 2006). It has also led them to believe that disclosing is ineffective, to blame themselves, and to question whether their experiences of sexual violence qualified as such (Ahrens 2006). In other words, survivors decided whether to speak or stay silent based on their experiences with past disclosures and negative reactions made them more cautious and, ultimately, silenced them.

Therefore, not only do survivors have a difficult time identifying themselves as survivors, because they may be unable to identify what happened to them as sexual violence, but their ability to self-identity is impacted by the recipients of their disclosures who can “confirm or deny their victim status” (Ahrens 2006:271). However, while some victims have “negative post-disclosure experiences,” such as when their disclosures are met with skepticism, they may also experience positive and supportive responses to their disclosures (Alaggia 2004:1222). Often, the positive responses victims receive after disclosing is because they engaged in a selective process around who and what to disclose (Fileborn 2018). Furthermore, disclosing may be healing and give survivors a chance to integrate their experiences into their lives (Loney-Howes 2018). Disclosing can also be an act of political activism and consciousness-raising in that it can draw attention to the issue of sexual violence as well as situate one’s individual experiences “within a broader system of power relations” and help others do the same (Fileborn 2018:11).
Public Disclosures as Advocacy or Activism and as Peer Support

When anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism take place in public, it can drive out some of the silence that permeates and energizes rape myths and sexual violence (Infusino 2014). Recent media coverage of sexual violence survivors turned advocates or activists focuses on those who have chosen to come out of anonymity and uses the terms ‘victim-advocate’ and ‘victim-activist’ interchangeably (Kort 2015; Brothers 2016; Walters 2016). Similarly, Infusino (2014) believes that the act of publicly disclosing one’s experience of victimization is itself a form of advocacy because the verbal or non-verbal sharing of one’s trauma in widely accessible venues can accomplish both helping other survivors and advocating for change. This is similar to the publicizing of personal stories used by injury prevention survivor advocates to push for change and research shows that going public about one’s experiences is beneficial to the healing of survivors of sexual abuse and incest (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000).

Public disclosures and the use of online activist spaces are just two of the ways that victims may go on to become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. Survivors may turn to online spaces because of the negative reactions they have received when they have disclosed in person (O’Neil 2018). The studies by Fileborn (2016), Anadalibi et al. (2017), O’Neil (2018), and Loney-Howes (2018) on victims’ use of online spaces further demonstrate how the concepts of stigma management and resistance, disclosures, peer support, and social change or advocacy and activism, raised in Sections I and II are linked and specifically related to sexual violence survivor advocates and activists. The use of online spaces for public activism has been called ‘digilantsim’ in which storytelling and being recognized is an important motivator for survivors (O’Neil 2018). This is because “storytelling is a practice allowing victim-survivors to be recognised” and in these spaces individual survivors can “create a collective identity” and be
empowered when they are recognized (O’Neil 2018: 53, 54). Furthermore, Fileborn (2016:1490) found that online activist spaces, such as “Facebook, Hollaback or the Everyday Sexism Project,” afford women who have experienced street harassment, which falls on the continuum of sexual violence, the opportunity to accomplish a multitude of these things.

For example, online, victims can share their experiences in their own words, or through storytelling, can be believed and taken seriously, as well as have an opportunity to help other victims (Fileborn 2016; Andalibi et al. 2017). Even though disclosing and seeking support online may be difficult for survivors, participating in these spaces could provide victims with affirmation, validation, acknowledgement, and support in a space where their voices are honoured (Fileborn 2016; Andalibi et al. 2017). It can also “situate their experience within broader structural forces,” showing them that they are not to blame, thereby normalizing their feelings about their experiences (Fileborn 2016:1493; Andalibi et al. 2017). This is also similar to the community stigma management that is used by bisexual individuals or the peer support used by cancer survivors and mental health consumers (Knous 2006; Ussher et al. 2006; Chavaria 2012).

Victims use online spaces to simultaneously give and receive support in a space where they can discuss and disclose the stigmatizing experience of sexual victimization with those who have been similarly stigmatized (Andalibi et al. 2017). Online spaces can also be an alternative to a criminal justice system which did not meet victims’ needs or were harmful and unjust (Fileborn 2016). For example, O’Neil (2018:55) found that the justice needs of survivors include “having a voice, being heard and being believed” which may be met on digital platforms. Online, victims have discussed their desire to disclose, reasons for or against disclosing, and the outcomes of past disclosure as well as the emotions of sadness, fear, anger, and shame (Andalibi
et al. 2017). They also discussed their uncertainty about naming the sexual violence they experienced and its impact on their lives, similar to the learning that occurs around the naming of their experiences for domestic violence survivor advocates (Andalibi et al. 2017; Wood 2017). The reasons for disclosing online include interacting with other survivors, accessing and offering support, seeking advice and solidarity, telling their story, being recognized and, at times, to name and shame their perpetrators (O’Neil 2018).

In order to feel heard and validated, survivors require “recognition of their experiences” and in these spaces recognition is both sought and achieved through feedback from other users (O’Neil 2018:54). In these ways and in these spaces, victims may be both theorists and witnesses of what happened to them (Loney-Howes 2018). These spaces allow them to be the experts of their own experiences rather than calling on legal experts to verify their claims, and give them permission to challenge what consent looks like and to be authentic about their experiences that may not fit with the dominant ways in which sexual violence is conceived, such as experiencing physical pleasure (Loney-Howes 2018; O’Neil 2018). In creating the space for new definitions of sexual violence and rape as well as other challenges, these spaces are also outlets for consciousness raising (Loney-Howes 2018). This is because “the affective work done in these online spaces constitutes important political work through the ways in which witnessing fosters a sense of solidarity as well as recognition” (Loney-Howes 2018:44). Survivors’ use of online spaces to disclose is also an act of consciousness raising because, online, survivors raise awareness about sexual violence and also “locate their experiences within a broader pattern and within gendered power structures” (Fileborn 2016:1492). The power dynamic that exists when survivors usually give testimony, such as before legal or clinical professional, is broken down on these sites (Loney-Howes 2018). Instead, these sites are a symbol of the political work that is
happening among and between survivors and the power relation that exists here is based on survivors’ shared experience (Loney-Howes 2018).

Like survivors in the mental health community who become activists to resist stigma and to create change, participating in these sites is about both the individual need to be heard and acknowledged as well as the collective aim of social change and education (Chavaria 2016; Fileborn 2016). Furthermore, Fileborn’s (2016) finding of a political element to using online spaces to tell stories of victimization is similar to Infusino’s (2014) conclusion that public disclosures are forms of advocacy. Therefore, publicly disclosing and using online activist spaces both serve to raise awareness and educate others about sexual violence and as a way to prevent it from happening by challenging and changing the norms that downplay sexual violence and its effects (Infusino 2014; Fileborn 2016). Public disclosures, including those that occur online, are also forms of peer support because victims not only educate the public through their advocacy and activism, but they also reach out and assist other victims.

In fact, Loney-Howes (2018:43) calls what happens on these sites a form of “peer-to-peer” witnessing” that “create the possibility of response.” However, the imperative to speak that is aligned with “feminist goals of changing public attitudes” may imply that victims who are unable, uninterested, or unready to publicly disclose are shirking the responsibility of undoing the stigma of sexual violence (Serisier 2018:56). Rather than see those who speak as the heroes, it assigns blame to those that do not for the victimization of women (Serisier 2018). Furthermore, not all survivors have felt welcomed in anti-sexual violence spaces. For example, “people of color, LGBTQ+ communities, and those living with disability” felt or experienced being excluded from anti-sexual violence spaces (Fileborn 2018:12).
Section III Summary

As evident from the literature reviewed in this section, several concepts are central to this study’s understanding about the move from victimhood or survivorship to advocacy or activism. These include labels, stigma, silence and voice, disclosures, and peer support. As with tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists, the ways in which victims of sexual violence are labeled, or label themselves, may impact how they feel, what they decide to do, and how they decide to do it. The labels may silence them or motivate them to speak out about their experiences. The interconnected concepts of silence and voice are also foundational to understanding and creating change around sexual violence because victims who become advocates and activists can speak about both silence and voice characterized respectively through their dual identities of victim and advocate. They can also discuss the mechanisms of power that serve to silence them as well as the factors that have led them to speak about or disclose their victimization. Since experts and the media continue to suggest that victims of sexual violence remain silent and isolated, it is important to capture the meaning of these concepts in the lives of individuals who have both experienced sexual victimization and struggled with silence, voice, advocacy, and power (Ullman 2010).

However, because of the stigma of victimization, victims may choose to never disclose their experiences or to disclose them in ways that feel safe or are less stigmatizing, such as by disclosing anonymously. Their disclosures may be their entry or gateway into advocacy and activism involvement or acts of advocacy and activism in and of themselves. This is because disclosing provides victims with a way to reach out for help, offer assistance to others, as well as create social change by bringing awareness to the issue of sexual violence. While the sharing of their private stories, whether publicly or otherwise, can be powerful tools for change, disclosing
is just one way victims of sexual violence may become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. The avenues they choose for acts of advocacy and activism are tied to the goals of those paths. Whether their advocacy and activism include private, semi-public, or public disclosures or whether they involve education, public events, or supporting other victims, the anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism of survivors of sexual violence are rooted in resistance and are a way they can manage the stigma of sexual victimization.

3.5 Research Gaps and Approach

This review has highlighted several gaps in the literature on sexual violence victims and survivors and their anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism which the study aims to address. Firstly, tertiary deviance overall and the direct links between the three levels of deviance and the three levels of victimization have not been well researched. Although Kenney (2002) examined the parallels between the three phases of deviance and three phases of victimization, he did so for homicide survivors and not victims of sexual violence. However, Kitsuse (1980) included rape victims as examples of tertiary deviants and this study focuses on and asks about each phase of victimization by pointing to its parallels in labeling theory.

Secondly, unlike studies that focus on victims or those on the individuals who assist victims and advocate on their behalf, the individuals in this study can be considered peer support workers in that they assist or speak out for those with whom they have a shared experience (Mead and MacNeil 2004). While peer support workers have been widely studied for their work in the mental health field with individuals suffering from the same or similar conditions, the peer support work of anti-sexual violence advocates and activists who are also victims of sexual violence has not been studied, even though it is accepted that peer support is beneficial to victims.
of sexual violence (Davidson et al. 1999; Mead and MacNeil 2004; Solomon 2006; Winkel 2006; Repper and Carter 2011).

Thirdly, while primary and secondary deviance and victimization have been studied, these studies have not considered possible positive outcomes of these experiences. Similarly, studies on stigmatized identities, such as gay youth, have focused on the negative aspects of their identity (Hammack and Cohler 2011). However, this study’s examination of the move to advocacy and activism can serve to counter the general literature that focuses solely on the deleterious aspects of victimization and show that people can and do move out of the victim identity and into the more positive identity of advocate and activists or from discreditability to normality (Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002; Hammack and Cohler 2011). Instead of problematizing victimization, as the primary and secondary phases of victimization suggest, it examines the avenues out of victimization and the new identity that may be found in the tertiary phase (Lemert 1951; Osborne 1974).

In addition to addressing these research gaps, the study uses the information gleaned from its review of the literature in its approach to inquiring into participants’ process of becoming advocates or activists. For example, some of the media coverage around public disclosures about sexual victimization makes it appear as if coming forward is easy or the natural way in which victims become advocates and activists. But the literature on tertiary deviance, survivor advocates, and sexual violence refute this, especially as they emphasize the stigmatization that members of each of the above groups experience. The literature on these groups also show how, often, the voices of survivors who become advocates and activists are not given the space to speak in a way that allows for the integration of their combined experiences with survivorship and social change to be heard. Therefore, in exploring the process in which a victim of sexual
violence becomes an anti-sexual violence advocate or activist, this study investigated how participants’ lives are organized around the identities of victim or survivor and advocate and activist and whether and how they have politicized their victimization through their advocacy and activism.

Moreover, studies about deviance have been heavily weighted in the views and actions of institutions and neglected those of “the stigmatized, the labelled, the outsiders, the deviants” (Osborne 1974:76). However, examining the tertiary dimension of the labeling process in the way that this study does allows for an analytic shift in focus from “the definition of deviance imposed by societal reactions to counterdefinitions of those reactions by deviants” (Kitsuse 1980:9). This can shed light on how victim advocates and activists define and perceive the important concepts related to their experiences of sexual violence, victimization, and advocacy. They are uniquely positioned to speak on these issues because they are both directly impacted by sexual violence and have a privileged perspective of the process in which social change through advocacy and activism takes place (Chavaria 2016; Wood 2017).

Finally, most studies on sensitive topics, such as this one on sexual violence victimization, have studied down, studied the powerless, and neglected to look at the powerful (Becker 1963; Lee 1993). However, in studying individuals who are both victims and advocates, this study examines people who, as the literature explains, may have regained power through their advocacy and activism. It asked about the evolution of their relationship to power from their victimization experiences until today and how they exercised resistance as they moved through the victimization phases. Furthermore, studies that have heard from survivor advocates and activists have focused on what they do in these roles or why they do it. This study, instead, sought to understand how survivors of sexual violence came to be involved in advocacy and
activism in the first place while considering that the ways in which they advocate and the reasons for their advocacy and activism may be related. Therefore, in understanding from the literature that becoming a tertiary deviant or survivor advocate or activist is tied to earlier and related experiences, the study investigated whether participants’ advocacy and activism grew out of these combined experiences and whether they can be considered tertiary victims.

3.6 Chapter Summary

This chapter has reviewed the bodies of literature on tertiary deviants, survivor advocates and activists, and victims of sexual violence and their anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. The studies discussed in each section were grounded on the experiences and perspectives of the individuals in these three groups. The chapter has demonstrated that the latter group can be considered examples of the two former groups in working towards turning their identities of victims into the more positive ones of advocates and activists and in resisting the stigma and negative labels that come with sexual victimization. It has discussed some of the stigma management strategies employed by all three groups and how this includes whether and how members of the groups disclose their personal experiences or stigmatized identities. It has also discussed the various advocacy and activist activities of these groups as well as their motivations for these involvements. Each of these advocacy and activism avenues include elements of resistance and stigma management.

The chapter has also shown how the peer support that is helpful to some tertiary deviants and survivor advocates and activists can also be helpful to victims. Peer support for survivor advocates and activists, including those in the area of sexual violence, accomplish several important goals. These include making space for the identity transformation of a survivor to that of advocate or activist, reaching out to other survivors, addressing gaps in particular systems,
processing one’s past experiences, creating social change, channeling one’s grief, creating a shared narrative with other survivors, and managing and resisting stigma. The study now turns to the methodological approach and design of the study used to address the research gaps noted above in responding to the study’s research question regarding how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists.
Chapter 4. Methodology

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter identifies the methodological approach and design of the study, including how the data were collected and analyzed with further reference to the conceptual framework of the research. The chapter also outlines how the study’s qualitative narrative feminist approach was useful to investigating the specific research question: How do victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists? Narrative feminist research is a way of conducting narrative research that is grounded in and informed by feminist perspectives (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004). Using narrative research as a methodology to investigate this study’s research question together with feminist perspectives acknowledges that feminist scholarship has put “narrative on the map,” which is largely ignored and upholds the values and goals of feminist research which are outlined throughout this chapter (Stanley and Temple 2008:276). These include the worthiness of studying the personal, linking the personal to the political, seeing emotion and reflexivity as sources of insight, and understanding that a study about the lives of victims who have become advocates must begin with and attend to their life experiences (Harding 1993; Allen 2011).

4.2 Narrative Feminist Research

Just as the rights movement inspired Kitsuse (1980) to theorize on tertiary deviance, it also led to academic interest in narrative methodology (Fraser and MacDougall 2016). This is because both narratives and the rights movement insist on listening to and raising marginalized voices (Fraser and MacDougall 2016). The narrative approach to research can advance agendas of social justice and equality (Sandelowski 1991; Bleakley 2005; Hammack and Cohler 2011:163) or cultural and political shifts (Squire 2012), many of which are important in
advocacy and activist work (Toporek 1999), including advocacy by survivors of sexual violence (Infusino 2014). The feminist approach to research shares these goals in that it allows for the uncovering of lives that have either been ignored or presented one-dimensionally (Allen 2011). In doing so, it makes room for presenting participants as active agents instead of pathologizing the impact of, and their responses to, social problems, such as sexual victimization (Fraser and MacDougall 2016). Similarly, the narrative approach allows participants to “create and give voice to” their own stories (Rappaport 1995:798) and it is one way to theorize “under or unrepresented lives” or hidden stories, such as those about sexual violence (Squire 2012:18; Squire et al. 2015).

While the lives and histories of victims of sexual violence have been studied at length in the social sciences (Walklate 2014), victims’ involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism has not. Since narrative research is relevant for studying disruptive or challenging life events as well as studying social movements (Riessman 2000b:4; Bamberg 2006), it is well suited for this study on sexual victimization and on advocating for social change. Additionally, since narrative methods is an interpretive approach to research (Feldman et al. 2004), it is well suited to study the interpretive labeling process (Weiss 2011), such as how participants labeled themselves, or were labeled by others, following victimization and disclosures as well as how their advocacy involvement has been influenced by those labels. The interpretive approach allows for an examination of why people act the way they do, how identities are constructed and undermined, and how their meaningful social roles are defined (Alford 1998). Narratives are also useful in uncovering the social, historical, and cultural constraints that people face, the justifications for the decisions they have made, including political undertakings or moral enterprise (Sandelowski 1991), and how their identities have been shaped (Etherington 2013).
was, therefore, the method chosen to study how participants became anti-sexual violence advocates, as well as the challenges they faced in doing so, the reasons behind their decision to advocate, and how their identities have been shaped by their advocacy involvement.

**4.3 Research Design**

This study is descriptive and explanatory as well as both deductive and inductive. Descriptive studies focus on the explanation of participants’ situations and “describe[s] the nature and function of stories,” whereas explanatory narrative research focuses more on why something has happened and can clarify an event’s significance to the reader (Sandelowski 1991:164). Using participant narratives, this study both describes and explains the experiences and events that led participants to become involved in advocacy, including their experiences of primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization. As outlined in previous chapters, participants’ involvement in advocacy can be considered an expression of tertiary victimization. The deductive component of the study came from my familiarity with specific concepts in labeling and feminist standpoint theories that were used to frame some of the interview questions, including the concepts of stigma and stigma resilience or destigmatization (Riessman 2000a; Clair et al. 2016). However, the study is inductive as well in that I remained open to all concepts that arose in participant narratives which is a key feature of both narrative and feminist qualitative studies (Fraser and MacDougall 2016).

Using theory based sampling and purposive sampling which are discussed below, 25 narrative semi-structured interviews with participants who are both victims of sexual violence and anti-sexual violence advocates or activists were conducted. Some were conducted in person and most were conducted via Zoom, a video and audio-conferencing system. In-depth interviews and narrative methodology have been used together in other studies (Mitchell and Egudo 2003).
and to interview victims of violence (Allen 2011). Participant narratives were transcribed, and the texts of the transcription were analyzed and interpreted (Lindseth and Norsberg 2004). Studies which focus on understanding the meaning of life experiences, such those using narratives, generally have a small sample size due to the deep level of analysis that is required (Bryman 2012). While there are different opinions about the number of sufficient qualitative interviews (Baker and Edwards 2012), six to 12 narrative interviews may be enough to reach theoretical saturation depending on the nature of what and who is being studied (Guest, Bunce, and Johnson 2006). The total number of participants in this study was double that estimate. An in-depth account of the methodology used in this study is described below.

4.4 Sampling and Recruitment

Participants who could be classified as victim-advocates or “survivor-activists” (Schmiedt 2016), or a combination of those terms, were recruited for this study using theory based sampling and purposive sampling methods. Theory based sampling indicates that participants are selected because they can help the research expand or develop a theory (Omona 2013). This sampling method was chosen because I sought to expand on labeling theory, develop the concept of tertiary deviance, and apply it to the experiences of victims and survivors who become advocates and activists. Therefore, the sample inclusion criteria listed below (Figure 4.1) were built from the literature on labeling and feminist standpoint theories (Bernard and Ryan 2010). Because this study represents the first examination of the trajectory from victim to advocate, it did not seek a representative sample. Instead, it sought to capture a multitude of experiences and stories about primary and secondary victimization and the varying trajectories to

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19 Recruitment methods for this study as well as the interview questions were vetted by the University of Guelph’s Research Ethics Board and the ethical considerations of this study are discussed later in this chapter (see Appendix Q for the REB application).
tertiary victimization or advocacy. To find a diverse sample, screening questions (Figure 4.2) were sent to all potential participants so that the study could highlight both the variety and commonalities about victimization and advocacy among participants (Palys and Atchison 2007:144) which is supported by the feminist perspective on qualitative research (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004).

While seeking a diverse sample and in addition to theory based sampling, the study used purposive sampling in which participants must meet predetermined criteria in order to be included in the sample (Guest et al. 2006). Therefore, only participants with particular characteristics and experiential expertise on a phenomenon were invited to participate (Palys and Atchison 2007:144). The sampling frame for this study consists of individuals of all genders who have experienced sexual violence, including childhood sexual abuse and/or sexual assault, and who are, or have been, anti-sexual violence advocates or activists in some capacity (see Figure 4.1).

**Figure 4.1. Sample Inclusion Criteria**

- Victim or survivor of sexual violence (child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
- Participant has disclosed victimization to someone(s) other than mental health professional (e.g. friend, family member, authority figure such as police or faith leader, etc.).
- Be or have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.

*Sample Inclusion Criteria*

‘Victim’ and ‘Survivor’- As outlined in chapters 2 and 3, people who have experienced sexual victimization use various terms to refer to themselves, including victim and survivor (Lamb 1999b). According to Knudten (1989:120), victims are those “who experience the
symptoms of victimization, while survivors are those who have lived through their victimization, have overcome or risen above victimization, and thus are no longer victims.” This study includes individuals who consider themselves victims or survivors (provided that they meet the rest of the sample inclusion criteria) and each participant was asked at the outset of the interview which term they prefer to use when referring to themselves, or if they prefer another term. Participants need not have publicly disclosed their victimization; however, to be included in the sample they must have disclosed to someone other than a mental health professional such as a friend, family member, police officer, faith leader, etc. This criterion was necessary in order to examine whether participants experienced stigmatization post-disclosures and to understand their process of stigma resistance and stigmatization. This is because stigma is a key feature in both labeling theory, regarding secondary deviance, and feminist standpoint theory, regarding secondary victimization. However, there was no time limit between victimization and disclosures or victimization and advocacy involvement that was placed on the eligibly of participating.

‘Advocate’ or ‘Activist’ – The scant literature on tertiary victimization highlights the idea of crime victims inculcating “positive new role identities” such as that of “victims’ advocates” and this study was devised with the specific term ‘advocate’ in mind (Kenney 2002:256). From an etymological perspective, the word advocate comes from the Latin compound of ‘ad’ which means toward and ‘vocare,’ which means ‘to call,’ derived from the root word for voice, ‘voc’ (Merriam-Webster 2016). However, the academic literature on advocacy highlights the confusion around how advocacy is defined, what is its purpose as well as what can and cannot be considered advocacy (Peled and Edleson 1994; Toporek 1999; Reid 2000). Hoffman and Stovall (2006:5154) define advocacy as “active support, which includes directly representing, defending,
intervening, or recommending a course of action.” Other definitions of advocacy focus on process, such as service provision, or on goals, such as empowerment (Peled and Edleson 1994).

In contrast to advocacy, activism is characterized by movement or action and is defined as “a doctrine or practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue” (Merriam-Webster 2017). Victim activists are those that are concerned with victims’ rights and involved in “the victims’ movement” (Smith 1992). They often create and facilitate collective action such as public awareness, legislative action, or the support of victims (Dorius and McCarthy 2011). The recent media coverage of sexual violence focuses on victims coming out of anonymity and activists are often victims who have gone public with their stories of victimization (Walters 2016). For example, the media has seized on the narratives of “activist survivors” who have sued institutions that let them down following their sexual assault (Kort 2015; Yashari 2016).

As noted in chapter 3, however, the work of victims of sexual violence who become advocates and activists varies and the media uses the terms ‘victim-advocate’ and ‘victim-activist’ interchangeably (Kort 2015; Brothers 2016). Therefore, in order to broaden the search for participants, this study used both the terms advocate and activist when recruiting for participants. Since the use of voice and actions are key to both advocates’ and activists’ pursuit of change, to be included in this study participants had to currently be, or have been, involved in advocacy work that addresses the issue of sexual violence or how it is perceived, discussed, or addressed, whether through speaking, writing, artistic, and survivor-focused endeavors. Participants were asked to choose the term (advocate or activist) that best fits their involvement in anti-sexual violence work at the outset of each interview, or if they preferred another term.
Furthermore, the sample inclusion criteria that was distributed on recruitment materials, such as social media posts and information letters, were open-ended in that definitions of sexual violence or advocacy and activism were not provided (see Figure 1). This was done intentionally and in line with the feminist and narrative approaches of this qualitative study which prioritized the standpoint and interpretations of participants over those of the researcher (Smith 1990; Harding 1991; Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004; Allen 2011). Therefore, in the interviews, participants were asked to define or characterize what the terms ‘sexual violence’ and ‘anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism’ mean to them.

Recruitment

Potential participants were contacted three ways and the study poster (Appendix B) and information letter (Appendix C) were included with each method:

1. I emailed individuals from my personal and professional contacts and my involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy, such as through the advocacy organizations on which I sit as a member of the board\textsuperscript{20} and consult for,\textsuperscript{21} and other contacts that I have made as a result of my involvement with these and other organizations. I asked for their assistance in recruiting participants for the study (Appendix D) by providing them with the study poster and information letter to be shared with people who they think would be interested in participating and who meet the sample inclusion criteria. Potential participants to whom these individuals forwarded the study information were able to contact me at the email address listed on the study materials they received.

\textsuperscript{20} Mi Li – Who Is For Me is an independent organization focused on addressing sexual abuse of minors in the Jewish community. https://www.facebook.com/MiLi.Who.Is.For.Me/

\textsuperscript{21} At the time of this writing, I was consulting for Sacred Spaces which is a cross-denominational initiative to address abuses of power in Jewish institutions. https://www.jewishsacredspaces.org/about/mission
2. I posted the study poster and information letter on my social media accounts including Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn with a short post about the study (Appendix E). Potential participants who met the sample inclusion criteria were invited to contact me by email, or through the direct message services of these platforms, if they were interested in more information about the study or in being interviewed.

3. Potential participants who have been public through the mainstream media or on social media about their victimization and advocacy experiences were contacted directly by email (Appendix F). Examples include some of the individuals discussed in the study’s Introduction (Chapter 1). Additionally, because of the study’s interest in how religious communities address sexual violence, individuals who experienced sexual violence in their religious communities and are now outspoken anti-sexual violence advocates were also directly invited to participate in this study.

When potential participants emailed to say that they would like to participate in the study, they received a reply email (Appendix F) which outlined participation details. The email asked those who wanted to continue with the participation selection process to answer six screening questions. The recruitment screening questions (Figure 4.2) asked about potential participants’ gender, number of victimization experiences/perpetrators, relationship to perpetrators, disclosures (i.e. public or private), disclosure process (i.e. formal, such as authorities, media, or religious/community leaders; informal, such as private correspondence, private conversations; or both formal and informal methods), and involvement in anti-sexual advocacy/activism. As
mentioned above, the screening questions were designed to promote a diverse sample (Palys and Atchison 2007).^22

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**Figure 4.2 Sample Screening Questions**

- My gender ____________________________
- I have experienced sexual victimization:
  - □ Once or more than once but by same perpetrator
  - □ More than once by different perpetrators
- The perpetrator(s) was/were: □ a stranger □ known to me
- I disclosed the victimization:
  - □ Publicly □ To people I selected to tell □ Both
- The way in which I disclosed was:
  - □ Formal (authorities, media, religious/community leaders)
  - □ Informal (private correspondence/conversations)
  - □ Both
- My anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism involvement entails________________________

---

To protect the privacy and confidentiality of everyone who contacted me to participate, individuals were not asked for their names or numbers unless they were selected to participate. (See Appendices O and P for the way in which the participant selection process protected potential participants’ identities and how the process was explained to them.) The emails and information of the individuals who chose not to continue with the selection process or who dropped out once selected for an interview were deleted.

The call for participants was open for a one-month period after which, excluding the seven individuals who dropped out, 25 people who met the sample inclusion criteria were interested in participating in the study. Though the initial plan was to select 10-12 individuals to interview, after reviewing the answers to the recruitment screening questions I decided to interview all 25 people.\(^{23}\) This decision was made so as to allow for a broader understanding of the research question regarding how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence

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^22 Screening questions were also designed to assist with the decisions around whom to include in the final sample in a way that captures the maximum variety within the experiences of participants. Ultimately, all potential participants who contacted me were included in the sample.

^23 Therefore, emails telling participants that they will or will not be included were never sent (Appendices O and P).
advocates or activists, as well as to allow for the diverse voices of the people who expressed a desire to participate. This is consistent with Smith’s (1990:224) position of making room for the voice of the discredited or those who “know the society differently.” It is also in the spirit of a feminist approach to narrative research that seeks to combat existing power and inequality structures between participants and a researcher who decides whose stories get to be represented in the research (Hilfinger Messias and DeJosephs 2004; Fraser and MacDougall 2016).

The final 25 participants were contacted by phone to discuss the study and the interview process, confirm their participation, and to set up a time and format (i.e. in person, phone call, or videoconference) for the interview. (See Appendix F for the verbal script of this phone call.) After the phone call, the consent forms (Appendix H) were emailed to participants so that they could review them if they so desired before their scheduled interview. Consent forms were also reviewed together with participants at the outset of each interview.

4.5 Sample Description

Since “actions to resist stigma need to be read in a social structural context” that is related to one’s position in life (Riessman 2000a:117), participants were asked to provide demographic information at the beginning of the interview. These are explained in depth below and the descriptive statistics are provided in Table 4.1. The socio-demographic characteristics that were collected include participants’ gender, birth year, ethnicity, marital status, and current country (Canada, U.S, other). Though information regarding sexual orientation was not gathered, four participants (16%) self-disclosed that they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual. The majority of

\[24\] The 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) on the violent victimization of lesbians, gays and bisexuals in Canada found that “bisexual individuals were almost nine times more likely to be sexually assaulted” (Simpson 2018b). Prior analysis found that those who identified as gay or lesbian “were more than twice as likely to be sexually assaulted as those who identified as heterosexual” (Conroy and Cotter 2017).
participants were female (76%)\textsuperscript{25}, white (88%)\textsuperscript{26}, and living in the United States (72%). Close to half of the participants were single (44%), though the sample also included participants who were married (36%) or divorced (20%). While participants ranged in age from 22 to 70 years old, they most commonly ranged from 31-40 years of age (28%), followed by 21-30 (24%), and then equally split between 41-50, 51-60, and 61-70 years of age (16% for each of these age groups). Additional descriptive statistics regarding victimization, disclosure, and advocacy experiences are provided in the Results section (Chapter 5).

![Table](https://example.com/table4_1.png)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sociodemographic Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tbody>
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<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Male\textsuperscript{27}</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td><strong>Age Range</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44%</td>
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\textsuperscript{25} According to the 20014 GSS on self-reported sexual assault in Canada, “Canadian women were far more likely than men to report that they were sexually assaulted” (Conroy and Cotter 2017). Additionally, Simpson (2018b) found that “regardless of sexual orientation, women reported experiencing violent victimization at a higher rate than men.”

\textsuperscript{26} According to the 2014 GSS on violent victimization and discrimination among visible minority populations, visible minorities were “as likely to report having been sexually assaulted” as non-visible minorities though they reported physical assault “at a far lower rate” than non-visible minorities (Simpson 2018a).

\textsuperscript{27} A statistical profile on police-reported sexual assaults in Canada from 2009 until 2014 found that “males accounted for just over 1 in 10 (13%) victims of police-reported sexual assaults. While the median age of female victims was 18 years, male victims of sexual assault were typically much younger, with a median age of 13 years. Children aged 13 and younger accounted for half (50%) of all male victims of police-reported sexual assault. This highlights a notable difference between the age profile of male and female sexual assault victims, with female victims being largely teenagers or young adults” (Rotenberg 2017).

\textsuperscript{28} One participant said that while growing up he “identified as transgender” but doesn’t “really feel I can claim transgender.” Though he “still checks male on boxes” he says, “I don’t really fit into that box.”
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<td>Divorced</td>
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**Country**

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<td>United States</td>
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<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</table>

### 4.6 Interview Format

Narrative research involves “collecting and analyzing the accounts people tell to describe experiences and offer interpretation” (Overcash 2003:179). In this study, the data were collected through narrative semi-structured interviews which sought to understand participants’ perspective, how it has informed the advocacy work they do, and whether and how their history of victimization and disclosures are linked to this work (Blumer 1969). The geographic frame for the study sought to capture the work of victim-advocates primarily in the English-speaking Western world and the sample includes participants from the United States, Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Depending on participants’ location, interviews were conducted in person, on the phone, or via audio or videoconference when distance prohibited face-to-face meetings. Though long-distance interviews are difficult to manage and control because of the miscommunications that can arise, at times there is no other alternative (Hermanowicz 2002). All interviews were recorded and notes were taken throughout.

The interviews were semi-structured in that depending on the stories participants told and the ways in which they told them, prompts, probes, or follow-up questions were used to assist in more fully filling out their stories (Greenlagh et al. 2005; Liamputtong 2012). These are essential to a successful interview about a sensitive topic (Bernard and Ryan 2010), such as sexual violence. Therefore, while many of the same questions were asked of each participant to ensure that the structure of the interviews remained the same across all participants (Guest et al. 2006),
the semi-structured nature of the interview allowed for additional questions to be posed in direct response to the particular stories participants told. Participants were repeatedly invited to provide a rich and detailed account of their experiences as well as explain narrative difficulties such as silences, hesitations, or contradictions and aspects of their experiences that they hinted to but did not articulate (Chase 2003; Fraser and MacDougall 2016). Understanding the relationship between narrative difficulties and submerged untold stories to the larger narrative is important when trying to understand competing identities (Chase 2003), such as victim/survivor and advocate/activist.

Following Becker (1963) and McAdams (1995) who divide participant experiences and narrative interviews into stages or chapters, interview questions were divided into three sections or plot marks (Bleakley 2005). Using the interview questions (Appendix I) as a guide and based on the phases of victimization, participants were invited to tell three stories; those about their experiences with sexual victimization, those about their experiences disclosing their victimization, and finally, the story about how they came to be an advocate. These stories uncovered how they dealt with victimization, the reactions to their disclosures and participants’ responses to these reactions, and how and why they became involved in advocacy. Therefore, the stories are directly related to primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization (Lemert 1967; Kitsuse 1980; Kenney 2002).

Interview Questions

Pilot Interviews: To ensure that the interview questions were clear and appropriate, I invited three anti-sexual violence advocates that I know from my professional work in anti-sexual violence advocacy to participate in a pilot study prior to conducting interviews with participants. These individuals fit the sample inclusion criteria and have publicly disclosed that
they have experienced sexual victimization. The invitation (Appendix J) included the study poster and information letter and asked them to select a time if they would like to participate in a 1-2-hour pilot interview to test the interview questions. Pilot study participants were provided with consent forms (Appendix K) which we reviewed prior to testing the interview questions and were informed that their responses would not be included in the study since their role was to test the questions. Two pilot interviews were conducted, since the third pilot participant was unable to meet. Following the pilot interviews, pilot participants were asked probing questions (Appendix L) about the interview guide and their suggestions as to how the interview questions should be altered. The interview guide (Appendix I) was then amended to reflect the feedback from the pilot interview participants, such as including questions about the ramifications of disclosing sexual victimization, training participants received to become advocates, and tensions participants may feel in being both victims/survivors and advocates/activists. Some interview questions are presented below as they relate to each phase of victimization and the important ideas in the literature on the victimization process (Burck 2005). The complete interview guide can be found in Appendix I.

**Questions about Primary and Secondary Victimization:** Participants were asked to share their stories of victimization and disclosure experiences. Asking participants to reflect on these experiences tapped into the reactions they had at the time they were victimized and later disclosed and how these experiences impacted them and influenced their decisions and actions (Mitchell and Egudo 2003). It also revealed their experiences of both primary and secondary victimization. Since the study also sought to understand how people who have experienced sexual victimization in religious groups become advocates, participants were asked about
whether religion played a role in primary victimization, their decisions around disclosures, and about the advice they were offered when they disclosed.

Questions about the various pathways of disclosure that participants utilized provided answers to the different ways in which silence about sexual victimization has been overcome by participants, as they selected how and to whom to disclose (Alaggia 2004). Participants were also asked about the strategies employed to manage their relationships with people who became aware of their victimization, including efforts by others to stigmatize them and/or their own self-stigmatization (Goffman 1963; Riessman 2000a). Questions were asked about resisting or normalizing stereotypes, such as those around gender and victimization, which are important in both narrative methods and feminist research (Fraser and MacDougall 2016).

Questions about Tertiary Victimization: Participants were asked to tell the story of how they came to be involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. Questions were asked about participants’ attitudinal changes that led them from secondary victimization to advocacy (Becker 1963), which can be considered tertiary victimization (Kenney 2002). Participants were also asked to discuss whether one of their statuses, victim/survivor or advocate/activist, is their master status and why, so as to get a sense of how participants currently self-identify and how they have dealt with competing identities (Hammack and Cohler 2011). Participants were asked about how their advocacy work has been affected by their experiences of victimization at each phase and about the ways in which their advocacy work challenges the normative discourse around sexual violence and victimization (Riessman 2000a). Questions about empowerment shed light on whether participants have created peer support systems or communities, as victims/survivors or as advocates/activists. Responses about empowerment can give voice to a collective or community narrative that positively sustains individual life stories (Rappaport
1995), similar to those of other survivor-advocates discussed in the literature review (Chapter 3), such as breast cancer survivor-advocates.

Following each interview, I typed up and organized my notes from the conversation, especially my thoughts on the responses to the interview questions and the overall narrative. I also created a timeline for each participant which captured the basic trajectory from victimization to advocacy involvement (Figure 4.3). When I analyzed the data, these assisted me to recall particular moments of the interview as well as my initial impressions.

**Figure 4.3 Sample Timeline of Participant Narrative**

- **Victimization**
  - When?
  - Relationship to Perpetrator(s)?
  - Interventions?
  - What you did afterwards?
  - Understood victimization?

- **Disclosures**
  - To Whom?
  - When?
  - Why?
  - How?
  - Reaction to?
  - CIS?
  - Public Disclosures?

- **Advocacy/Activism**
  - How
  - When
  - Why
  - Details of Involvement

**4.7 Data Analyses**

Analysis in narrative research involves the cyclical process of uncovering and recovering meaning (Boeije 2002; Feldman et al. 2004) in which data gathering and data analysis take place simultaneously (Etherington 2013). The data in narrative inquiry can take the form of interviews, or written pieces such as artifacts, field notes, and transcripts of audio or video materials (Sandelowski 1991; Bleakley 2005). The data in this study consists of the transcribed participant interviews. The unit of analysis, therefore, are the words, phrases, and sentences from the
narratives that were transcribed for the purpose of analysis. Analysis and close readings of the texts took place repeatedly (Feldman et al. 2004).

Scholars differ in opinion as to how to best analyze narrative data, some calling for thematic analysis, which is the most common approach, which focuses on the ‘what’ more than on the ‘how’ something is relayed in the interview (Burck 2005; Riessman 2005). Others believe the narrative itself in its raw form is full of detail and realism (Overcash 2003) and can be analyzed structurally focusing on the form of a story and on how it was told (Burck 2005; Riessman 2005). Narratives can also be analyzed politically, performatively, or interactionally, focusing on the co-construction of the narrative in relation to the research (Riessman 2005).

In this study, the data were analyzed narratively and through comparative thematic analysis and analyses focused on both the content and meaning of participant narratives (Bleakley 2005; Etherington 2013). Narrative analysis involved analyzing each individual interview to understand how each participant became an advocate as well as creating a narrative from the entire interview which answered the research question per participant. In this way, participants’ words from their transcribed narrative interviews as well as the created narrative from their interviews are considered data (Bleakley 2005). Comparative thematic analysis was then used to analyze all of the interviews in order to capture and uncover the similarities and differences among participant advocacy experiences and narratives (Palys and Atchison 2007; Liamputtong 2012).

Comparative analysis is especially useful when interviewing participants from different backgrounds such as the participants in this study (Bernard and Ryan 2012). Since this study has an inductive element, thematic analysis allowed concepts to emerge from the data and uncover the themes that emerged from each narrative and “construct its meaning” (Liamputtong
Inductive and iterative thematic coding took place and I remained open to all concepts and ideas that arose in each interview, though my knowledge on labeling and feminist standpoint theories and sexual violence informed my initial analyses. The writing of the theoretical framework and literature review for this study further informed later levels of analyses that I conducted. The specific steps taken to analyze individual interviews as well as to compare and contrast the 25 interviews to each other are outlined below.

**Analysis of Individual Narrative Interviews**

Drawing from the narrative analysis advice provided by Lindseth and Norsberg (2004), Riessmann (2000b), and Fraser and Jarldorn (2015), the analysis of individual participant narratives followed these steps:

**Step 1**: Each interview was transcribed and read in its entirety and close attention was paid to what was being said. In order to present participants’ stories in an organized and chronological fashion (Murray 2003; Bleakley 2009), I singled out three units of meaning (Lindseth and Norsberg 2004) or stories in each transcript: victimization story, disclosure story, and advocacy story. Additional units of meaning were selected for analysis purposes including participants’ background stories at the time of victimization, victimization impact, participants’ definitions of sexual violence and advocacy, why they participated in the study, their advice regarding sexual violence and victimization to the public, other survivors, and advocates, and their responses to questions about their relationship to power. These provided context to the stories participants told, gave insight into their advocacy paths and roles, and upheld the values of narrative feminist research (Allen 2011; Fraser and MacDougall 2016).

Microsoft Word and various font colours were used to highlight each transcript and represent different parts of the stories participants told. For example, all comments about
victimization were highlighted in red in the transcript, those about disclosure in green, and those about advocacy involvement in purple. Though the interviews were structured linearly, asking questions about victimization first, followed by disclosure questions, and ending with questions about advocacy, all participants told their stories in a way in which the various stories bled into each other. In this sense, participant storytelling was non-linear. Because participants often spoke about their disclosures or advocacy when they were telling the story about their victimization experiences or vice versa, some comments were highlighted in both colours to indicate that more than one story was being told in those particular comments.

**Step 2**: A coding sheet was created where participant’s stories and responses from the now highlighted transcripts were isolated by being copied and pasted into the appropriate sections on the coding sheet (Figure 4.4). Highlighting the transcripts and then organizing them by placing all victimization questions and answers together, followed by those about disclosure and then advocacy helped me perceive connections between stories and analyze stories that belong together temporally (Bleakley 2009) as well as “in the research context itself” (Stanley and Temple 2008:436). Comments that belonged in more than one box were placed in all appropriate sections. For example, if participants spoke about a disclosure experience that impacted their advocacy involvement, this comment was placed in both the ‘disclosure story’ and ‘advocacy story’ sections on the coding sheet. At the end of this step, each participant’s narrative interview was organized as outlined in Figure 4.4.
After coding each interview as outlined above, I read each unit of meaning, or box on the coding sheet, and coded the important processes involved in each participant’s path to advocacy. The focus was on identifying what appears to be important to how they became involved in advocacy by paying attention to episodes, statements, or phrases where there is recurrence, repetition, and forcefulness (Overcash 2003). For example, I noted the turning points in participants’ experiences which are “radical shift[s] in the expected course of a life” (Riessman 2000b:21). Turning points can occur at any of the three phases of victimization and
they impact one’s history and identity since they provide unanticipated direction in the course of one’s life (Riessman 2008), such as becoming an advocate. I also noted areas where participants spoke emphatically or with great emotion, such as the places where they were crying or laughing, because emotions are “sources of embodied knowledge” which can reveal how participants feel about what happened in their stories and in retelling them (Fraser and MacDougall 2016:245).

When related to their journey into advocacy, I also examined how participants position themselves and others in their narratives (Riessman 2000b); for example, as agentic or passive beings, which is important to victims who are often represented as passive (Lamb 1999b; Walklate 2014). The counter-narratives that participants use to contest the claims of identity made on them by others who refuse to see them as more than a victim (Chase 2003; Squire et al 2014) were also analyzed. This is because understanding how generalizations or stereotypes, such as those around gender, are resisted or normalized is important in both narrative methods and feminist research (Fraser and MacDougall 2016) and can help identify participants’ destigmatization strategies (Clair et al. 2016).

After coding the various meaning units of the coding sheet to understand how participants became involved in advocacy, I reviewed the notes I took following each interview and the timelines I created for each participant to see if there was anything from my initial notes on each participant’s move to advocacy that I had missed. The transcripts were read again and the processes that I noted in each coding sheet were reflected upon and compared to the reading and understanding of the entire interview (Lindseth and Norsberg 2004). Main processes and concepts regarding how each participant became an advocate were identified at the bottom of each coding sheet.
Step 4: I reviewed each coding sheet together with the processes and concepts that had emerged in each interview and formulated the answer to how each participant became an anti-sexual violence advocate into a meta-narrative (Stanley and Temple 2008). In addition to focusing on participants’ advocacy story, I considered the narratives about victimizations and disclosures as well as anything else that could provide context as to what influenced participants to become an advocate or what actions they or others took that led them to advocacy. This involved weaving together the individual stories participants told about primary and secondary victimization in order to see the larger picture about how they came to be involved in advocacy or tertiary victimization. Reducing each interview to a core chronological and organized narrative is part of the narrative feminist approach focusing on how a larger story is made up of the overlaps in many separate experiences (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004; Liamputtong 2012). These descriptive core narratives appear in the appendices (Appendix A). 

Comparative Thematic Analysis of Narrative Interviews

After individually coding and re-storying each individual narrative interview as outlined above, I conducted comparative thematic analysis on all of the interviews. I searched for common story lines or story types across all interviews regarding how participants came to be involved in advocacy (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004). Below are the steps taken to comparatively and thematically analyze the narrative interviews based on the focus of the research question.

Step 5: Comparative analysis involves “categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them” (Boeije 2002:393). Therefore, I created a comparative thematic analysis coding sheet (Figure 4.5) which allowed me to track the similarities and differences among how participants became involved in advocacy. Tracking these similarities and differences by pasting
all the stories and related processes and concepts in the appropriate section of the comparative coding sheet helped me to fragment and connect all of the narratives. Fragmenting involves separating emerging themes and connecting involves interpreting the data or separate stories “as a whole” and connecting one to another (Boeije 2002:394). Comparative analysis included comparing how all of the stories participants told (Feldman et al. 2004), including those about victimization, disclosures, and their relationships to power, relate to their advocacy journeys and to consider all of the main processes and concepts in participants’ advocacy journeys.

Figure 4.5 Comparative Thematic Analysis of Narrative Interviews
Stories, Processes, and Concepts per Participant Regarding Advocacy Journey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P</th>
<th>Victimization Story</th>
<th>Impact of Victimization</th>
<th>Disclosure Story</th>
<th>Advocacy/Activism Story</th>
<th>Power Why Participate in Study</th>
<th>Main Processes and Concepts in Advocacy Journey</th>
<th>Main Themes about Processes into Advocacy and Activism</th>
<th>Initial Pathway into Advocacy or Activism</th>
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Step 6: Reviewing all of the stories, processes, and concepts related to how participants became involved in advocacy in each section on the coding sheet allowed for the identification of common patterns or themes regarding how participants became advocates (Fraser and Jarldorn 2015). For example, some people who have survived trauma believe that it is their mission and
responsibility to tell their stories so they can improve the situation for others (Hawkins 2007). Several participants explained their road to advocacy involvement in a similar way by saying things like “I felt it was my responsibility to become an advocate” or “I could not not do it.” Others spoke about being offered public speaking roles following their time in victims’ support group. Since every participant discussed becoming an advocate as a result of several processes rather than a single event or experience, I reviewed everyone’s core narrative and their processes involved in becoming an advocate to find the main themes among all of the participants. The themes that emerged represent the main processes among all participants’ journey in becoming advocates.

**Step 7:** Using the themes that emerged in step 6, I singled out the initial theme or process among every participant’s many processes that led each one to become an advocate. I called this their ‘initial pathway.’ After grouping those with similar initial pathways into advocacy together, I had several categories of advocacy pathways and compared and contrasted the participants in each category to one another. The various themes and categories, together with salient quotes from participants in each category, are presented in the Results section (Chapter 5) to answer how victims of sexual violence go on to become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. In line with the narrative feminist approach of this study, participants’ words and quotes are used as much as possible rather than the researcher’s codes and categories in an effort to balance between researcher and participant voice (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004).

**Step 8:** To understand the sociological significance of participants’ paths to advocacy, I reflected upon and analyzed how the main themes and initial pathways relate to the literature on primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization as well as stigma and shame resilience and feminist standpoint theory.
In sum, after creating a descriptive narrative about each participant’s processes involved in becoming an advocate, the various initial pathways to advocacy taken by all of the participants were compared and contrasted to each other. Analysis also involved thinking about how the literature on sexual violence, victimization, and advocacy can shed light on the interviews and how the interviews can shed light on these bodies of literature (Lindseth and Norberg 2004).

**Figure 4.6 Steps of Analyses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Narrative Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Read each transcript and highlight victimization, disclosure, and advocacy stories in different colours as well as other selected meaning units of the transcript.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fill in the individual narrative analysis coding sheet using the transcribed interviews by placing the highlighted portions of the transcripts in the appropriate section of the coding sheet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Read and code each section of the coding sheet for the important processes and concepts related to how each participant became involved in advocacy. Refer to participant timelines and interview notes. Identify main processes and concepts regarding participants’ advocacy trajectory.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Create a core narrative for each participant from the coding sheet that answers how that participant became an advocate or activist.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparative Thematic Narrative Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5. Compile all participants’ stories, processes, and concepts that relate to their advocacy involvement on the Comparative Analysis Coding Sheet. Search and code for the similarities and differences in all participants’ advocacy journeys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Identify common themes among participants’ advocacy journeys that explain their processes into becoming advocates.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Using the main themes, identify the initial pathway into advocacy for each participant. Group together those with the same initial pathways to form a category. Using participant narratives and quotes, present the themes and pathways that emerged from participant narratives about their move from anti-sexual violence victim/survivor to anti-sexual violence advocate/activist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relate advocacy themes and initial pathways to relevant literature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4.8 Validity, Reflexivity, & Researcher-Participant Relationship**

Providing a detailed accounting and justifications of the methodological decisions and being purposeful and transparent about the analysis process from the outset of the study, as this study has done, boosts the “traceability and the credibility” of a researcher’s work (Boeije
While some feel that validity has no place in narrative inquiry (Overcash 2003), a study’s validity is strengthened through evidence of the researcher’s reflexivity (Greenhalgh et al. 2005). Reflexivity involves acknowledging one’s positionality, assumptions, and values as well as one’s attraction to particular themes or questions (Burck 2005; Menard-Warwick 2011). These are all key considerations when conducting narrative feminist research (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004).

Validity in narrative research is not about reproducing the facts as they happened but in understanding the ways in which an event’s meaning changes for participants as well the cultural and historical location of these changing meanings (Riessman 2000c). Since one’s life story is created out of one’s experiences (Denzin 1989), the distinctions between truth and fiction and story and science are artificial (Sandelowski 1991). While seeking honest and factual narratives, truths and not the truth is the focus of narrative research (Riessmann 2000b; Overcash 2003; Lindseth and Norsberg 2004). Therefore, when inquiring into how participants became anti-sexual violence advocates, this study did not involve triangulation of the data to confirm or strengthen participant narratives. Instead, and in keeping with the feminist perspective (Sydie 1987; Harding 1991), participants were taken at their word to examine their perspective of their experiences and trajectory into advocacy.

Narrative research is unique in that it orients the researcher to the participants’ interests and life experiences and not that of the researcher (Chase 2003), making it especially useful in this study where I, the researcher, can be included in the sample inclusion criteria. Because life experiences impact what people choose to study (Clark 2007), and because narrative feminist researchers must pay attention to the intersection of their stories with those of their participants (Fraser and MacDougall 2016), it is crucial to acknowledge my position as someone who shares
several characteristics with participants in this study. Firstly, I have experienced primary victimization and then secondary victimization after I disclosed through both formal and informal routes. I have also been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy work as a result of my academic pursuits and the victimization I endured. For example, over the past several years I have spoken publicly and written about sexual violence and victimization. I am also a member of the Orthodox Jewish community, where my victimization and subsequent initial disclosures took place and later disclosures involved the criminal justice system. I currently serve as a consultant for Jewish institutions and communities, working with them to prevent and address sexual violence. In these ways, I could be said to have experienced tertiary victimization by transforming the identity of victim into the “positive and viable self conception” of advocate (Kitsuse 1980:10). Through my religious membership and professional pursuits, I have become connected to many victims of sexual violence both from within and outside of religious communities (Jewish and otherwise), and to advocates within and outside of religious communities.

Researchers must be very self-conscious and aware of their influence on participants and their stories (Clandinin et al. 2007) and reflexivity includes being careful not to displace participants’ stories with one’s own (Riessman 2000a). As discussed above, throughout the research process, including after each interview, I wrote reflexive field memos or notes that captured my reflexivity. These field memos were used to note the similarities and differences between my stories and those of participants, as well as when I was triggered by participants’ stories which can potentially cloud the research (Fraser and Jarldorn 2015). They also captured my reflexivity regarding my agency, positionality, insider/outsider status, and my emotions and experiences with the feelings and concepts that arose in my interactions with participants.
Throughout the coding process I remained constantly aware of the intersubjectivity between myself and participants, the co-construction of narratives, and that I was selecting which parts to represent in the study (Hilfinger Messias and DeJoseph 2004; Fraser and Macdougall 2016). The goal was not to use participants’ quotes to support my interpretations but to let participants’ voices speak.

Being mindful of the relationship between researcher and participant and the positionality of each throughout the course of a narrative feminist research project is crucial because an asymmetrical relationship exists between the researcher and participant, one in which the researcher, who plays the role of listener, is more dominant (Lindseth and Norsberg 2004; Sandelowski 1991). However, the fact that researchers analyze participant narratives does not imply that they are better informed about participants’ experiences than the participants themselves (Feldman et al. 2004). This is because participants decide what to include in the stories they tell and the duration of their interview (Overcash 2003). For example, in this study every participant was directed to only share what they were comfortable discussing as well as choosing how many of their experiences of sexual violence they wished to talk about. They were also informed that they could end the interview at any time. The shortest interview was one hour and 23 minutes long and the longest took close to five hours, demonstrating the control participants had over the duration of time in which they were interviewed.

It is also essential that neither researcher nor participant judge what is being said in the interviews but that they bracket their biases and judgments about the facts being relayed.

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29 Several participants discussed that though they have been victimized several times, they do not incorporate their history with multiple experiences of victimizations into their advocacy.

30 This interview took place over a period of three meetings because the participant wanted to complete all of the questions but could not do so in one meeting. The longest interview that was conducted in one sitting took close to three hours.
(Lindseth and Norsberg 2004; Bernard and Ryan 2010). During the interviews, participants often apologized for something they said, did, or felt as they told their stories. In line with the feminist research perspective, I was quick to reassure them that “there is no judgment here” and they could speak freely (Fraser and MacDougall 2016). However, in any study, participants’ responses will be affected by their relationship with the researcher (Chase 2003). Because of this dynamic, I did not interview participants with whom I have a close personal or professional relationship. Additionally, since the narrative methodological approach “privileges positionality and subjectivity” and “does not assume objectivity” (Riessman 2000b:3), it is important to acknowledge that there are many ways to interpret the meaning of a narrative and one’s methodological choices are just one way of doing so (Feldman et al. 2004; Fraser and MacDougall 2016). The key, however, is to capture the understanding of participants’ expressions in their narratives (Feldman et al. 2004).

4.9 Ethical Considerations

Because of the nature of the interview topic and questions in this study, ethical considerations required special attention at all stages of the research process (Clandinin et al. 2007). This included the decisions about which portions of participant narratives to include or exclude in writing up the study results as well as whether or not to share the results with participants prior to publishing them (Clandinin et al. 2007). It also involved being careful not to further ‘other’ participants when representing their stories and experiences (Burck 2005). In order to ensure that the ethical considerations for this study have been appropriately considered and were adhered to, an Application to Involve Human Participants in Research was submitted to the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board (REB) for review (Appendix Q) prior to sending out recruitment materials.
As suggested by the Research Ethics Board, part of the consent process for this study involved educating potential participants about identification because I anticipated that some participants were already identified publicly as both victims and advocates and may want to be named in the study so that their stories can be shared. Many advocates who have experienced victimization are purposefully public about their past experience as a victim and consider this part of their advocacy. In fact, several participants discussed being able to name themselves as victims as key to their advocacy processes and how being identified will help others realize the extent of the problem of sexual violence. They also explained that being identified signals to them and others that they have no more shame about being a victim.

However, I also understood that while perhaps being led to advocacy because of past victimization, some participants may have not publicly disclosed their past experience with victimization. Therefore, though it is an unconventional approach, participants were given the option to be publicly identified or to remain anonymous and instead have a pseudonym attributed to their narratives and any direct quotes used in the study report. This upholds the feminist value of allowing victims to speak in the way they wish to be heard and seen. Prior to beginning any of the interviews, I had a conversation with participants to educate them about the ramifications of being publicly identified by name in the study which was also outlined in the consent form (Appendix H). I suggested that participants who have not yet publicly shared their past victimization experiences continue to remain anonymous and unidentifiable in the study report. However, all participants were able to choose to be unidentified.

Since participating in such a study poses several risks for participants, the risks were outlined in the participant consent form (Appendix H). Psychological risks included the possibility that participants may feel triggered when discussing their experience(s) of sexual
victimization and what happened after they disclosed. Difficult emotions could also arise as they relay their stories and reflect on how they came to be involved in advocacy work. To mitigate this risk, questions about the details of the initial victimizing experience were not asked, nor was this the focus of the interviews. However, many participants chose to share the details and some felt that detailing their experiences was a necessary component to understanding their experiences. Instead, questions about the initial victimization were broad (See Appendix I Interview Guide). Additionally, all participants were provided with a list of counselling services should they have felt the need to seek further support. However, the fact that participants must have disclosed their victimization to someone other than a mental health professional to be included in the sample meant that the interviews were not the first time that participants were disclosing their experiences. Furthermore, participants had to have been or currently be involved in advocacy work, meaning that they encounter discussions about sexual violence on a regular basis. My academic studies and professional work training individuals who work with victims informed my approach to asking the interview questions in a sensitive manner that was mindful of participants’ experiences and the difficulties in discussing them.

The social risks that may arise for participants included the risk of being identified in the study report. The fact that participants are anti-sexual violence advocates means that people are aware of their involvement in this issue which can mitigate the social risks. Further ways in which the social risks were minimized included ensuring not to leave voice messages, or messages with someone other than the participant, when calling participants to finalize the interview time. I also only contacted participants by email to recruit, to send the consent forms, and to schedule a time to call to finalize the interview time which gave participants the freedom to decide whether and when to respond. I ensured that strict confidentiality was adhered to
throughout the study by having unique codes as identifiers relating to each participant. A separate master list with participant names and contact information was kept in a locked cabinet in the Center for the Studies of Social and Legal Response to Violence so that I can contact participants to provide them with the study results.

In the results chapter (Chapter 5), some of the findings are reported in aggregate form to protect participants who chose to remain anonymous to the reader. This also protects participants who chose to be identified but do not want all of their information linked to them, such as those whose experiences include multigenerational experiences of sexual violence. Participants who would like to remain anonymous were given a pseudonym and any direct quotations or examples included in the study are attributed to that pseudonym. Additionally, when describing participant narratives, more generalized information is used instead of information that could be linked back to specific participants. For example, if a participant was from a particular religious sect, only the broader religious group is referred to. Additional measures taken to protect participant identities can be found in the Application to Involve Human Participants in Research (Appendix Q).

Participants for this study included paid and volunteer advocates. In either situation, there was an economic risk to participating in this study if participants represented their advocacy involvement or work they do in a way that impacted whether or not they continue to be welcome in the advocacy community. To mitigate the economic risks, I did not refer to the organizations that participants work or volunteer for, whether or not the participant has chosen to be identified. Instead, the study refers to the type of advocacy work that the participant does broadly, such as ‘provides legal advice’ or ‘provides training services.’ Participants’ references to particular advocacy agencies in the interviews were removed when the interviews were transcribed and
replaced with a description of what they do as advocates. The original audio recordings of the interviews were deleted following transcription.

Aside from the various risks, participating in this study was beneficial for participants. Participants benefited from being involved because the study helped them speak their own narratives about experiences of victimization and resistance which can help them “gain power through voice” (Rappaport 1995; Hammick and Cohler 2011:172). Participants thanked me for conducting the research, for listening to their stories, and for giving them the opportunity to advocate through their participation in the study. Since participants are working to create change around sexual violence, narrative inquiry was helpful because the method itself can facilitate change (Mitchell and Egudo 2003). While telling these stories has the potential to re-traumatize the narrators (Squire et al 2014), the very telling of the stories can transform participants’ lives and that of others (Sandelowski 1991). Often marginalized people have their stories dictated or written by others and narrative interviews was a way to empower participants (Rappaport 1995; Bleakley 2005). Participants also benefited by being viewed as the experts on both victimization and advocacy.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the methodological choices of this study and outlined processes for participant recruitment, data collection, and analyses. Narrative inquiry provided the methodology while feminism provided the perspective and approach (Allen 2011). Analyzing narratives is a way to study the connection “between the general and the particular.” Narrative and comparative thematic analyses allowed for the exploration of the larger social and cultural patterns and constraints revealed in participant narratives, as well as the particular stories, experiences, or episodes they relayed (Chase 2003:290). In narrative analysis, each participant
interview was analyzed by searching for the important processes and concepts related to their path to advocacy; in comparative thematic analysis, the processes and concepts that arose in each interview were compared to each other and main themes were identified. Participants’ initial pathway into advocacy was identified and those with similar initial pathways into advocacy were grouped together to form a category and participants in each category were compared and contrasted. In the following chapter (Chapters 5), an overview of participants’ victimization and disclosure, or primary and secondary victimization experiences are presented in aggregate form together with illustrative quotes from participant interviews. This is followed by an analysis of the main themes and initial pathways into advocacy that emerged from participant narratives.
Chapter 5. Results

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the results of the narrative and comparative thematic analyses that were conducted in this study. First, quantitative data that pertain to participants’ victimization experiences, disclosures, advocacy or activism involvement, and the labels they prefer to use regarding the terms victim or survivor and advocate or activists are provided. These data were the focus of the collected narratives because they provide context for understanding participants’ involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. Next, the five main themes that emerged from participant narratives about their initial pathway into becoming advocates and activists are presented with an explanation of each theme. Finally, based on the five main themes, participants whose initial entry into advocacy or activism were similar were grouped together to form a category. Each category is explained and highlighted using quotes from participant narratives and the participants within each category are compared and contrasted to one another. For the complete narrative of how each of the 25 participants in this study became anti-sexual violence advocates and activists, please see Appendix A.

5.2 Descriptive Statistics on Victimization, Disclosures, and Labels

As explained in Chapter 4, the study’s screening and interview questions allowed for a collection of socio-demographic data, as well as data about participant experiences of sexual victimization, their disclosures, their advocacy or activism involvement, and the labels participants use to label or describe themselves (i.e. victim/survivor and advocate/activist). Below are the descriptive statistics of this data which are also visually captured in Table 5.1.
Data on Victimization Experiences

The data collected on victimization experiences include the number of victimization experiences for the entire sample, participants’ age at the time of victimization, and whether or not they experienced child sexual abuse. Data on the perpetrators’ gender, the number of perpetrators per participant, whether participants experienced repeat victimization, their relationships to their perpetrators, and whether or not participants experienced victimization in a religious context were also collected. Altogether 25 participants spoke about 52 victimizations, not including the 30-40 times one participant reported being sexually victimized because he was sold for sex by his original perpetrator over a period of several years. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention outlines that child maltreatment, including child sexual abuse, occurs to a child who is less than 18 years old (Saul and Audage 2007). Though 44% of the participants experienced victimization prior to their eighteenth birthday, only 20% of participants experienced only child sexual abuse.31 This is because some of their victimization experiences that occurred before their 18th birthday included those committed by peers or those in which the perpetrator was not an adult.32 However, 24% of participants experienced both child sexual abuse and sexual victimization in adulthood.33

As noted in chapter four, 76% of participants were female. A large majority of participants (92%) were victimized by males,34 while two participants were victimized by

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31 A statistical profile of police reported sexual assaults in Canada from 2009 until 2014 found that “the median age of victims of police-reported sexual assault was 18 years. The majority (87%) of victims were female, particularly young women and girls. One in four (26%) victims were children aged 13 and younger” (Rotenberg 2017).

32 Child sexual abuse can include “sexual contact between an older and a younger child…if there is a significant disparity in age, development, or size, rendering the younger child incapable of giving informed consent” (Saul and Audage 2007:1). However, for the purposes of this study, child-on-child sexual victimization was counted as non-child sexual abuse because these disparities did not appear in participant narratives about their victimizations.

33 The 2014 GSS on self-reported sexual assaulted in Canada found that “the rate of sexual assault was considerably higher for young Canadians” aged 15-24, especially women (Conroy and Cotter 2017).

34 The 2014 GSS on self-reported sexual assaulted in Canada found that “sexual assault offenders were most often men, acting alone and under the age of 35” (Conroy and Cotter 2017).
females with one of them having been also victimized by males. An equal number of participants (32%) were victimized by one perpetrator and two perpetrators (32%) overall. This means that they experienced victimization by one or two perpetrators overall in their lifetime, at times being victimized by more than one perpetrator at the same time. Those who had experiences with three or more perpetrators overall represented 36% of the sample. However, of the participants who were victimized by only one perpetrator (32%), only one participant (4%) experienced victimization by the perpetrator a single time. The rest of the participants who were victimized by one perpetrator endured multiple experiences of sexual violence by the same perpetrator. The remaining participants (64%) experienced victimization by a number of perpetrators either a single time or multiple times.

The majority of participants (64%) knew or had a relationship with their perpetrator(s) prior to the victimization(s), while 32% of participants experienced victimization both by strangers as well as by people they knew. Only one participant (4%) experienced victimization solely by strangers. Finally, the majority of participants (64%) were not sexually victimized in a religious context or by a religious figure, while 32% of participants’ victimizations occurred at the hands of a religious figure. Additionally, three participants who were not sexually victimized by a religious figure came from a religious community or family and their reactions to victimization were impacted by their belonging to a religious community or family. The relatively high percentage of participants whose victimization involved a religious figure or community may be due to the fact that the study’s call for participants specified a search for

35 The 2014 GSS on self-reported sexual assaulted in Canada found that “men more commonly reported that they experienced one incident of sexual assault than women (72% versus 49%). Female victims reported two (24%) or three or more incidents (26%)” (Conroy and Cotter 2017).

36 A statistical profile on police-reported sexual assaults in Canada from 2009 to 2014 found that, in sexual assault cases where police laid charges, “87% of victims knew their assailant; most commonly as a casual acquaintance, a family member, or an intimate partner. Only a small proportion (13%) of sexual assaults were perpetrated by someone who was a stranger to the victim” (Rotenberg 2017).
victims and survivors of sexual violence from the mainstream population as well as religious communities or groups. Anti-sexual violence advocates and activists who work in religious communities and groups were also asked to circulate the call for participants.

Data on Disclosures

The data collected on disclosures includes whether or not participants found a peer support group of other victims and survivors through their disclosures. It also includes whether or not participants disclosed their victimization to the criminal justice system, including police or courts, and/or the civil legal system. It also includes whether participants were stigmatized following their disclosures, whether they confronted their perpetrator(s) or the institutions in which they were victimized, whether they have publicly disclosed, and whether they chose to be identified or anonymous in the study. Disclosures occurred through conversations, writings such as letters or posts on social media, official disclosures to law enforcement, and more. While 52% of participants discussed disclosing to a group of peer victims or survivors and finding community through them, 48% reported that they had not.

Criminal justice system involvement includes calling police to inquire about making a complaint, making a formal complaint whether or not this led to charges being laid, and appearing in court at a trial against their perpetrator(s). The involvement of the civil legal system includes whether or not participants disclosed to a civil lawyer and/or inquired or went through with filing a civil lawsuit against their perpetrator or an institution. A little over half of the participants (52%) had no involvement with the criminal justice system (i.e. police or courts) due to their victimizations\(^\text{37}\), while 48% of participants had some contact with police or courts,

\(^{37}\) In Canada, “sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes.” If they are reported to police, it is common for there to be a delay in reporting with only 52% being reported the day they occur (Statistics Canada 2017). In 2014, approximately “1 in 20 sexual assaults were reported to the police” (Statistics Canada 2017).
following one or more of their victimizations. While 72% of participants did not turn to the civil legal system, 28% did. Though six participants turned to both criminal justice and civil legal systems, others only turned to one of these systems.

When asked whether they experienced stigmatization from others after disclosing, 64% of participants reported that they did while 36% reported that they did not. However, several who reported no stigmatization provided anecdotes about their disclosures that could be interpreted as experiencing stigma. For example, one participant who reported no stigmatization said that when she commented on a victimization story online someone responded, “What do we care what this person thinks?” and referenced the participant’s victimization.

A majority of participants (68%) confronted their perpetrators or the institutions in which they experienced sexual victimization, while 32% did not. The majority of participants (76%) have publicly disclosed that they have experienced sexual violence compared to those who have not (24%). Public disclosures include public talks about victimization experiences, widely available writings about their victimization, and sharing their experiences via social media forums such as websites, blog posts, Twitter, and Facebook. More participants (56%) chose to be identified by name in this study than those who chose to remain unidentified (44%).

Data on Advocacy or Activism

This study includes participants who have been involved in advocacy and/or activism through employment (i.e. as paid professionals) as well as those who are unpaid volunteers. Therefore, data were collected to differentiate between the two. It also includes whether participants were involved in advocacy or activism on any level (i.e. even unrelated to anti-sexual violence work), prior to their victimization experiences or only after they experienced victimization. Participants were also asked whether they found peer support among other anti-
sexual violence advocates and activists. The majority of participants’ (64%) involvement in advocacy and activism is volunteer compared to 36% whose involvement is both paid and volunteer. None of the participants were solely paid advocates or activists. While the majority of participants’ (72%) advocacy and activism involvement occurred after they experienced sexual violence, some participants (28%) were involved before experiencing sexual violence, though their work was not necessarily related to sexual violence. Examples include equal marriage activists, advocates for women and children in general, and advocates in cultural or religious centres. Many participants (64%) found a community of peer support as advocates and activists among other advocates and activists, while 36% said that they had not.

Data on Labels

Participants were asked which labels they prefer to use when referring to themselves and their experiences including victim, survivor, or another term, and advocate, activist, or another term. The majority of participants (56%) prefer to use the term ‘survivor’ when referring to themselves, followed by those who use the terms ‘survivor’ and ‘victim’ interchangeably (28%). Some (8%), however, prefer to use the term ‘victim’ and some (8%) did not use either term. Other terms include “someone who has metabolized trauma” and “someone who has experienced rape.” Similarly, the majority of participants (56%) prefer the term ‘advocate’ when referring to themselves and their anti-sexual violence work, while 32% use the terms ‘advocate’ and ‘activist’ interchangeably. A number of participants (12%) prefer the term ‘activist.’ Examples of other terms that participants use or prefer include “storyteller” or “story healer” and “truth teller.”

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38 Equal marriage “is about the right to full citizenship and equal human rights for lesbians and gay men” (Kitzinger and Wilkinson 2004:10). Equal marriage advocates argue that marriage is a civil right and challenge “legal provisions that limited marriage to individuals of the opposite sex” (Lenhardt, Hernandez, and Paul-Emile 2018:86).
In sum, the quantitative data collected about participant victimization, disclosure, and advocacy experiences shows that more participants experienced victimization prior to their 18th birthday that was not characterized as child sexual abuse. Most participants experienced multiple instances of victimization. Perpetrators were largely male and known to participants. While more of the participants did not turn to the criminal or civil legal system, many did confront their perpetrators or institutions in which they were victimized. More participants reported experiencing stigmatization after their disclosures and most participants have disclosed publicly. Additionally, more participants are volunteer advocates or activists and a majority became involved in anti-sexual violence work after their own victimization.

**Table 5.1 Complete Descriptive Statistics of Sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victimization Experiences</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of victimizations/sample</td>
<td>52+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age at Victimization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both (&gt;18&lt;)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Victimization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CSA</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of Perpetrators/per participant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Perpetrators/Participant Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat Victimizations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 perp/1 time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 perp/multiple times</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different perps/1 or 1+ times</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to perpetrator</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Known</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
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<td>4%</td>
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141
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<th>Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Both (due to multiple exp.)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimated by Religious Figure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>Disclosures</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim/Survivor Peer Support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identified/Anonymous in study</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed/Volunteer</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Volunteer</td>
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<td>Previous Advocacy/Activism</td>
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<td>Advocate prior to SV</td>
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<td>Peer Advocate/Activist Support</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim/Survivor Label</td>
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<td>Survivor</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate/Activist Label</td>
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<td>Advocate</td>
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<td>Both/Interchangeable</td>
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5.3 Main Themes and Initial Pathways into Advocacy and Activism

To answer the research question, how do victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists, each narrative interview was analyzed to find the individual level processes regarding participants’ involvement into advocacy or activism. Then, comparative analysis was conducted to compare the processes in all of the participants’ advocacy and activism journeys as well their core narratives. Five main themes emerged about the processes in which participants became advocates and activists. In order of the most to least common, they are: (1) disclosure/response (88% or 22/25 participants); (2) learned advocacy (72% or 18/25 participants); (3) victimization/aftermath (68% or 17/25 participants); (4) empathic response (56% or 14/25 participants); and (5) systems’ experiences (48% or 12/25 participants). A combination of several of the five main themes emerged in every participant’s narrative because all of the participants discussed their journey into advocacy and activism as a process rather than as an outcome of a single event or experience. The themes and the names of the participants that discussed that process are listed below in Table 5.2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Advocacy/Activism Themes</th>
<th>% (# of participants)</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure/Response</td>
<td>88% (22/25)</td>
<td>Adam Delmonico, Alissa Ackerman, Anne, Aurora De Lucia, Aviva, Bethany Mandel, David Clohessy, Debra Morrow, Hank Estrada, Jack, Joanne, Kathryn Borel, Madeleine Black, Navila Rashid, Nigel O’Mara, Rachel, Sarah Beaulieu, Sharon, Tamara Schoor, Tim Lennon, Wendy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned Advocacy</td>
<td>72% (18/25)</td>
<td>Adam Delmonico, Anne, Aurora De Lucia, Aviva, David Clohessy, Debra Morrow, Hank Estrada, Joanne, Julie, Laura, Lily, Madeleine Black, Navila</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout this study, participants whose first and last names are included are those who have chosen to be identified. Participants with no last names have been given a pseudonym and identifying details have been changed or omitted to protect their confidentiality because they chose to be unidentified. This process was approved by the Research Ethics Board as presented in Appendix Q.
Participants also discussed one of the five main themes as the one in which their advocacy or activism began. I identified this theme in each participant’s narrative and called it their ‘initial pathway.’ As outlined in Table 5.3 below, participants whose advocacy or activism involvement began with the same initial pathway were grouped together to form a category. The results of this effort revealed that an equal number of participants (six or 24%) began their path into advocacy and activism with their disclosures and/or responses to their disclosures, as did those whose advocacy or activism began because of their victimization(s) and/or the aftermath. An equal number of participants’ (five or 20%) advocacy and activism began following their experiences with external systems, such as the media, medical and criminal justice systems, and victim services, as those whose initial pathway was due to an empathic response to other victims or cases. Finally, three participants (12%) began their involvement in advocacy or activism through learned advocacy. The remainder of the chapter explains the five main themes in general and how one of these themes was the initial pathway for the participants in each category.
Table 5.3 Categories of Initial Pathways into Advocacy or Activism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Initial Pathway Categories</th>
<th>% (# of participants)</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure/Response</td>
<td>24% (6/25)</td>
<td>Alissa Ackerman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>David Clohessy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Madeleine Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Navila Rashid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sarah Beaulieu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tim Lennon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victimization/Aftermath</td>
<td>24% (6/25)</td>
<td>Adam Delmonico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Anne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aurora De Lucia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Aviva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nigel O’Mara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systems’ Experiences</td>
<td>20% (5/25)</td>
<td>Bethany Mandel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Debra Morrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Emily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kathryn Borel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wendy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathic Response</td>
<td>20% (5/25)</td>
<td>Joanne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rachel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tamara Schoor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned Advocacy</td>
<td>12% (3/25)</td>
<td>Hank Estrada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Julie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Main Themes

Each of the five main themes are outlined and explained below using quotes\textsuperscript{40} from participant narratives.

I. Disclosure/Response – Participants whose process involved their disclosures and/or the responses to their disclosures discussed the centrality of private or public disclosure experiences, and sometimes both, to their involvement in advocacy or activism. All but one of the participants in this process disclosed privately before also disclosing publicly. Private disclosures were one-\textsuperscript{40}Throughout this chapter, the terms used when discussing various participants are the terms those participants prefer to use. This includes the terms victim/survivor and advocate/activist as well as when participants used the terms interchangeably.
on-one conversations where participants shared their victimization experiences with others. Public disclosures included online disclosures through blogs or social media, writing about one’s victimization, or speaking about it in a public forum. For example, Aurora explained how publicly disclosing online was part of her process into activism: “I started blogging about it, tweeting about it sometimes… and then someone [from a talk show] found me on Twitter and they asked me if I wanted to go on the show because they were going to have a sexual assault survivor day, and so then I did.” Some discussed the centrality of others’ responses to these disclosures, for example by friends or religious leaders, and how this motivated them to become an advocate or activist.41

II. **Learned Advocacy** – Participants whose process involved learned advocacy discussed learning about sexual victimization and/or anti-sexual violence advocacy efforts through school, by networking with other advocates and activists, or through their previous involvement in advocacy or activism (whether or not that previous work was around sexual violence). For example, Lily’s previous work in advocacy influenced her anti-sexual violence advocacy: “I've always had an interest in women's issues and so I started in the work with young women, like high school girls, and talking about healthy relationships and anything from drug use or alcohol use and all sort of the range of topics you could talk about. Then I moved into a lot of work around sexuality and sexual identity, so like queerness, LGBTQ. I think throughout the years I've just had interest - I always wanted to talk to women facing violence. It wasn't specifically sexual violence, but just I knew that it's a subject that we needed work on.” Some also discussed learning to become an advocate or activist through their involvement with a group or organization as victims or survivors.

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41 This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.
III. **Victimization/Aftermath** – Participants whose process involved the victimization/aftermath theme discussed how something specific about their victimization experiences, or the aftermath of the victimization, contributed to their process. Many also discussed how their life circumstances following their victimization up until their advocacy and activism involvement contributed to their becoming an advocate or activist. Examples include experiencing repeat victimization, feeling driven by anger or obligation, and being in the right place and time in their lives to become an advocate and activist. For example, Madeleine explained that her life circumstances after working on the aftermath of her victimizations contributed to her process: “I had gotten to a place in my life where I felt so okay about it. I worked so much to clean it all up, and I thought I could actually speak about it.” Part of how this happened was because after feeling “so full of hate and rage and revenge, I was just angry with life.” But when her therapist suggested that her perpetrators “weren’t born rapists,” she realized that they had “demonized themselves in the dehumanizing of me. Then my heart went out to them. I thought, for them to live with what they did to me must be so much harder.” The encounter with her therapist led Madeleine’s advocacy and activism to include a focus on forgiveness.

IV. **Empathic Response** – Participants whose process involved an empathic response discussed how discovering other victims of their perpetrators or learning about other cases of sexual violence is part of what led them to become advocates or activists. For example, Nigel explains that he launched an advocacy organization for male survivors because “I had so many other people and I know also, right then, that there were situations that were developing which were being perpetrated where people had absolutely no control.” Alissa described disclosing after watching a film about a sexual violence case that led to advocacy/activism work: “A friend
said you need to see this film. I saw it and fell to my knees. Just, oh my goodness, I have to reach out to the producer and so I did. I said, this is my story.” Alissa worked together with the producer by speaking at screenings of the film.

V. **Systems’ Experiences** – Participants whose process involved systems’ experiences discussed how positive and negative interactions with various systems or services such as medical and mental health professionals, members of the criminal justice system, and the media, as well as the gap in services that they, as victims, experienced led them to become an advocate or activist. For example, Navila distinguished between her personal activism, which came first, and her professional advocacy. Here, she explained why she became a professional advocate: “I actually ended up doing my Master's in forensic social work which incorporates all things social work within the realm of the criminal justice system, because after my experience with the detectives and being a victim and a survivor I felt - and also having read so many articles where many survivors went through the same - I decided I needed to be more proactive in terms of policy reform and doing that type of work.”

In sum, five main themes about the process into becoming an anti-sexual violence advocate and activist emerged from participants’ narratives. Every participant discussed a combination of several themes to explain their process. For example, David’s process of becoming an advocate involved the themes of disclosure/response, victimization/aftermath, and learned advocacy. David went public with his story about being sexually abused by a priest because the bishop he disclosed to was “pathetic and frustrating and unhelpful.” The reasons he advocates are related to the victimization he experienced in a religious context: “First of all, as an agnostic, I can't comfort myself and do nothing about a known perpetrator thinking well, in the next life he'll get his just desserts. So, my lack of religious belief, I think, makes me more
motivated. All I know for sure is this life. I think, also… I heard for years all of this talk about Jesus protecting the vulnerable and Jesus caring about the wounded and Jesus caring about the powerless and the Sermon on the Mount and the line about ‘Jesus would put a millstone around your neck, those who would harm the young,’ and all that kind of stuff. So, you know, even if I don't believe the religious part of that, those moral lessons were instilled in me by religion.”

David also discussed how he learned to be an advocate from working on other causes: “I have these skills. I’m a community organizer, I did public relations, I worked for political candidates, so I was used to working in a kind of combative atmosphere. I was used to controversy.”

Initial Pathway Categories

Each participant discussed one of the above five main themes as their initial pathway into anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism and they are explained below. Quotes from participants’ narratives are used to explain how that specific pathway was their entry into advocacy or activism and the participants in each category are compared and contrasted to one another. Often, the other processes or themes involved in becoming advocates and activists are evident in participants’ stories.

Category I. Disclosure Response as Initial Pathway - Alissa Ackerman, David Clohessy, Madeleine Black, Navila Rashid, Sarah Beaulieu, and Tim Lennon

The group of participants whose initial pathway began with their disclosures and/or the responses to their disclosures consists of Alissa Ackerman, David Clohessy, Madeleine Black, Navila Rashid, Sarah Beaulieu, and Tim Lennon. All of the participants in this category chose to be identified in the study and they have all disclosed privately and publicly. While some of the responses to their disclosures that led them into advocacy and activism were negative, others were positive. All of the participants in this category discussed how disclosing made them feel
like an advocate or activist and also linked their public disclosures to their private disclosures. They also all discussed disclosing as an act of advocacy or activism in and of itself.

Private disclosures and responses – The private disclosures of Tim, David, Sarah, and Navila led to their advocacy and activism involvement. For example, Tim and David both became leaders and directors of the survivor groups in which they privately disclosed their experiences of sexual victimization by priests in their Catholic communities before going public with their experiences. Their anger at the church’s response to their disclosures also led to their advocacy. For example, David, who years after being molested by a priest disclosed to the bishop, explained, “Part of what has put me into this activist mode, I’m sure, was the fact that the bishop a) was unresponsive to me or unhelpful to me and then b) that he was so mean spirited as to out me,” because the bishop named David as the victim in the case.

Similarly, Tim, who was molested and raped by a priest, described the church’s response to his disclosure: “They wrote me back a rather horrible letter, insulting and dismissive, saying, you know, at the time society in the church, in the community, and you didn't describe much harm to abuse – [the perpetrator] is dead. No apology. No ‘I’m sorry.’ No ‘how can I help?’ Nothing like that.” He explained, “I was exceptionally angry at the church, so I began to be more public in doing various different kinds of press events, not necessarily my story but in support of other survivors, other victims who have stories to tell that we need to raise awareness, provide support for them.”

Sarah’s private disclosures to family and friends led to further disclosures and, eventually, her advocacy work or what she called being “a professional truth-teller.” Though she characterized this response to her disclosure as “confusing” rather than negative, Sarah explained that when she disclosed her memories of childhood sexual victimization to her friends at a
meditation retreat that she attended as a teen, “the spiritual leader put me into a silent retreat so that I would stop talking about that.” When she returned home, she said, “I was telling everybody.” Throughout high school, Sarah wrote and spoke about sexual violence and in college spoke at anti-sexual violence events where she publicly disclosed her story. She volunteered for many years with several anti-sexual violence organizations and eventually found a way to infuse advocacy in both her personal and professional worlds. Her professional work now focuses on “conversations around sexual violence.”

Navila explained how sharing articles about sexual violence with a friend, as well as their respective experiences with sexual violence, led to her “personal activism:” “We bonded over that. That felt great and so we both decided to create this website and eventually this organization.” The website was a place where survivors of sexual violence could share their artwork about their experiences. Their site got attention and led to invitations for Navila to do anti-sexual violence advocacy, activism, and training in her Muslim community, as well as to participate in a documentary where Muslim women discuss their experiences of sexual violence.

Public disclosures and responses – Alissa and Madeleine explained how their public disclosures, and responses to these disclosures, led to advocacy and activism opportunities. Alissa was afraid that publicly disclosing would negatively impact her academic career as a “sex crimes researcher” and before she identified as an advocate and activist, though she prefers the term “professional survivor,” her research and work was primarily about offenders of sex crimes. However, after tweeting under the hashtag #beenrapedneverreported, she connected with the founder of an anti-sexual violence advocacy organization. She said, “I joined her organization and through that found this group of survivors who all do advocacy work and it was the first time that I had this group of people. And our victimization histories are very broad, very buried, but it
was like this group of people who just got me…I think that helped a lot to propel me into this activist role.”

Madeleine was encouraged to continue publicly disclosing by seeing the reactions of others when they read her story which she shared for the first time in a writing workshop: “I underestimated what the impact would be and, yeah, once I shared it I saw how powerful it was sharing my story.” Publicly disclosing led to her activism because after her story was shared on an organization’s site as well as on her Facebook page, she said, “I started to get messages from people that I didn't know and then I got messages from people all over the world. People started to message me via Facebook. Then I was asked to do talks and asked to do interviews, so I've done TV a few times.”

Disclosures made them feel like an advocate or activist - The centrality of disclosures in the initial path to becoming advocates and activists was clear for the participants in this category. All of the participants in the study were asked to complete the sentence: ‘The first time I thought of myself as an anti-sexual violence advocate or activist was _______.’ David explained that it was when he filed a lawsuit which led to his going public and Tim explained that it was when he became a leader of a chapter of the survivor group to which he first disclosed. But Madeleine, Navila, Alissa, and Sarah more directly linked their disclosures to feeling like an advocate or activist saying that it was when they publicly disclosed.

Though Madeleine had done years of extensive professional and volunteer work with women experiencing violence, she does not consider this advocacy: “I guess advocacy started when I shared my story in 2014.” Navila explained, “It was when I first published my website with my friend and started being asked questions and being able to prepare answers and then being asked to speak at different events.” Alissa responded that she first felt like an
advocate/activist “after I gave my first Take Back the Night speech,” which was at the same time as she put her name to the sexual violence narrative she was writing for a textbook. Sarah, who prefers the term truth-teller rather than advocate or activist, explained “that the first time I thought of myself as a truth-teller was when I was 11,” which was when she told her mother that she had been molested. But she added that she became “a professional truth-teller” in her sophomore year of high school, which is when she disclosed to her friends, began writing about her experience, and teaching her class about consent.

**Linking private and public disclosures** – Every participant in this category discussed the difficulties and challenges to disclosing publicly and what they considered before doing so, such as how publicly disclosing would impact their careers or family members. They also explained the link between their private and public disclosures. As Tim said, “I needed to have the safety and security of disclosing privately before I could ever become public.” Similarly, David explained, “The private disclosures helped give me the strength to disclose publicly.” Alissa explained how privately disclosing to a friend and sharing her fears about publicly disclosing led to a public disclosure in a textbook she was writing. Her friend said, “This is a really important story to tell and it’s a really beautiful survival story. Like, look what you’ve done with this. People need to hear this. And anybody who’s going to think that your work is not good work, they're going to think that anyways whether or not you're public about being a survivor. So, that's when I decided to put my name on the narrative for the textbook.” She added that the support following her private disclosures allowed her to speak publicly: “I think without those people supporting me, I don't know that I would’ve gotten to the point that I could speak publicly.”

As noted above, Navila’s private disclosure to a friend led them to create a website through which art is used as an anti-sexual violence advocacy tool. As she was creating the
website, she said, “I decided to also disclose to my best friends at the time.” On the day the site was published, Navila also went public about her experiences. She explained that disclosing her experiences created “a movement surrounding the language that we use to talk about this, especially in the Muslim community but also the South Asian community as a broader umbrella.” Sarah, similarly, explained that there were parts of her story that she did not share publicly for several years, though she did discuss them privately with friends. Sarah linked her private and public disclosures when she explained that she realized that, while she was open with her friends about being a survivor, she was “in the closet” about it in her professional world. This shifted her professional work so that it focuses on her voice and her story. “For me it was that realizing that I had put myself back in the closet that sparked me to bust the fuck out again because I was like, how is it that now I've got this huge network of national leaders and non-profit people and foundations and I'm like criss-crossing the country and meeting and, like, literally zero people know that this happened to me?!?"

Madeleine explained that after privately disclosing to her writing workshop teacher, “He said he would like to share my story at a workshop that I go to. And I said oh, I don't know, and he said it will really help me, but it will help other people as well.” Later, when people would approach her after her public talks, she began “to understand what he meant by the sharing of my story and how it would help other people.”

**Publicly disclosing as an act of advocacy or activism** – All of the participants in this category also explained how they consider their public disclosures to be acts of advocacy or activism. For Tim and Madeleine, it is because publicly disclosing one’s story helps other survivors recognize and share their own. Tim said, “Advocacy to me is sharing your story. By sharing your story, people in relation to their own possible abuse can relate to your
experience...So, if you provide an opening for them to say someone else has, then it’s easier for them to come forward and get help.” Madeleine explained that when she speaks, “My whole aim is to, in finding my voice, to give other people the power to find their voice. Not to speak publicly, you know, I just encourage people even to tell themselves their own story.”

Navila and Alissa explained how being open about being survivors is an advocacy and activism tool. For Navila, disclosing that she is a survivor is an advocacy decision or choice: “As an advocate, when I do disclose I'm a survivor, I use it as a tool for advocacy. But, there are times that I don't disclose I'm a survivor and that's good enough, too.” However, for Alissa, being open about her survivor identity is advocacy: “For me, my advocacy is being open with that label and navigating the world. Like, I wear a necklace from Brave Miss World42 that says I am brave. It is the embodiment of who I am.”

David explained that going public with the lawsuit was a way to warn and protect others from the priest who molested him, saying, “I desperately, desperately want to warn people about him and protect kids from him.” And Sarah explained that, in general, her advocacy is focused on bringing the sexual violence “conversation to people who can’t yet have it themselves for whatever reason,” and that “conversation is activism.” She teaches that “you can have a conversation about sexual violence and not die.”

In addition to discussing how their disclosures and responses to these disclosures was the start of their path to becoming advocates and activists, the participants in this category also discussed how they found community through their disclosures, how disclosing helped them

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42 A film about Linor Abargil who was crowned Miss World six weeks after being raped. The film is about her rape and her subsequent activism.
integrate their various identifies and labels into their lives, and how disclosing allowed them to release the shame and burden they carried.

**Category II. Victimization/Aftermath as Initial Pathway - Adam Delmonico, Anne, Aurora De Lucia, Aviva, Jack, and Nigel O’Mara**

The participants in the study whose initial pathway was because of something about their victimization(s) or because of the aftermath of their victimization(s) includes Adam Delmonico, Anne, Aurora De Lucia, Aviva, Jack, and Nigel O’Mara. Some of these participants were also initially led to advocacy and activism because of their life circumstances at the time, which are in some ways related to their victimization or its aftermath.

Because of the victimization(s) – Jack, Adam, and Aurora were all initially led into advocacy and activism because of the victimizations they experienced. For example, Jack, who was sexually victimized by both priests and nuns for years as a child in his Catholic convent and school, focuses his activism on religion because “religion is such a powerful grooming tool.” In adulthood, on his job driving tour buses, he took opportunities to talk about “the use of religion to abuse” but not necessarily his experiences, though he would sometimes privately share them with members of tour groups. Later, using his internet-based business, he put up several websites “that was documenting abuse from around the world” through his contacts with other victims. He helped victims organize and tell their stories through software that he created that would “bundle” and “label” victimization incidents which could briefly identify the incident, and later be used to “write a paragraph where it’s more detailed.” This was a simple way to help people who were going through the expensive process of working with lawyers to “timeline their case.” He did this because he realized how emotional and difficult it was for him to keep his story structured without digressing when telling it, as well as how hard it was to tell chronologically.
Years later, Jack had the opportunity to confront police officials and politicians about his experience which is when he first felt like an activist.

Adam explained that after experiencing a second rape by a woman, he changed all of his university electives so that he could study “human connections classes and women’s study classes, and sociology... and stuff that were very social justice orientated.” He was trying to find a way to deal with his rape “analytically and sort of, I don't know, theoretically I guess. I learned a lot after the fact about things like that erections happen from the spinal cord instead of the brain and so, it’s a completely different circuit.” He thought that “if I could explain it to myself it would maybe lose its power,” which is connected to his victimization because, at the time of the second rape, he “got so angry at my body for responding that I thought I am going to cut my dick off if she lets me live. This is the last time my body betrays me.” He was “empowered in having a voice” by his classes that he wrote to a textbook author about the author’s dismissal of male rape and he also disclosed his experiences to his class, which is when he first felt like an activist. From this, he started speaking out more about sexual violence. Like Adam, the last two experiences of sexual violence by Aurora’s friend “really lit the activist fire” in her. However, as explained below, it was more the aftermath of victimization that initially led her to become an activist.

**Because of the aftermath of victimization –** The aftermath of their victimization(s) initially led Aurora, Anne, Adam, Aviva, and Nigel to become advocates and activists. Aurora explains what happened after she was victimized the last two times by her friend: “I found there were a lot of problems after being sexually assaulted and I found two of the biggest ones were, that because I had started spending a lot of time just at home, it was almost like I was afraid to go out. Even if it doesn't make total sense because it wasn't a total stranger who did it, I had this
weird fear about going out.” She also had to take a leave from “her dream school” and was crying often. She started tweeting and blogging about her experiences which led to an invitation to tape a talk show about sexual assault survivors (which never aired). Then, based on a statistic she had read, Aurora decided to run “882 race miles in one year to represent the 882 Americans who are sexually assaulted every day” and to raise money for three charities along the way. Running would force her to get outside and “be around people” from whom she was withdrawing. She started her project “right before both the, like, anniversary of my first sexual assault of this guy, because I didn't want a full year to go by without me feeling like I have taken back some power, and before the inauguration [of Donald Trump] because I was like, this is terrible, that he is terrible.” When her fundraising website went live “very shortly before inauguration day,” Aurora first felt like an activist. Becoming an activist was a way for her to “fix” or “deal with” her problems in the aftermath of her victimizations and she says that it came “from kind of a selfish place.” Ultimately, she realized that she could pretend that victimization was not a gigantic part of her life or she could “embrace it” and “try to make something good about it” and “lean into it…grab it and use it.”

Like Aurora, Aviva’s advocacy began due to her “inner turmoil” after she had to drop out of her Master’s program for her “lifelong dream” to “become a therapist” because she had anxiety and panic attacks during the first week of her program. She had also experienced these symptoms when she was being victimized. She felt upset that she “was not mentally strong enough to be a therapist. It triggered me into this spiral of destruction.” Feeling like a “good for nothing,” with no purpose, meaning, or value, she turned to an anti-sexual violence advocacy organization in her Jewish community to which she was already connected as a survivor and said, “I’m going through a really rough time. I really want to make a support group for women.”
They connected her to a woman and, together, she and Aviva started a support group for female survivors. The advocacy organization also invited Aviva to publicly disclose her story at their dinner, which is when she first felt like an advocate. When her recorded public disclosure went viral, Aviva received “hundreds and hundreds of messages” making her realize how badly survivors need help. Aviva feels an “obligation” to be an advocate.

Like Aviva, Anne’s advocacy began out of a sense of “obligation,” but she now advocates from “a place of empowerment” and makes “the active choice” to do so. Several times throughout her interview, Anne reiterated the sentiment that her advocacy stems from the idea of “if someone had done or been that for me at some point along the way.” Anne’s advocacy and the times she chooses to share her story are about helping people understand that “so much of the trauma is around the aftermath piece rather than the experience itself.” Her first act of advocacy was when she publicly spoke at a campus event about sexual violence, years after her victimization. Though she was initially going to share a written unidentified account of her story, she agreed to speak publicly because “had somebody brought voice to this in that way for me, you know, so many years back, maybe I would've been able to speak out earlier and maybe I would've been able to acknowledge what happened to me earlier.” Had that happened, she believes there would have been “less severe post-trauma.” Anne saw the opportunity to speak as a “responsibility” and she first felt like an advocate some point after her talk.

Like Aviva previously, in the aftermath of his victimization, Adam sought out therapeutic services. He explained how what happened when he tried to do so, as an adult male victim who identified as transgender/gender queer of two female perpetrated rapes, led him to activism: “And the only place I could go was the women's centre on campus and they refused to see me because I was a man. They said, oh there's probably some advocacy out there for men. But the
only things I could find were for victims of childhood abuse and they all cost money and I didn't have any money. That's when I tried to start educating myself.” Even when Adam sought assistance from a male therapist he explained, “He acted like, even when I told him I identify as trans and queer whatever, he still talked to me like he was talking to - I don't know. It wasn't helpful when I talked about how my emotions tend to be cut off now and I can't cry anymore. His suggestion was to go and cry in my truck and stuff and it was geared towards a very masculine sort of thing. And he was using sports analogies to like describe things and stuff.” As explained above, Adam’s education gave him opportunities to be an advocate/activist. His advocacy/activism is also the “only thing that seems to” help him deal with the aftermath of the victimization.

For Nigel, it was about a year after his victimization began, which included victimization by a friend of the family and being sold by this man to other men for sex that he “started to have antisocial behavior. I started stealing, started burglarizing. My lines were blurred about what was right, what was wrong.” When Nigel was “picked up for doing a burglary” by the police he responded to their question about “what’s wrong” that made him commit the crime by disclosing his victimization. However, since there was no law at the time43 “to stop a man raping a male” when he disclosed, his report “wasn’t filed as an official complaint because there was no law that covered it.” Nigel explained how these events that occurred in the aftermath of his victimization are linked to his initial involvement in advocacy, saying, “Like I said, I think I had to. It was in

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43 In 1994 in the United Kingdom, the Criminal Justice and Public Order was amended to broaden the “legal definition of rape to include anal penetration with a penis, and therefore male victims of rape” (Graham 2006:191). It also increased the penalties for the perpetration of male rape to be equal to that of female rape (Graham 2006). Prior to this, “rape was limited to non-consensual vaginal intercourse with a woman” and “anal penetration of a man was considered non-consensual buggery” (Abdullah-Khan 2002:41).
me that I saw this as a massive injustice that had been perpetrated, not only against me, but because of the calls I'd had from the helpline” that he had started with others.

Because of life circumstances – Participants in this category whose initial involvement in advocacy and activism also involved their life circumstances include Nigel, Aurora, and Adam. While Nigel’s advocacy began because of the aftermath of his victimizations, it also began when he spent the last six months of his counselling sessions discussing what was next for him in life, “what I wanted to do, where I wanted to go.” Nigel met this counsellor after answering a call for participants on a study about men involved in prostitution and the researcher became his counsellor. Several times throughout his interview he said, “I didn’t know anything else” and that he recognized that he was ready and able to advocate. Together with this counsellor and a friend who was also a survivor, Nigel launched the first male survivors’ advocacy organization in the United Kingdom because they noticed a gap in the services for men where they lived and they wanted legislation to recognize and criminalize sexual violence against males. On the day the organization launched, Nigel shared his story publicly “to help launch the organization” shortly after which he began to feel like an advocate. For him, going public was not a choice and he says, “I think I realized I had to. It wasn't a case of whether I wanted to or not. I think I had to, for my own sanity. Because I just couldn't believe how badly treated, how nothing was being done, how badly treated survivors were.” His advocacy was initially driven by “anger at the police and at society for not dealing well with victims of sexual abuse.” Currently, it is driven more by being “bloody-minded determined to change things.”

For Aurora, her anti-sexual violence running project and related fundraising is not her first. She had run marathons and fundraised before as a way to recover from “open heart surgery for a congenital heart issue five years” prior. She had also “always been an activist-ish person”
for many causes, such as equal marriage, and she never questioned or cared about how her activism would be perceived. But after being assaulted and wanting to do something, she realized that she felt worried to be perceived as “dramatic” or “an angry feminist” or to make people uncomfortable because her activism cause “has the word sex in the title.” However, part of how her anti-sexual violence activism initially came about is when she asked herself, “Is their right to get married so much more important than the bodily autonomy of females all over the world and male survivors? ...If I’m so willing to shout about that from the rooftops with no worry and no shame, how in the world can I not advocate for myself and other people in the same way?”

In addition to being raped a second time and his experiences trying to access services, Adam’s life circumstances influenced his advocacy/activism. After having been in the army, during which time he was first sexually assaulted, then spending “a few years in an Evangelical church,” getting divorced, and then experiencing sexual violence for a second time, he was in crisis. As he explained, “I was trying to figure out who I was outside of the army and that was a crisis I was going through, then the divorce, and then this. And I believed I was up for debate anyway, so I think I was in a place - I was a blank page so I wanted to know truths.” Going to school allowed him to learn and change his attitudes which led him to advocacy/activism.

Finally, every participant in the victimization/aftermath category also spoke about empowerment and anger, but in different contexts in terms of who and what they were angry at as well as what empowered them. For example, Nigel and Jack spoke about being angry at police for doing nothing to hold perpetrators accountable when they reported, Aviva was angry at the rabbis who did not nothing when she disclosed, and Aurora was angry at her perpetrator. Adam and Anne were both angry at themselves; Adam, because his body responded at the time of his rape and Anne, for being unable to let go of what happened to her. Adam, Aviva, Aurora, and
Nigel discussed how speaking out about their stories was empowering. Nigel and Jack spoke about how empowering it felt to confront lawyers and law enforcement professionals. Anne discussed how moving out of the victim identity as well as creating religious rituals to mark the anniversary of her assault have been empowering.

**Category III. Systems’ Experiences as Initial Pathway - Bethany Mandel, Debra Morrow, Emily, Kathryn Borel, and Wendy**

Five participants’ initial pathway stemmed from experiences they had with various systems including journalists, a hospital, police, midwives, and transitional housing services. They are Bethany Mandel, Debra Morrow, Emily, Kathryn Borel, and Wendy. Three participants’ interactions with systems were negative, while two participants’ interactions were positive.

**Negative systems’ experiences** – Kathryn, Bethany, and Wendy, had negative interactions with particular systems. Kathryn and Bethany were bothouted by journalists as victims of their perpetrators whose crimes were widely covered in the media and this led to their advocacy. Wendy’s negative interactions with a hospital and police officers are what initially led her to become an advocate. All three of them discussed writing about their experiences publicly as a way to own the narratives of what happened to them and to take the narrative into their own hands. For Kathryn and Bethany, this led to other advocacy opportunities.

**Negative interactions with media** – Though their experiences of sexual victimization as well as their number of victimization experiences differed, Kathryn and Bethany both had negative interactions with journalists that initially led to their advocacy. Their stories share many similarities but also have important differences as outlined below. Kathryn and Bethany are both journalists, their stories of victimization involved high profile cases that were widely covered by
the media, and they also had the opportunity to confront their perpetrators in some way through the criminal justice system. An important difference is that, while Kathryn is clear that she was a victim of sexual violence several times, Bethany is just as clear that she was not, saying, “I was a victim of sexual whatever, but I’m not a survivor of abuse.” This is because Bethany was a victim of voyeurism and was not aware that the rabbi overseeing her orthodox Jewish conversion had filmed her, and other women, as she prepared to enter the ritual bath as part of her conversion process until her perpetrator was arrested. Even then, it took months until the prosecutor verified that she was one of the victims who was filmed. Furthermore, Kathryn was pressured by journalists to let them tell her story and working with a journalist on her story is what eventually made her feel like an advocate. In contrast, Bethany did not discuss being pressured to tell her story nor did she discuss participating in a process of having her story told through others.

Because Kathryn and one of her perpetrators both worked in the media, she explained that when he was arrested she “started getting hit up by like every single journalist in the country” asking “when are you going to come out of anonymity? And I was like, never!” For Bethany, journalists contacted her because she “was active in D.C. [where she lived at the time] journalism.” Whereas journalists seemed to know that Kathryn was one of the victims in the case against her perpetrator, it was not necessarily common knowledge that Bethany was one of her perpetrator’s victims, though it was “common knowledge that I had converted Orthodox” and journalists were “trying to find sources” about the case.

Kathryn and Bethany never planned on going public with their story, nor did they initially want to. Kathryn felt that she had “done enough” by providing journalists with “anonymous quotes” and she did not want to revisit the pain of her experiences. However,
Kathryn and Bethany both wanted the stories told. For Kathryn, it was because “I wanted people to stop being hurt by this person” and, for Bethany, it was because she wanted the journalists covering a case involving religious practices they may be unfamiliar with to have the correct information. She said, “I felt sort of an obligation as a journalist to talk to people, give them information on background because I hate seeing misinformation in the media…to give them an idea of what the mikvah (ritual bath) is and the process, and to sort of make sure that they were writing from an informed perspective.”

The most negative interaction with the media for both Kathryn and Bethany came when they were outing by journalists and made identifiable as the victims of their perpetrators in the way the stories were written. The pressure for Kathryn to speak publicly about her experiences of sexual violence continued to increase as the media attention around her perpetrator’s crimes grew and some journalists used my past experiences with sexual violence “to sort of bully me into talking.” Then, the way a journalist published an article in which Kathryn gave him unattributed quotes “blew the lid” off her cover. Similarly, a journalist published an article with details of Bethany’s experiences with her perpetrator during her conversion and linked it to the crimes the perpetrator had committed at a time when it had not yet been verified to Bethany that she was one of his victims. She said, “He named me, basically, as a victim without my consent…I was so infuriated that I had been outing and that now this wasn't my story anymore, that he had taken it and done it for his own clicks.”

Kathryn was then pressured into participating in a documentary about her perpetrator and the media institution that they both worked for when she was victimized by him. Though she initially refused to participate, the woman who would be conducting the interview flew down and asked Kathryn to consider “how will you feel in five years if you don’t participate?” Kathryn
thought, “Would I be able to look myself in the mirror five years later and say hey, you could’ve
done more to help other people and to change things institutionally potentially, you know? And
that was the thing that got me.” Having a respected female journalist put the situation in these
broad terms spoke strongly to Kathryn and she participated in the documentary “in shadow, with
[her] voice cloaked.” Thinking about her legacy and the opportunity to tell her story “in a way
that could potentially help other people” was “the a-ha moment” where Kathryn said she became
an advocate. “Everything just kind of dominoed from there,” she said to explain her continued
involvement in advocacy. This experience stands in contrast to Kathryn’s previous negative
interactions with journalists.

Because they were outed, both Kathryn and Bethany decided to go public with their
stories and write about their experiences and both linked this to the fact that they were
journalists. Kathryn adds that, after the documentary aired, journalists were “bugging” her,
saying, “let me tell your story!” But she realized, “if there's one person who deserves to tell her
own story at this point, it's me.” For Bethany, it was that none of the other victims were talking
about the case and “Since I was outed, I sort of felt like it might as well be me. And I'm a good
writer, whatever, and I had things, I had gripes that I wanted to get out.”

But it was more than being outed that led to their advocacy. For Kathryn, it was
understanding that, just like her perpetrator was protected by the institution they worked for,
“this is happening in all institutions” that made her decide to write her article. Similarly,
Bethany’s victimization “turned on a light…to sexual abuse and sexual incidents in the Jewish
community” and she “couldn't stop seeing it everywhere.” Furthermore, she observed that “there
did not seem to be the same amount of concern” for victims as there was with their perpetrators
and perpetrators’ families. Because there were things she wanted to change regarding Orthodox
conversions, she wrote an article on the idea of Jewish “converts’ bill of rights.” Other reasons that she wrote her piece were because her case was in the news, because she was no longer afraid of her perpetrator, and, primarily, because she was “inspired” to write after an upsetting interaction she had with a local rabbi about her conversion that was unrelated to her victimization. The articles that Kathryn and Bethany wrote both went viral, which neither of them had expected. After her article was published, Kathryn was invited to be “the keynote speaker” for a fundraising event for a rape treatment center. Bethany’s article led to an invitation from a rabbinical organization to sit on a committee to improve the conversion process, which is when she first thought of herself as an advocate.

**Negative interactions with a hospital and police** – Like Kathryn and Bethany, Wendy became an advocate because of her negative experiences with various systems. Wendy’s negative interactions with a hospital and police officers occurred years after she had several experiences of sexual violence. However, it was her experiences with these systems, which she characterizes as “secondary victimization” several times throughout her interview that initially led her to become an advocate. About a decade after her experiences of sexual violence, Wendy would experience “severe depression” when she would drink. One night, she was depressed and drinking and thinking about her experiences. She went to the hospital and “told them that I had been a sexual assault victim and that I was having flashbacks to that time and that I was seeking inpatient treatment for depression.” But, “the hospital called the police without telling me and, the next thing I know, there were police officers standing in front of me, wanting to handcuff me, and take me to jail.”

The night she spent in jail was Wendy’s “beginning of trying to be an advocate in some way.” The “kicker” was realizing that the hospital “did that to over 100 people per year” and “the
poor treatment that rape victims have with secondary victimization.” The day she got out of jail, Wendy knew she “was going to advocate for that cause come hell or high water, for people to be able to seek treatment.” She sought a lawyer’s help to “get an injunction to stop them from doing that to people.” Although Wendy sued the hospital and won, she gives more credit to the doctors than she does to the police. This is because she believes that the doctor felt bad about calling the police but that the police “just flat out didn't care,” and because a night in jail is “the reverse of what somebody needs” in terms of a “therapeutic environment.” The police were “worse because they were the coldest… I don't see any remorse from them at all.”

Wendy traces her advocacy through three stages which are directed to three different audiences: First, she advocated by suing the hospital to ensure that people seeking treatment could get proper care and to get the hospital to change their policy of involving the police. Then, she advocated by telling everyone about her experience in order to raise awareness about what was happening. Finally, she advocated by self-publishing a book about her experiences so that she could “reach the victims” directly.

Positive systems’ experiences – Unlike Kathryn, Bethany, and Wendy, two participants in this category, Debra and Emily, had positive experiences with various systems that initially led to their advocacy and activism. They share several similarities. Debra and Emily were both from religious communities, though only Deborah experienced sexual violence by a religious figure, while Emily’s religious beliefs impacted her ability to disclose and find support. Both went from being survivors accessing services to being advocates or activists within those very services. In fact, they both described the first time they felt like advocates to have occurred when they helped women who were in similar situations that they had been in as survivors, in the same way that they had been helped at the time. Debra’s positive experiences with a domestic violence
shelter and transitional housing program years after she had experienced sexual victimization by the priest in her church initially led her to become an advocate. She later got a job working for the organization that helped her when she left her husband. Similarly, Emily’s interactions with her midwives at the time that she was pregnant by the man who sexually victimized her and became her husband, as well as during her other pregnancies, led her to later become a midwife.

An important difference between Debra and Emily’s advocacy is that Debra’s is not as directly linked to her victimization experiences as is Emily’s. For example, Debra did not turn to the shelter and transitional housing program because of her childhood sexual victimization by a priest; instead, she needed their services after fleeing two husbands who were violent towards her years after her sexual victimization. However, she says, “the domestic abuse in my life kind of stemmed from the sexual abuse, because it was the seeking, that being okay being punished, being abused, like that's what I deserved.” This is because she always thought that the priest abused her as a child “because I was bad.” The idea that she was bad is a sentiment that Debra repeated several times throughout her interview. On the other hand, because of Emily’s lack of knowledge and control around reproduction, she became pregnant and married the man who was sexually victimizing her. Her perpetrator tried to force her to have an abortion, flushed parts of a miscarried fetus down the toilet, forced sex soon after pregnancy, and blocked her from being able to pick up birth control. The lack of control Emily had over her body and life before and during her marriage appears central to her decision to become an advocate/activist through midwifery. She explained, “And if you don't have control over your reproductive life…And in my own mind, I never ever intended to get pregnant, not any one of the three times… That's why I feel like an advocate as a midwife. I want my whole profession to be advocacy.” She stresses that a “really important part of my story” is the fact that her midwives gave her “control over my
birth” and her body by supporting her through “two un-medicated births” at a time where she did not have much control.

Their positive experiences with the services they turned to led Debra and Emily to pursue an education and career that would allow them to advocate. During a two-year transitional housing program, Debra went back to school and obtained a criminal justice degree and also worked for a small business that was part of the program. This was a “motivator” for her and “a second chance” that she felt she could not waste. She ended up working with incarcerated women who, like her, had domestic and sexual violence histories and made many referrals to the agency she had originally used. Eventually, an official position at the agency opened up and Debra said “that was like going full circle” from being a client to working there.

For Emily, deciding to become an advocate/activist occurred at the same time that she decided to become a midwife. As she was trying to figure out how to leave her husband, she engaged in a “long” and “deliberate” process of finding a midwifery program “because I loved my midwives so much. They were the ones who had told me you deserve better than this.” Though Emily and her midwives never explicitly discussed her experiences of sexual and domestic violence, she believes that “they saw all kinds of red flags,” for example when she missed appointments, and they would cautiously ask her questions about her well-being. Emily expressed the idea of coming full circle from client to advocate/activist when she said, “If I can help another woman, particularly a mother, feel empowered in any way I will go to great lengths to do it. I don't care how long it takes or how much money it takes because there were women like that who helped me and I would not be where I was right now without this help.” Emily explains that becoming an advocate/activist by studying to become a midwife gives her “a source of authority” and vetting to advocate through the midwifery credentials she has obtained.
However, neither Debra nor Emily are public about their experiences with sexual violence in general or with the women they work with.

**Category IV. Empathic Response as Initial Pathway – Joanne, Lily, Rachel, Sharon, and Tamara Schoor**

Five participants’ initial pathway began because of an empathic response to learning about other victims. They are Joanne, Lily, Rachel, Sharon, and Tamara Schoor. Their empathic responses were related to other victims of their perpetrators or victims of other cases that were unrelated to their own victimization.

**Victims of the same perpetrator** – Lily and Tamara both became advocates after learning that the men who victimized them also victimized others, something that neither of them were aware of. Though Lily had been doing “work around sexual violence and gender-based violence for the longest time,” it was after finding out that the second person by whom she experienced victimization had victimized other women that she became involved in “personal advocacy.” She has heard about eight other women in total that her perpetrator has harmed and explained, “What happened was, once I started hearing about this, I took on this responsibility to do something about it because that's my advocacy side.” She heard about how he punched someone in bed and was horrified at the thought that it could have been her. She advocated by informally complaining to the university where he worked and made specific requests about what the university should do to protect students. She said, “I want to do something because I know he will - he's going to do it again. I 100% can see him doing it again. I hope it creates a rift in his pattern.” She has received comments about why she advocates against this individual as opposed to against the man who first victimized her, and she says that it is about power and change: “That's so hurtful to me because I don't have power with [the first individual] …it's over. I am
trying to move on with my life. With [the second individual], at least I have some sort of ability to do something.”

Tamara also became an advocate after learning that her perpetrator had victimized others. However, unlike Lily, she never heard from these other victims. She said, “I know for a fact that there are many others, but no one has contacted me.” Unlike most participants, she also became an advocate first and only later decided to publicly share her story. As she explains, “I wanted to expose him, especially once I found out I wasn't the only one. Like, until I found out that there were others, I was content to let it go. But once I found out that I'm definitely not the only one, then things changed. Then I decided that it was time to take action.” She took action by contacting advocacy organizations to see if they could help her, talking to the police, and networking with advocates at a conference which is when she first began to feel like an advocate. In the process, she learned about the problem of child sexual abuse in the orthodox Jewish community to which she belongs, “started understanding the issues better and, at every opportunity that I could find, I took whatever opportunities were created to volunteer my time more and try to help in any way.” She also went public with her story on Facebook and named her perpetrator. Tamara believes that if she would have been able to get two other women to come forward with her when she first approached the rabbis, that they “would listen and it would change” because the rabbis told her that “they're not surprised or that they've heard rumors, but unless I can bring a few other girls to testify, there's nothing they can do.”

Victims in other cases – Joanne, Rachel, and Sharon initially became involved in advocacy because of their empathic response to other victims in cases that had nothing to do with their own experiences of sexual victimization. Joanne’s and Rachel’s advocacy was triggered by other cases and they both wrote articles in which they shared their own experiences after they
learned about these cases. Though before becoming an advocate Joanne would speak out against sexual violence if the topic came up, until she learned about the case she “had never written about it and I had never actually told my story.” But when she read about how a victim in a high-profile case in her industry wanted to stay anonymous so that her family would not find out about her victimization, Joanne explained, “My heart just went out to that woman. It was like the words she was saying could come out of my own mouth, and so I felt like I had to share my experience and stand up for her.” Joanne’s empathic response began her process into advocacy and she says that the case “was that trigger that I can't keep silent any longer.” She wrote an article about how the trial in that case “mirrors society's misconceptions of rape” and, in it, “brought in my own rape and my own thoughts and sort of compared it to that and wrote about why I remained silent for so many years because of the stigma society places on women.” Writing about it was the first time Joanne felt like an advocate.

Like Joanne, Rachel said that a widely covered case where a male raped an unconscious female on a university campus, “really was a big trigger for me.” That case initially led to her advocacy involvement when Rachel and her friends were discussing it and “people were saying, well, what do you think? I mean, she was drunk - you can't blame.” Rachel heard them say “the typical stuff. Maybe she wasn't dressed appropriately or maybe she was drunk” and she tried to explain that even if the victim had been drinking that does not make the rape okay or her fault. As the people around the table continued to repeat “the same stereotypes, the same myths that I bought into, those are the ones that kept me silent,” she “felt I had an obligation to tell them.” When someone suggested that Rachel would never experience sexual violence because she dresses conservatively, is confident, and clear about yes and no, she announced, “It did happen to me! It happened to me twice! And the whole table was so silent...I said when you think about
somebody you see in the news, I want you to see my face. Because it's somebody that you know and it's probably more than me, you know? And it happens all the time and it happens to people that you know.”

As opposed to Joanne who immediately felt that writing an article was an act of advocacy, Rachel did not initially think that speaking up about the case was an act of advocacy. But after telling her therapist, “I just want to DO something!” and explaining what happened with her friends, the therapist said, “that IS advocacy.” Rachel had previously thought that “advocacy had to be out there with a banner and a protest and a big bull horn or something. Or publishing a book or something. Starting a political movement” but now, she began to feel like an advocate. She further explains how her advocacy process began with an empathic response when she says that what made her want “to do something” in the first place was her anger at hearing other people’s stories of victimization in response to her own. She says that realizing “how many people who were in my life, who I cared about who were affected. It's...wow. It's just gotta change. It's gotta change.” Becoming an advocate was also a way for Rachel to deal with and “undo” her feelings of guilt that her silence may mean that another person has been harmed. Rachel wrote an article about her experiences and also joined an organization working to end the statute of limitations.44

Like Rachel, Sharon advocates through her volunteer work with an organization that works on legislative changes regarding sexual violence, including the statute of limitations and other bills. Doing this work has made her feel like an advocate. However, she differs from the others in this category in that she became an advocate in what she called a “secondary way.”

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44 Statutes of limitation are the “laws that determine” the time frame in which the state can charge a perpetrator (Judicial Council of California 2018; RAINN 2018). It is also “the deadline for filing a lawsuit” (National Center for Victims of Crime 2012).
Though she experienced sexual victimization as a child and teenager, Sharon’s daughter was sexually victimized by the child’s father and Sharon explains that her daughter’s case is what led her to “direct advocacy:” “The court process with my daughter really totally opened my eyes to how the oppression, the silencing of victims - especially child victims - is institutional.” Whereas Sharon thought her daughter would be protected in court, she instead “found out that it was all about, you know, delegitimizing the victims and protecting the perpetrator. And I was astonished how many mechanisms are at play in that, and how much disbelief specifically OF WOMEN, by women, of women. And it really was an eye opener.” The court process led her to connect with other mothers who were going through something similar as well as to become connected with anti-sexual violence advocates.

All of the participants in this category also spoke about the difficulty in speaking out about their experiences or being anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

**Category V. Learned Advocacy as Initial Pathway - Hank Estrada, Julie, and Laura**

There were three participants, Hank Estrada, Julie, and Laura, whose initial pathway began with learned advocacy. This means that learning about sexual violence or advocacy efforts initially led them to their own involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. Whereas Hank became an advocate through his relationship with another advocate, Julie and Laura both became involved in advocacy and activism through their universities. While Julie’s advocacy and activism came about because of her program of study and the focus of her academic work, Laura had the opportunity to engage in anti-sexual violence advocacy through her job on campus. The three participants in this category first felt like an advocate or activist in relation to learning about or being afforded the opportunity to become an advocate or activist. Hank, Julie, and Laura also all experienced sexual victimization multiple times.
How they learned to become advocates and activists - Hank’s learned advocacy came through volunteering for a suicide crisis line and from networking with another advocate. First, he spoke about feeling isolated as a male victim after he disclosed: “Because I was finding myself so isolated, I only heard of women survivors and books in the ‘80s were for women…and I just changed the gender, but I felt I could relate to most of them.” He then volunteered for a suicide crisis line: “I felt confident I could help other survivors, male survivors, if they called, but I knew they would mostly be women.” Through this he learned “that we needed something for men. There was nothing for male survivors, so I took it upon myself.”

Hank’s gender and sexual orientation also played a role in the learned advocacy that initially led him to become an anti-sexual violence advocate. Soon after volunteering for the suicide crisis line, he heard a male survivor speak and this is how he described the experience: “He was a tremendous speaker and advocate and out, and not out survivor but an out gay male - the first ever that I had seen talking on both levels, and I was inspired by him.” Hank introduced himself to the speaker, shared his story, and they developed a friendship. The speaker invited Hank to “be the male speaker at a local television station doing a story on male survivors and child.” Doing this interview was the first time Hank felt like an advocate because “there were hundreds of thousands of people watching.” Hank explains that the speaker “got me started on that” and that he “worked with him as much as I could.” This led to more invitations for public talks “to different organizations, women's organizations, survivor groups, and counselling conferences on male survivors…And that’s what I would start to do. I'd tell my story.” At one of these conferences, Hank was given additional speaking opportunities by people that he met.
Like Hank, Laura volunteered at anti-sexual violence events before she became an advocate. Though she was already engaged in “slacktivism,” or posting anti-sexual violence articles online, it was not until university that she became more heavily involved in advocacy. She said, “It probably wasn't until I got to university that I realized that there's a lot more I guess I could do. There's Slut Walk and there's a lot of organizations on campus that support victims, or I guess just prevention of stuff like this.” She got a job at an advocacy centre on her campus which coincided with her second sexual assault. Though the centre is not focused solely on anti-sexual violence work, Laura describes her anti-sexual violence work at the advocacy centre as coming about “sort of accidentally but out of interest. They were like oh, if you have a project you want to work on.” This gave her the opportunity to work on a video to educate others about victim blaming after sexual violence and this is the first time she felt like an advocate. She explained, “Because it's not just like a one-time event sort of thing. It'll spread. I really felt like I did something valuable.” She has also educated high school youth about sexual health and sexual violence.

At the time of her third experience of sexual victimization, Julie “was developing a feminist consciousness. Like, I had been exposed to some theory in my undergrad and I was getting more alternative platforms of media and just seeing those stories more.” Like Laura, Julie explained how it was through her university program that she was initially led to advocacy and activism saying, “It definitely took its form in school, in my Master's degree and then really came out in my Master's research paper.” Though she did not enter her Master’s program

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45 The Oxford dictionary notes that slacktivism is a blend of the words ‘slacker’ and ‘activism’ and is defined as “the practice of supporting a political or social cause by means such as social media or online petitions, characterized as involving very little effort or commitment” (Oxford University Press 2018). Though the term coined by Fred Clark and Dwight Ozard originally had a positive connotation, using the Internet for political activities that do not impact political outcomes but increases the participant’s sense of feeling good is a common criticism of online activism (Christensen 2011).
intending to study sexual violence, at the time “there was a lot about consent. It was all over.” She realized that she was interested in her own and her friends’ “fuzzy first sexual experiences” in undergraduate school and on their long-term effects. In her Master’s program she felt like “I couldn't turn it off. I just - I started out as like, okay, I'm going to do this one interview about this. But then it kept growing and I was like, okay, this actually does matter to me.” She felt compelled to do her Master’s project on consent and, together with a friend, began naming and labeling some of their sexual experiences and started using terms they had previously shied away from, such as rape.

Julie finds it easier to talk about her experiences through an academic lens and wrote about her “blurry and messy” sexual exchanges during university and another one of her sexual violence experiences for her paper. She said, “I didn't realize how badly I needed to tell that story and it was easier for me to access those points in an intellectual way, like by theorizing it…Since writing that paper, I do feel more comfortable talking about it.” Writing these stories was also a “process of telling myself and it was a very meta experience.” Around the same time of her Master’s program, a friend of Julie’s was raped and Julie helped the friend label the incident as such and accompanied her to the police to file a report. Though feeling like an advocate and activist was “a really slow process,” it first happened for Julie when she moved to the city where her university is located and attended a student-led Take Back the Night event: “And I wasn't going there to see friends. I went on my own and I stood as a body by myself and it was a really powerful feeling.” In sum, while Hank and Laura felt like advocates when they understood that they had an impact on others, Julie felt like an advocate and activist when she attended an anti-sexual violence event alone but with other students at her university.
All three participants in this category also discussed how the focus of their advocacy and activism is related to their experiences of sexual victimization or their disclosures about these experiences. They differed in how they identify themselves in terms of having experienced sexual victimization and in how public they are about being survivors or victims, even as they advocate, and the reasons for being or not being public.

### Table 5.4 Advocacy/Activism Process Themes & Initial Pathway Highlighted

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<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Disclosure/Response</th>
<th>Victimization/Aftermath</th>
<th>Systems’ Experiences</th>
<th>Empathic Response</th>
<th>Learned Advocacy</th>
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**5.5 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the results of the narrative and comparative thematic analyses that were conducted on the data. First, additional quantitative statistics were presented on the
victimization, disclosure, and advocacy or activism experiences of the participants in the study as well as the labels that participants use. Next, the five main themes about the processes in which participants became anti-sexual violence advocates and activists were outlined and described. Finally, the five categories of participants’ initial pathway into anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism were presented and illustrated with quotes from participant narratives. An account of how participants fit into the categories was provided and participants in each group were compared and contrasted to the others in their category. The table above (Table 5.4) visually presents which of the five main themes applied to each participants’ process into becoming an advocate and activist and their initial pathway is highlighted. The next chapter discusses the five main themes and pathways and how they relate to existing research on the three stages of victimization and feminist standpoint theory as well as the literature on tertiary deviance and survivor advocacy and activism.
Chapter 6. Three Stages of Victimization and the Main Themes

6.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents further research findings on how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. It uses the five themes and pathways to highlight the ways in which the study’s theoretical framework, and the three bodies of relevant literature that were previously reviewed, are supported by or differ from participants’ experiences. As with the previous chapter, words in quotations are taken from participant narratives.46

The results presented in Chapter 5 provide some answers to the study’s research question: How do victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists? The focus was on understanding participants’ processes in moving from and between sexual violence victimhood and survivorship to anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. The study used qualitative narrative feminist analysis to answer the research question and drew upon labeling and feminist standpoint theories. It also reviewed the literature on tertiary deviance and deviants, survivor advocacy and activism in general, and the survivor advocacy of victims of sexual violence specifically. Narrative and comparative thematic analyses resulted in important quantitative and qualitative data regarding participants’ victimization, disclosure, and advocacy/activism experiences.

The data collected about participants’ victimization and disclosure stories directly correspond to the research on the primary and secondary victimization that victims of sexual violence endure, as well as the primary and secondary phases of deviance outlined in labeling theory (Lemert 1951; Karmen 2007; Weiss 2011). The data on their advocacy/activism stories

46 To mark the broad connections between participant narratives and prior research, this chapter does not identify to whom quotes belong. Instead, it offers unidentified participant quotes as illustrative examples of the discussion.
are related to the tertiary deviance phase that was added by Kitsuse (1980). The data about these three types of stories can be better understood using feminist standpoint theory’s lens about the ways in which females and others are victimized, how re-victimization occurs through stigmatizing labels and rape myths that are applied to them when they disclose, how both victimization and stigmatization are linked to gender, race, and class, and how intersectional identities affect one’s ability to resist, reject, and overcome stigmatization (Harding 1987; Riessman 2000a; Suarez and Gadalla 2010). Therefore, embedded in the research question was an examination of whether and how victims who become advocates/activists reject or transcend the stigma that is part and parcel of primary and secondary victimization. In doing so, the study also considered whether a tertiary phase of victimization exists for victims as it does for deviants, and whether and how survivors of sexual violence who become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists can be considered tertiary victims.

Five specific processes and initial pathways into advocacy and activism were identified after analyzing each narrative in search of the main themes capturing how participants became advocates and activists, and then comparing all of the narratives and themes to each other. The five main themes and pathways are: (1) disclosure/response; (2) learned advocacy; (3) victimization/aftermath; (4) empathic response; and (5) systems’ experiences. Every participant spoke about how a combination of these five processes was integral to their journey to becoming an advocate/activist. These processes and pathways are evidence of and reveal participants’ agency and stigma rejection, resistance, and resilience or destigmatization as they recounted what they did to become advocates/activists, including their actions at the time of victimization and afterwards. Victims’ resistance and agency are often hidden or silenced in accounts about victimization making it crucial to identify them when they appeared in participant narratives.
Because 76 percent (19/25) of the participants were women, noting their accounts about agency and resistance is important to counteract the historical obstruction of women’s agency and resistance (Randall 2010). Furthermore, it was important to identify agency in participant stories since it is a key concept in tertiary deviance and stigma resilience and transcendence (Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980; Riessman 2000a). Highlighting the initial pathway also allowed participants with similar advocacy/activism beginnings to be compared and contrasted.

As noted in Chapter 4, in recounting their victimization, disclosures, and advocacy/activism experiences, each participant’s stories bled into each other. This means that in recounting one of the three stories or experiences they were asked about, they each incorporated elements of the other stories, demonstrating that there are specific reasons for their involvement in advocacy/activism that are tied to their victimization and disclosure experiences. Therefore, the study traces not only how participants became advocates and activists, but when and why they did so as well. Where applicable, the presentation of the five themes and pathways in Chapter 5 explains the connections between the three stories as do the core narratives presented in Appendix A. Showing the links between participants’ experiences gives voice to the many silences in the spaces between victimization and advocacy/activism involvement which are important to uncover (Romito 2008).

Below, the relevance of the qualitative and quantitative data to labeling and feminist standpoint theories and the relevant bodies of literature are presented. To answer the research question, they are structured according to the three victimization phases or processes that can culminate with victims and survivors becoming advocates and activists and the themes that best relate to each phase. Therefore, the primary victimization section discusses the findings related
to the victimization/aftermath theme. The secondary victimization section discusses the findings related to the disclosure/response, empathic response, and systems’ experiences themes. The tertiary victimization section discusses the findings related to the learned advocacy theme. In this way, the study appreciates how, or whether, participant experiences of primary and secondary victimization influenced or impacted their journey into advocacy and activism, or tertiary victimization. The chapter then discusses participants’ chosen labels and master identities and explains why participants in the study can be considered survivor advocates and activists as well as, in some cases, tertiary victims.

6.2 Primary Victimization and the Victimization/Aftermath Theme

The victimization/aftermath theme discussing primary victimization experiences demonstrates that some participants became advocates and activists because of the impact of victimization and its consequences on their lives. The quantitative data collected on participants’ primary victimization experiences support much of the literature on sexual violence including that sexual violence is primarily committed against females, by males, specifically men who are more likely acquaintances than strangers, and that repeat victimization is common (Randall 2010; Suarez and Gadalla 2010). It also supports the literature on the range of long-lasting negative ramifications of sexual violence (Lamb 1999) because all participants discussed the multiple consequences that victimization had on their lives, including difficulties in relationships, school, and work; “psychological scars” and mental health issues; substance abuse; suicide attempts; eating disorders; chronic pain; and more.

The fact that 72 percent (18/25) of participants became advocates or activists only after experiencing sexual violence, and the fact that this theme emerged in 68 percent (17/25) of participant narratives, shows how strong a catalyst the experience of sexual violence and its
aftermath can be to engaging in resistance efforts through anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. For example, participants spoke about feeling “obligated” or “responsible” as victims of sexual violence to become anti-sexual violence advocates/activists and how these feelings drive their work. One said, “I never want another woman to go through, like in the under-resourced if not un-resourced way, the things that I went through in the aftermath.” This supports the research on survivor advocates and activists which explains that a life changing experience, or its aftermath, can lead some people to transform their life mission into being an advocate for that cause (McLoughlin and Fennel 2000; Kenney 2002; Lythcott et al. 2003; Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Dorius and McCarthy 2011).

However, some participants said they would have become advocates/activists anyway, but that having been victimized made them more inclined to do so. This was especially true for those who experienced multiple incidents of sexual violence, where the second or third victimization was their impetus to becoming an advocate/activist. Participants with multiple experiences also discussed a hierarchy of victimization in which they identified the victimization experience that had the largest impact on them and their involvement in advocacy/activism. The idea that repeat victimization can lead people into advocacy/activism shares some parallels with the deviant’s trajectory from primary to secondary and, then, tertiary deviance. This is because secondary deviance involves continued acts of deviance that are followed by societal labeling and stigmatization (Lemert 1951; Becker 1963). Perhaps victims’ continued “confrontation, assessment, and rejection” of repeat victimization experiences allows them to become advocates and activists, like Kitsuse (1980:10) theorized happens with tertiary deviants.
Acknowledging Primary Victimization

The victimization/aftermath theme also made it clear that naming the acts committed against them and identifying as victims or survivors is part of what allowed participants to become advocates and activists. Many participants spoke about not identifying as a victim at first, even after clear instances of sexual violence. For example, one explained, “I didn't at all identify as a victim or a survivor. I didn't even see it as violence, I just thought like oh, it was too rough.” Another, who was victimized as an adult, felt “apologetic” about her story because she is not a “child abuse survivor,” making her unsure about how to self-identify. Some who saw themselves as victims or survivors at the time of victimization explained that it was only after multiple experiences of victimization that it hit them that they were, in fact, victims or survivors. This is important to note because, like feminists who worked to name the acts of and silences embedded in sexual victimization (Lamb 1999b; Walklate 2014), victims may similarly engage in this work on their road to becoming advocates/activists. In essence, before participants could disclose their experiences to anyone else, they first had to disclose that they had been victimized to themselves. This is similar to Knous’s (2006) finding that the path to tertiary deviance begins with self-identification and the acknowledgement of one’s experiences and Brown’s (2006) finding that shame resilience involves acknowledging one’s vulnerabilities related to an experience of shame.

There were several reasons for being unable, or not wanting to, identify as a victim or survivor. Participants explained that they did not have the language to name the acts against themselves and, therefore, could not recognize themselves as victims or survivors at the time, and often, for many years later. One said, “I don't know what words I would have possibly used.” They also explained that this is why they “didn't tell anybody, didn't do anything,” and many
discussed never having been taught about sex, sexuality, safety, or sexual violence. As Smith and Cook (2008) have noted, this prevents disclosures especially by female victims. This suggests that the silences surrounding sexual violence are primarily around language and voice; victims cannot or do not articulate what happened to them because they have no words for it making disclosures near impossible. These silences may begin in, and with, primary victimization and being unable to acknowledge one’s experience of victimization can make it difficult to move forward. These silences may also preclude survivors’ desire or ability to engage in advocacy or activism because it is difficult to advocate for something one cannot name. Uncovering these silences has been an important focus of feminist standpoint theory (Romito 2008; Walklate 2014).

Gender, Intersectionality, and Primary Victimization

Female participants, in particular, spoke about being unable to acknowledge that the person who victimized them did anything wrong. They also discussed the experience of learning or realizing that what happened to them had a name, in some cases “was a crime,” and how to reframe it in this way as opposed to labeling it a “relationship misunderstanding” or “bad sex.” They linked their initial inability to name and frame sexual violence to the normalization of these experiences in discussions with friends and to the “rape myths” that they believed. Being able to link one’s feelings of shame to social structures has been found to be important for shame resilience to occur (Brown 2006). This is the essence of consciousness raising. Additionally, more of the women than men had multiple experiences of sexual victimization and, in some ways, male and female participants discussed their victimizations differently. For example, many of the women discussed losing their virginity in an experience of sexual violence but the men did
not, even if their assault was their first sexual experience. Several of the men, however, used the term ‘rape’ to describe their victimization which female participants did too, but several females said that it was difficult to use that term. Many females also spoke about the concept of consent when recounting their victimization stories, while only the gender queer participant who was victimized as an adult did.

Another notable difference is that females discussed how they were ignored when they tried to speak up or confront their perpetrators at the time of victimization. However, most of the male participants did not discuss this experience and, instead, explained that when they said ‘stop,’ the perpetrator generally did. This aligns with the research on how women’s reading of a situation as sexual violence may be read by male perpetrators as ‘normal’ and the research on the silencing of feminine voices (Harding 1991:126; Glenn 2004; Karmen 2007). It also highlights questions around who is allowed to protest the violence committed against them at the time and afterwards, in what ways, and whether or not they will be taken seriously and heard. Additionally, women but not men blamed themselves for the primary victimization they experienced saying, for example, that they used to think they were victimized because they “gave off the wrong message” or did not give “voice” to their feelings of wanting to stop the sexual activity at the time. As notes previously, female participants blamed themselves because of these rape myths and the fact that their victimization experiences felt “common” to those of other women. They internalized shame, guilt, and blame, for example, saying, “I did beat myself up for a long time for ending up in that situation in the first place. And I felt very dirty and very

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47 This may be because all of the victimizations of male participants included child sexual abuse, even if they were also victimized as adults. The participant who identified as gender queer and “still checks male on boxes” was victimized only as an adult.

48 However, male participants talked about consent in general or when discussing the advocacy/activism they do on behalf of other survivors.
guilty.” Therefore, it appears that not only do society and a patriarchal culture demand that women protect themselves from sexual victimization (Karmen 2007), victims demand it of themselves too and label themselves blameworthy for what they perceive to be their failures in doing so. These are some of the many experiences which, as the literature has shown, require resistance to become an advocate or activist.

Participant stories about victimization also demonstrate the importance of understanding sexual violence and its aftermath from an intersectional lens (Harding 1991; Intemann 2010; Randall 2010). For example, the gender queer participant that described his protests being ignored by a female perpetrator said he was afraid to defend himself and have that read as an act of male aggression against a female, making him the perpetrator when he was really the victim. Several participants, most notably those abused by religious figures 49, also linked their experiences of primary victimization at the hands of individuals to the institutions that allowed them to occur. They also explained that the links between their individual perpetrators, the larger institutions, and their broader lives kept them silent. This is important to note because feminist research believes in linking the violence committed by individuals to the structures that allowed them to occur (Romito 2008). These participants also explained that being victimized by a religious figure negatively affected their relationship to their faiths, 50 faith communities 51, and families and that “there’s been a price to pay.” Participants who self-identified as members of the LGBTQ+ community also discussed the ways in which their experiences of primary victimization were linked to, or happened because of, their identities. For example, one

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49 Participants abused by religious figures made up 32 percent (8/25) of the sample.
50 Most of the religious participants discussed that though they are no longer religious, they advocate on behalf of victims in their previous faith communities.
51 Participants explained that they suffered a “loss of community” or are no longer “members of the community.”
explained that her sexual assault “was a hate crime,” saying that it happened “because I was gay.”

In an effort not to erase victims’ emotions in their narratives of sexual violence, it is important to note that, as outlined in Chapter 5, all of the participants in the victimization/aftermath initial pathway category spoke about their “righteous anger” and “outrage”52 (Harding 1991; Lamb 1999b). Some were angry at themselves, others were angry at their perpetrators or those they disclosed to, and still others were angry at the impact their victimization had on their lives, such as the derailing of their life plans. However, to provide a fuller perspective about the aftermath of victimization that goes beyond its deleterious aspects, it must be noted that these participants also all spoke about empowerment.53 For some, anger was the “fuel,” “drive,” or “energy” through which they became empowered through advocacy/activism. They also explained that their empowerment began with using their voice in some way to “break the silence” and disclose their victimization.

6.3 Secondary Victimization and Stigma Resistance

The disclosure/response, empathic response, and systems’ experiences themes were the ones in which participants discussed their experiences of secondary victimization as well as their acts of resistance and destigmatization that led them to become advocates and activists. They are discussed below and, at times, show evidence of the three discriminatory results of stigmatization including “individual discrimination, structural discrimination, and discrimination that operates through the stigmatized person’s beliefs and behaviors” (Link and Phelan 2001:379).

52 Participants in other pathways spoke about their anger as well.
53 Participants in other pathways spoke about empowerment as well.
I. The Disclosure/Response Theme

The disclosure/response theme demonstrates that some participants became advocates and activists because of, or through, their disclosures or because of the positive and negative responses to their disclosures. It also demonstrates the need to investigate what leads some victims to speak out and to appreciate what they have had to overcome in doing so because it can provide context for their advocacy/activism involvement. Though telling their victimization and disclosure stories was emotional for participants, evidenced by their tears during these sections of the interview, the disclosure stories were the longest to get through. This may be because disclosing involves telling others about the secret humiliation one has experienced (Breckenridge 1999) or because disclosures are impacted by delayed, fuzzy, or traumatic memories (Alaggia 2004) which almost all participants discussed. It is also because, as research shows, participants spoke about vacillating between silence and speech as they contemplated what to do after being victimized and disclosing in fits and starts, often over a period of many years (Flynn 2008; Alaggia 2004; Andalibi et al. 2017). However, as opposed to the literature that explains that victims often do not disclose or wait many years until they do, all the participants in this study have privately disclosed and a large majority disclosed publicly (76% or 19/25).

For several participants, disclosing in a public setting was important to their advocacy, whether the disclosure occurred on-line, through a public talk, or an article they wrote. Like the works of Infusino (2014), Fileborn (2016) and Andalibi et al. (2017) on the use of public settings and online spaces as sites for anti-sexual violence activism, participants discussed their experiences of disclosing publicly and how it impacted their advocacy involvement. Participants’

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54 As one participant explained, “it takes [me] forever to tell this story. I'm going back and forth. I can't even get a timeline. Because when I get into that space, I suppose the victim mentality.”

55 This discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that the study’s sample inclusion criteria stated that participants must have disclosed to someone other than a mental health professional.
goals of disclosing, and the ways in which they disclosed, are similar to what some research has found regarding victims of sexual violence who engage in advocacy and activism. The goals include telling their story, being believed, helping other victims, and finding support (Fileborn 2016; Andalibi et al. 2017). Similar to the literature, they discussed their public off-line and online disclosures as tools for education, awareness raising, and sexual violence prevention efforts (Infusino 2014; Fileborn 2016; Andalibi et al. 2017).

**Difficulties to Disclosing and Secondary Victimization**

The participants in this initial pathway category, and others who discussed this theme, also discussed how difficult it was to disclose. Participants whose involvement in advocacy/activism involved this theme discussed the fraught process of disclosing as an act of “coming out” or coming “out of the closet as a rape victim”, similar to the research on coming out about invisible and/or stigmatized identities (Schneider and Conrad 1980; Frese et al. 2001; Bowen and Blackmon 2003; Knous 2006) and on the significance of the act of disclosing (Alaggia 2004). For example, they discussed the “hours” it took to compose or share an online post about their victimization and how “terrified” they felt when they did. They also discussed the personal and professional challenges to disclosing, such as worrying about committing “career suicide” and assessing whether or not someone was “safe” to disclose to. They also worried whether people could “handle” their disclosures. Additionally, they discussed the emotional difficulties they experienced after disclosing, such as “depression.”

Several participants discussed thinking about how their disclosures would impact their loved ones. This is similar to the research on secondary victimization which can also mean the victimization that occurs to victims’ families and friends (Knudten 1989; Karmen 2007). They explained what they did to “minimize the burden and risk and discomfort” for these individuals.
While some were worried that their loved ones would be stigmatized as a result of their disclosures, others worried what would happen when their loved ones “found out” about the victimizations.\footnote{This was especially true for participants who were victimized by family members.}

The fact that 64 percent (16/25) of participants reported being stigmatized after disclosing supports the research on the stigmatization and secondary victimization that occurs when victims disclose (Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012). Here, too, participants discussed how their emotions, such as anger\footnote{Female participants also spoke about how the anger of the men they disclosed to was more harmful than helpful. This type of response is known as an egocentric reaction (Ahrens, Cabral, and Abeling 2009).}, at the negative responses to their disclosures triggered their involvement in advocacy/activism. However, while the difficulties of disclosing included experiencing secondary victimization and stigmatization, participants spoke about how their fears of being stigmatized led them to neither disclose nor report their victimization. This supports Weiss’s (2011) research on how the internalization of rape myths prevents victims from disclosing and reporting.

While some participants spoke about how disclosures brought them closer to family and friends,\footnote{Participants also discussed learning about the sexual victimization and other forms of violence that their relatives endured when they disclosed to them. Some explained, however, that “it’s easier to disclose” to strangers} others spoke about the rifts that negative responses to their disclosures caused in their relationships\footnote{Participants spoke about negative responses from both women and men and its impact on their relationships.} and the stigma management techniques they used. For example, some “stopped talking” to individuals who responded negatively while others chose to “avoid the topic” of sexual violence so that their relationships could continue. In other words, even when victims spoke out about their victimizations, they needed to navigate spaces of silence or, at times, silence themselves. This supports the literature on the challenges to disclosures for, and stigma
management techniques of, tertiary deviants (Nack 2000; Knous 2006), survivor advocates (Frese et al. 2001; Chavaria 2012), and victims of sexual violence (Flynn 2008; Andalibi et al. 2017). However, disclosing was also a “tool” or strategy for participants to be “efficient” in building relationships with people since being a victim/survivor was “so much a part of my identity.” Therefore, becoming an advocate or activist involved deciding who and when to tell about their victimization as well as understanding that telling would impact their relationships and other aspects of their lives.

**Gender, Intersectionality, and Secondary Victimization**

Notably, while a majority of participants discussed the experience of stigmatization, only female participants discussed being blamed. Females also spoke about how their mothers’ responses to their disclosures were, or felt, stigmatizing. This supports the research on the ways in which female victims, specifically, are negatively labeled and treated when they come forward (Scully and Marolla 1994; Karmen 2007; Randall 2010; Schwartz and Gibbs 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012; van der Bruggen and Grubb 2014; Walklate 2014). Therefore, it appears that just like sexual violence is gendered, so is the secondary victimization that often follows (Lamb 1999b; Grubb and Turner 2012; Walklate 2014).

The secondary victimization discussed by male participants includes being unable to find sympathy or services in the wake of their disclosures because what was available was oriented to female victims. This suggests that more attention is needed to identify the ways in which males have been impacted by victimization (Fyke and Lucas 2013). Similarly, participants from religious and ethnic groups discussed how belonging to these groups made their disclosures more difficult and less likely at first. For example, at times disclosing one’s survivor status meant publicly disclosing religious norms that participants no longer abided by, such as avoiding
alcohol or members of the opposite sex. Participants were afraid to disclose because of what people in their communities might think about them and the context in which their victimization occurred. However, participants also discussed how their victim status and group membership combine to allow them to advocate for their specific communities by disclosing like some cancer survivors who advocate in and for their ethnic communities, (Lythcott et al. 2003).

Some participants also discussed that the ways in which they were stigmatized in religious groups solidified, and led to the internalization of, shame and blame. Their disclosure stories support the research on how religious values, texts, or leaders may be used to suppress disclosures and what it has taken to break their silence (Fontes and Plummer 2010). The research on stigma also contributes to understanding how individual, structural, and self-discrimination work together to create stigma and how the removal of blame is important to destigmatization (Link and Phelan 2001; Clair et al. 2016). This seems to explain that the need to understand the structures in which not only sexual violence, but also secondary victimization, take place or is enabled is key to its eradication. In this way, feminist research can shed light on the ways in which victims are kept in their place and also offer answers as to how this motivates or demotivates victims from engaging in advocacy and activism (Allen 2011). However, while the majority of participants discussed being stigmatized when they disclosed, a common sentiment was their surprise at the positive reactions to their disclosures.

**Disclosing as Advocacy/Activism and as Stigma Resistance**

Participants discussed how the positive responses to their private disclosures motivated them to become advocates and activists and to also continue disclosing, sometimes doing so publicly. For example, participants in this initial pathway category described the security, strength, support, and camaraderie they received from private in-person disclosures that allowed
them to go forward publicly by speaking, writing, or posting about their victimization online. Since the research on disclosures is more focused on secondary victimization and negative labeling post-disclosures (Burt 1980; Bohner et al. 1998; Karmen 2007; Randall 2010; Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012), the lack of attention paid to the support victims of sexual violence may receive can be considered one of the silences around sexual victimization disclosures. While the reality that not all victims will be viewed positively is important to acknowledge, the focus on negative reactions might encourage and perpetuate the silence of victims after they are victimized. Furthermore, and in line with Infusino’s (2014) study on how advocacy and publicly disclosing are synonymous, all of the participants in this initial pathway category explained that they considered their disclosures to be acts of advocacy/activism. Therefore, for some participants, disclosing did not just lead them to advocacy/activism but was itself an act of advocacy or activism. This explains why advocacy and activism helped participants find their “voice” and “power” and why all of the participants in this initial pathway category said that disclosing made them feel like advocates/activists.

It is possible that focusing on the negative responses to disclosures may also prevent victims from engaging in activities like advocacy and activism. It is, therefore, important to note the benefits of disclosing that participants in this initial pathway category discussed and to recognize that the benefits may be the byproducts of advocacy and resistance through disclosures (Kitsuse 1980; Gotell 2010). One of the benefits to disclosing was that it helped participants integrate their victim/survivor identity into their lives. For example, one participant said “in telling my story I get stronger. I incorporate more of what my story is into my life...you become a fuller human being...And by sharing your story, it's reinforcing that acknowledgement of who you are as a person.” In this way, disclosing is similar to Kitsuse’s (1980:1) ideas around coming
out, which he views as more about the “social affirmation of the self” than secrecy and disclosures. Integration is important to the advocacy of injury and cancer survivors as well (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000; Rechis et al. 2013). Additionally, Nack (2000) notes that disclosing one’s stigmatizing identity or experience can lead to self-acceptance about that stigma and participants discussed how disclosing allowed them to accept their history with sexual violence.

Participants also discussed the benefit of finding community through disclosing both in-person and online whether it was through a formal or informal group of other survivors, like bisexual individuals who found community when they disclosed their bisexuality (Knous 2006). A little over half of participants (52% or 13/25), at some point, turned to a group of peer victims to whom they disclosed their victimization and some found community among victims when they became advocates/activists. Furthermore, several participants discussed how publicly disclosing brought their story to the attention of those who later invited them to serve in advocacy and activism roles. In this way, one participant explained, disclosing “has changed the entire trajectory of my career… It is the public disclosures that has brought my work internationally.” One noted how “bizarre” it is that her disclosures “actually raised my profile to such a degree that it was actually beneficial to my career.” This is also similar to the experiences of injury prevention survivor advocates who use their personal compelling stories as an advocacy tool, as their entry into advocacy, or as a way to come together with experts to create change through advocacy (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000).

Another benefit to disclosing was its impact on releasing the shame and burden of victimization. A participant explained, “I have always felt shame around it until I started speaking publicly.” Another said that the first time she semi-publicly disclosed felt like walking
“into the room naked. I was so exposed. That actually really helped me to stay steady in my shame and it just kind of all fell off.” Disclosing also allowed participants to combat the internalization of shame saying, “Disclosure has been great for me…because it stopped the self-blame.” In this way, disclosing was more than a stigma management technique or act of advocacy/activism; it was an act of silence breaking and stigma resilience, resistance, and rejection. This explains why becoming able to speak about one’s shame and deconstruct it is a key process of shame resilience (Brown 2006) and why it is important to critically interrogate who can speak and be heard.

Finally, participants’ private and public disclosures exposed them to the disclosures of others and when this led them to advocacy, it can be considered an empathic response. As one said, “the public disclosures did enable me to feel as though I was part of a small but growing and important social movement, because I started to hear, of course, from other survivors and they thanked me, they asked my advice.”

II. The Empathic Response Theme

The empathic response theme demonstrates that some participants became advocates and activists because of their empathic response when learning about other victims. The forms of advocacy and activism that the participants in this initial pathway category engaged in include: reporting perpetrators to powerful individuals to protect others; networking with and volunteering for professional or established advocates; privately and publicly disclosing as a way to educate, raise awareness, or stand up for other victims; and by connecting with others who share similar experiences. Participants who discussed this theme said that they felt “empowered” and “able” to create change as well as “obligated,” “responsible,” and compelled to advocate because of what they learned from other people’s stories.
An empathic response leading to advocacy/activism was triggered when, upon hearing about the primary and secondary victimization experiences of others, participants realized that the problem of sexual violence was much larger than they had thought. As one explained, “I got involved because I saw so many people turning the cheek. I never realized how many people out there, tons of people are affected by sexual violence.” Though most of the participants that discussed this theme did not reach out directly to the survivors they were empathic to, their actions to become advocates and activists following their empathic response can, nevertheless, be considered an act of peer support on behalf of fellow survivors. Like cancer survivor advocates and tertiary deviants, participants wanted to improve the lives of those with whom they have a shared identity or experience (Weitz 1985; Rechis et al. 2013).

Similarly, in learning about others’ victimization, participants recognized that their particular stories were not unique to them and advocating allowed them to “stand up for” other victims. This is because, as occurs in consciousness raising, other people’s stories highlighted the commonness of victimization for participants and participants went on to highlight the commonness of victimization as part of their advocacy/activism work. As one said, “I'm not so sure that my private story is that essential necessarily, but the experiences that are universal to lots of survivors” are. Therefore, in seeing themselves in the stories of others, and in seeing others in their own stories, participants became active in anti-sexual violence work. In this way, the advocacy and activism that came about through participants’ empathy emphasizes feminist standpoint theory’s objective of both respecting individual experiences and highlighting the patterns they share (Smith 1990; Allen 2011). Furthermore, finding and offering empathy by reaching out to others is an important element of shame resilience (Brown 2006).
Additionally, some participants who were previously silent about their own histories of victimization moved from silence to voice by “coming out” as victims fueled by their empathy for other victims. For example, participants wrote or spoke about their victimization and the way in which the treatment of the victims they were empathic to “mirrors society's misconceptions” of sexual violence. They explained that their behaviours and decisions post-victimization, such as silence, were similar to those of these other victims, for example, because “of the stigma society places on women.” Writing or talking about their own victimization as they stood up for others is also in line with feminist standpoint theory’s goal to construct “stories and analyses” that can reframe or interrupt negative victim labeling (Allen 2011:39). In attaching their lives to social structures through these stories and justifying the behaviours of the victims they were standing up for, participants’ advocacy/activism and resistance involved demonstrating that social structures can perpetuate rape myths and impact the ability to resist stigmatization (Harding 1987; Riessman 2000a).

In trying to prevent the stigmatization and secondary victimization of other victims they learned about, participants were also able to release the shame about their own victimization. For example, one described her advocacy/activism due to empathy as a way to “contribute” to the undoing of the “rape myths that I believed, that held me back, that kept me silent.” Therefore, an empathic response and advocating for others allowed participants to have empathy and “stand up for” themselves. In this way, participants’ advocacy/activism because of an empathic response may also be aligned with the goal of tertiary deviance to interrupt stigma. It was also a way for

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60 For example, several female participants discussed how hearing then-candidate Donald Trump brag about committing sexual assault led them to write about their stories or to advocate.
61 One participant discussed how part of his advocacy is to, with the consent of survivors, publicize their behaviours that will be used to discredit them when they come forward about victimization. He explains that this is a way to “challenge” the idea that their past negative behaviors, like crime, “should discredit” their disclosure. Instead, he presents these stigmatizing behaviours as “evidence” of the abuse the survivor endured.
participants to do “those things I wish somebody did for me,” which was a common sentiment among female participants. Further, religious leaders told participants that they would only hear their complaints about victimization, or would only be empathic to them, if they could prove that there were other victims. Therefore, the lack of empathy of religious leaders, and the empathy that victims from religious groups had for their fellow victims, led some of them to advocacy/activism.

However, an empathic response also generated feelings of guilt in some participants who could not speak up at the time and later either worried, or found out, that their perpetrator had harmed others. One said, “I felt guilty that somebody else might get hurt because I kept my silence. I want to undo that.” Becoming involved in advocacy and activism was a way to assuage some of these feelings or to respond to them and can, therefore, be read as resistance to, or a rejection of, negative feelings such as guilt or blame.

*Gender, Empathy, and Resistance*

Gilligan (1987) explains that one of the strengths of women is the way in which they value relationships and are sensitive to, and assume responsibility for, others. She notes that this may impact their ability to speak up, which is often seen as a weakness. This may be supported by the fact that all of the participants in the empathic response initial pathway category were women. These women all discussed how difficult it is to speak out about their victimization as well as the difficulties in being an advocate or activists. Therefore, just like primary and secondary victimization have been shown above to be gendered, it is possible that the acts of resistance to sexual victimization through advocacy and activism are as well.

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62 However, the majority of participants in this study were female.
However, while the participants in this initial pathway category became advocates/activists because of their empathy, they do not necessarily believe that the empathy of others extends to them. For example, one explained that she worries that people who know her as an advocate will find out that she is a victim because, “in some ways, like saying you're a survivor de-legitimizes your role as an advocate.” She thinks that people wonder, “Is she valid? Is she legitimate? Does she have an axe to grind?” Therefore, participants may move from, and between, secondary and tertiary victimization like some tertiary deviants move from and between secondary and tertiary deviance (Shoenberger et al. 2015). As they advocate, they feel or worry about being stigmatized as victims and/or as advocates/activists. Some participants, however, were led to advocacy because of their experiences with systems.

**III. The Systems’ Experiences Theme**

The systems’ experiences theme demonstrates that some participants became advocates and activists after their experiences with particular systems. Both positive and negative systems’ experiences motivated participants’ engagement in advocacy and activism. Participants discussed their experiences with civil or legal systems, medical systems, the media, and systems that provide services for victims. For some participants, advocacy/activism is about decentering systems and centering victims’ power and choice similar to the research on how sexual violence survivors engage in advocacy or activism (Gotell 2012). Similarly, some participants spoke about becoming involved in advocacy/activism as a way to address and confront the injustices that they had faced as victims (Gotell 2010; Fileborn 2016). For others, especially those with positive experiences, advocacy/activism is about working within systems on behalf of fellow survivors. This is also similar to the work of survivor advocates and activists who work within
systems that are related to their survivorship experiences, for example as peer survivor advocates (Lythcott et al. 2003; Hoffman and Stovall 2006).

Secondary Victimization and Negative Systems’ Experiences

Participant narratives about their experiences with various systems support research examining how gaps in systems, or negative treatment within systems that were meant to help them, has led some survivors into advocacy (Armour 2003; Rechis et al. 2013; Malone 2007; Moroney 2011; Gekoski et al. 2013; Englebrecht et al. 2014). For example, some participants discussed the secondary victimization, or re-traumatization, they experienced when they turned to legal systems, which is also highlighted in the literature about victims’ experiences in the criminal justice system (Karmen 2007; Randall 2010). Furthermore, the fact that 52 percent (13/25) of participants did not turn to the criminal justice system after being victimized, at times in fear of being “laughed” at or mistreated, supports the literature noting that victims of sexual violence often do not turn to legal systems in the aftermath of victimization, and that when they do it can be a disappointing experience (Frohmann 1991; Randall 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012).

Though only one participant used the term ‘secondary victimization’ (meaning, her re-traumatization) to discuss why she became an advocate/activist because of her negative systems’ experiences, other participants discussed becoming advocates and activists because they were secondary victims in the sense that they became advocates or activists because of the victimization of a family member. For example, they explained that, though they had experienced victimization, it was because of the way their children were treated by particular

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63 One participant, however, discussed the support she found when turning to the criminal justice system.  
64 Several participants also discussed that the impetus for their advocacy/activism was when their children arrived at the age at which participants had experienced primary victimization.
systems when the children were victimized that led them to become involved. This supports the literature on survivors who become advocates after their loved ones have been victimized (Knudten 1989; Smith and Huff 1992; Armour 2002; Karmen 2007; Gekoski et al. 2013; Englebrecht et al. 2014).

Additionally, participants spoke about the ways in which their realities and perspectives were silenced by professionals, especially when they sought help from those working in the mental health field. For example, a participant’s account of being labeled by doctors and police as an alcoholic, which ignored her history with victimization, supports the literature on how professionals who label and stigmatize victims may make it difficult for them to access the care they need (Randall 2010). It also supports the literature on how female victims’ behaviours post-victimization have been medicalized, pathologized, and psychiatrized (Harding 1991; Lamb 1999b; Kenney 2002). The accounts of those with negative systems’ experiences also point to the ways in which victims of sexual violence are blamed by powerful individuals within some systems and how negative labels are used to discredit them (Frohmann 1991; Kenney 2002; Randall 2010; Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Grubb and Turner 2012). Moreover, participants victimized by religious figures spoke about the ways in which they were negatively treated by systems in ways that intersected with their multiple identities. For example, they spoke out about being unable to turn to, or ignored by, police who venerated their religious perpetrators or the institutions to which they belonged. Therefore, being able to counter powerful systems and these negative labels and stigmatization appear to be important reasons for participants’ involvement in advocacy and activism. Additionally, participants’ multiple identities seem important to their
advocacy involvement and several of them advocate for and within the various communities they
belong to,65 such as their religious or ethnic groups.

Resistance to Negative Systems’ Experiences

Similar to the other themes, participants discussed how their advocacy/activism following
systems’ experiences allowed them to “take back power” or has “empowered” them. The
narratives about what they did after a negative system experience show their resistance to, and
rejection of, systems and the way those systems perceived or treated them. For example, some
discussed suing the systems that harmed them to prevent the future primary or secondary
victimization of others. Others, who were already engaged as anti-sexual violence
advocates/activists, took on additional advocacy/activism roles because of their negative
systems’ experiences. Listening to the influence that negative systems’ experiences had on
participants’ paths to advocacy and activism was key to understanding how they have rejected
and transcended stigmatizing labels and attitudes (Harding 1987; Riessman 2000a).

Participants’ agency in response to negative systems’ experiences included identifying a
problem, participating in media coverage about sexual violence in general or a particular system,
and gathering information about the systems they wanted to change. This is similar to the
activities of injury survivor advocates (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000). Their accounts of writing
or speaking about their victimization also explains how negative interactions with systems can
lead survivors to publicly disclose their primary and secondary victimization experiences. For
example, participant experiences with journalists and being outing by the media66 are examples

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65 Almost all of the participants who were victimized in religious communities but no longer belong to the religious
group continue to advocate for victims from their previous religious community.
66 Participants also discussed the experience of being outing, or the threat of being outing, by coworkers and family
members.
of how the media can “bully” victims into feeling responsible for the outing of perpetrators and supports the literature on the interactions between the media and victims (Frohmann 1991; Karmen 2007; Smith Maguire and Matthews 2014). Not wanting their names to be “paired” with their perpetrators’ “in perpetuity” may also explain why victims may avoid systems that they believe will portray them solely as ‘victims,’ which is known as ‘secondary labeling’ (Taylor et al. 1983:24). This is especially in contrast to those with positive systems’ experiences in this initial pathway category who did not disclose their victimization publicly, and rarely disclose it privately, as discussed below.

Disclosing their primary victimization and negative, or secondary victimization, by systems was a way for participants to prevent the harm of others, to put sexual violence in the broader context of institutional harm, and to gain “control” over their stories. Reclaiming their narratives was also one way they used their agency to speak about their own experiences and talk back to power by asserting the validity of their experiences (Sydie 1987; Breckenridge 1999; Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003). Harding (1991) notes that people are shaped by what they reject as well as what they accept, and this theme makes it clear that rejecting the stigmatization and secondary victimization that came with negative systems’ experiences shaped the future of some participants by leading them to become advocates and activists. However, not all of the participants’ experiences with systems were negative.

Positive Systems’ Experiences

Participant narratives discussing positive systems’ experiences support Wood’s (2017) research on survivor advocates in the area of interpersonal violence. For example, like those in her study, these participants provide services to women in the same organizations or industries in which they received help when they were victimized, they experience the benefits of being
advocates as well as the challenges to being advocates who are also survivors, and their advocacy is rooted in their life experiences with victimization. For example, the two participants with positive systems’ experiences in this initial pathway category had engaged in some anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism prior to their ‘official’ careers in this field, but neither of them considered that work to be advocacy. Until they worked in the specific systems in which they received the help they needed as victims, they considered their previous work to be “altruistic” or something other than advocacy.

However, they are not public about being survivors of sexual violence and find it easier to talk about other forms of violence they have experienced. This stems from personal and professional feelings about disclosing to the people they serve in the systems they once used as victims, and have now joined as advocates/activists. For example, they discussed feeling the need or being told to keep their survivorship status hidden from the women they work with, which Wood (2017) notes, can also happen with IPV survivor advocates. Therefore, becoming an advocate and activist does not always mean that disclosing one’s story is at the center of one’s advocacy or activism. Participants’ also raised the challenges to advocating while not sharing one’s story and the links between silence and advocacy/activism are discussed further below. Nevertheless, in working within the systems with which they had positive experiences, they learned to be advocates/activists.

6.4 Tertiary Victimization and the Learned Advocacy Theme

The learned advocacy theme demonstrates that some participants became advocates and activists by learning about sexual violence and anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism efforts. It is most related to the tertiary phase of victimization where one builds the victim/survivor community through advocacy and activism (Kitsuse 1980; Knous 2006).
Participants learned how to advocate through their involvement in advocacy/activism for other causes, through their involvement with organizations or supports they initially turned to as victims and survivors, through formal and informal education, and through networking with other anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. Some of the research on survivors of sexual violence who become advocates supports these findings (Sheehy 2012). Their experiences of primary and secondary victimization were also motivators that steered them to learn about advocacy and activism. In learning how to advocate, participants realized that there was more they could do to address sexual violence and they felt joy and “value” at being able to help others. All of the participants in this study were volunteer advocates and activists at some point and 36 percent (9/25) went on to be employed as such. Some participants distinguished between volunteer and paid roles when they referred to “professional advocacy” or activism.

Participants discussed learning “a lot of the language and a lot of the terms” to name their own experiences and to advocate, learning the skills needed to tell their stories publicly as a way to advocate, learning about sexual violence, and learning about others’ advocacy work and projects, like survivors of IPV who become advocates (Wood 2017). Previously advocating for other organizations or issues also taught them the importance of advocating for and within their own survivor, ethnic, or religious communities. For some participants, learning to be an advocate/activist emphasized the problems in their communities regarding sexual violence that they were previously unaware of and helped them create change around these problems. This
was apparent in the narratives of participants from religious communities or whose families were religious, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and those who were male.

**Peer Support and Subcultures of Victims and Advocates**

Some participants learned to advocate through the survivor support groups they joined as victims. For example, victim peer support groups taught participants how to advocate through “survivor speaker programs” and “trainings.” This is similar to deviants who may join subcultures or peer groups in which the deviant identity is solidified, such as homicide survivors, those with a sexually transmitted disease, or members of the LGBTQ+ community (Kitsuse 1980; Weitz 1985; Nack 2000; Kenney 2002; Knous 2006; Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). However, the learned advocacy theme goes beyond the banding together of those with shared identities and experiences because it considers the agency of these individuals to address the social problems that led them to their common identity. As one participant explained, his advocacy/activism involves “taking people who have no power and helping them see that, in fact, they do have power if they band together.” In learning how to advocate, participants were assisted by, and have become, peer support workers like other survivors who engage in peer support group models of care, for example around cancer and mental health (Frese et al. 2001;

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67 Of the entire sample, 32 percent of participants were victimized by religious figures. Additionally, three participants who were not sexually victimized by a religious figure came from a religious community or family and explained how belonging to a religious community or family impacted their responses to victimization.

68 Participants were not asked about their sexual orientation, however 16 percent of the sample self-identified as LGBTQ+.

69 Out of the 25 participants in this study, 5 participants were male.

70 While Kenney (2002) interprets support groups that victims may join as the subcultures discussed in labeling theory, the norms of support groups do not deviate from those of society as they do in deviant subcultures (Lemert 1951). However, survivor support groups may challenge the idea of the passive, silent, and isolated victim by bringing together those with a common identity to share their experiences of victimization and support each other.

Surprisingly, while the study found that 52 percent (13/25) of participants turned to victim support groups in the aftermath of victimization, 64 percent (16/25) of participants discussed finding peer support as advocates and activists among other advocates and activists but outside of an official peer support group. Moreover, participants spoke more about the benefits they derived from the peer support of fellow advocates/activists than they did from peer victims. Based on Nack’s (2000) research showing that avoiding a support group as a deviant or stigmatized person allows one to overcome fully identifying as such, perhaps the same can be said of some participants. In not joining a victim support group, it is possible that they were able to resist and reject the stigmatized identity of victim and instead embrace the one of advocate and activist. The advocate/activist identity was further solidified in the peer support they found from other advocates and activists making it a subculture to which victims and survivors who become advocates and activists belong.

Challenges to Being an Advocate or Activist

The learned advocacy theme also shows that advocates and activists are not born overnight and that hardship, work, and education have gone into victims’ process of becoming advocates and activists. In addition to discussing the difficulty of creating and maintaining boundaries as they advocate, participants discussed other challenges to advocacy. For example, participants spoke about the challenge of holding onto their own stories while guiding others “through a process of beginning to unpack their own trauma.” They also spoke about the
difficulties they faced working with other anti-sexual violence advocates and activists at the same time that they spoke about the support they have found among them.71

Difficulties include having their feelings and opinions discounted, feeling like “the token survivor” among them, watching advocates address sexual violence only in the “white feminist” realm, feeling like “I didn’t belong,” and feeling like other advocates are “ego driven,” “have so much baggage,” or are “competing” with them. These difficulties were expressed more by the 64 percent (16/25) of participants who were solely volunteer advocates and activists than those who had been both volunteer and paid professionals. Therefore, just because participants see themselves as anti-sexual violence advocates and activists, it appears that they may not be perceived or accepted as such by others and their ability to lead may not be embraced by ‘professional’ advocates. This differs from cancer survivor advocates who have been accepted by professional cancer organizations (Hoffman and Stovall 2006). One participant said that advocacy is “a hierarchy…depending on who you know and how much money you have, your voice can only go so far.” This shows that just like power is a factor in victimization and stigmatization, it is also a factor in being recognized as an advocate which impacts one’s ability to advocate (Link and Phelan 2001; Clair et al. 2016).

The power needed may be gendered, and several male participants discussed the challenge of being a male advocate around an area that has focused on female victims. Female participants explained the challenge of watching “poster people for sexual violence” not “being held accountable.” For example, they believe that the “advanced language” that is used in advocacy is being learned by men who are “misogynist[s] wrapped in a feminist wrapper” or

71 Generally, however, participants felt that their interactions with other advocates/activists were positive but noted these negatives. Another explained that it was “inevitable” to have these challenges with other advocates which are mostly around “tactics and approach.”
“male feminists” to “make claims” that they are feminists or advocates when, in fact, they “use it to perpetrate.” Therefore, while becoming an advocate or activist allowed them to challenge primary and secondary victimization, their work poses its own, or a new set of, challenges to overcome. These may be invisible in the accounts about victims who are presented as advocates and activists where the focus is often on their stories of victimization but not on how they came to be outspoken regarding anti-sexual violence efforts and the challenges they faced to get there.

For example, based on the literature on survivor advocacy, one would imagine that learning to be an advocate or activist gives people strength. However, not all of the participants felt this way, with one explaining that “advocacy has hurt me” and that she believes she has “lost jobs” because of it.

Though many participants did discuss feeling strengthened and empowered through learned advocacy/activism, others spoke about how that strength is reserved for their advocacy roles but does not extend to their victim/survivor status. For example, of the three participants whose initial pathway was learned advocacy only one is public about being a survivor. The other two are not public, though they sometimes wish they were able to be more open about their victimization experiences. Nevertheless, they discussed their learned advocacy and activism as forms of resistance, specifically resisting and rejecting their previous silences. For example, one said that advocacy is a way for her to speak up now “maybe because I didn't know how to speak up for myself” when she was victimized and that advocacy “was kind of a way for me to almost take some of the pressure off.” In this, way learned advocacy may be an example of resistance or tertiary victimization in that the new identity of advocate or activist resists or rejects one’s victimization, including one’s responses to it, such as silence. It is, therefore, important to understand participants’ multiple identities and how they label or see themselves.
6.5 Labels and Identities

Participants’ discussions about the victim and survivor labels support some of the literature on how victims of sexual violence choose to identify themselves (Lamb 1999; Weiss 2011; Walklate 2014), as well as the literature on the importance of language for tertiary deviants and survivors who become advocates (Kenney 2002; Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Knous 2006; Chavaria 2012). Participants explained how the terms they choose to use are a stigma resistance, resilience, transcendence, or management technique, which is also discussed in these bodies of research (LeFrancois et al. 2013). Participant comments about labels and identities also supports the use of narrative feminist methods in this study because narrative methods can help reveal the links between personal narratives and master identities (Hammack and Cohler 2011).

Victim/Survivor Label

While 28 percent (7/25) of participants said that they are “both” victims and survivors who use the terms interchangeably to refer to themselves because they do not “contradict one another,” 56 percent (14/25) prefer to use the term survivor, and some do not like either term. One participant explained that the term ‘victim’ is only related to the past and that ‘survivor’ shows that “what happened to me is who I am, is part of my character, and it impacts me every day.” Others said that ‘survivor’ is “more positive” and “empowering.” Some who prefer ‘victim’ explained that it is because the word survivor should be used for more severe acts of violence than they experienced, should only refer to Holocaust survivors, or because the more “empowering” term of survivor would suggest that victimization does not continue to impact one’s life. This shows that the terms they use to capture their experiences with victimization are not only about the acts they endured, but its consequences on their lives as well.
Advocate/Activist Label

More participants in the study prefer the term advocate (56% or 14/25) over activist (12% or 3/25) when referring to themselves, though 32 percent (8/25) of participants use them interchangeably. Some prefer advocate because it carries “more of a personal approach” as opposed to activists which they thought meant “marching with a placard.” Similarly, others prefer activist because “I'm going to events, I'm doing marches, and writing stories. I'm raising money,” and think an advocate is someone “helping individual people.” Interestingly, however, though the study’s participant recruitment materials explained that one of the sample inclusion criteria is having been or currently being involved in anti-sexual advocacy or activism, participants sometimes hesitated when asked whether they prefer the term advocate, activist, or another term for themselves. They explained that until they saw the call for participants, they did not necessarily think of themselves as advocates or activists. One said, “Until you approached me for this, I didn't really think of myself as either, but I suppose I am, really.” This means that being invited to participate in a study that asks about how they became advocates and activists, and considers the impact of their primary and secondary victimization experiences on their advocacy/activism involvement, allowed participants to recognize and acknowledge their involvement in addressing sexual violence. In this way, the study uncovered the hidden identity of advocate or activists for some participants. Participants also explained that participating in this study was itself an act of advocacy/activism.

Master Identities

When asked about how they identify today between their dual identities of victim/survivor and advocate/activists, and whether there is any tension, there was a mixed response. Like Klebold (2009), many participants discussed their experiences of feeling like a victim and only later identifying as a survivor and, from there, becoming and feeling like an
advocate or activist. Some said they were both, but that their feelings of being a victim are related to external things such as “the patriarchy” or because they need to be “more deeply healed.” Some, who said they currently identify more as a victim/survivor than advocate/activist, relayed that it is because their advocacy and activism only came about because of their personal experiences with victimization. Others were unsure how they felt, saying that they “struggle with vulnerability around that. Like wait, do I want that? Is survivorship my identity or do I want it to be advocacy?” Another explained that her whole life has “been, all of these different labels were compartmentalized” and that it took years until she became a survivor advocate where she was able to “be this whole person.” This demonstrates participants’ bifurcated consciousness and identities and how they have been integrated as they became advocates/activists (Smith 1990).

One said that he wishes “there were another title other than survivor.” To him, the often-used term ‘thriver’ is “not a complete description” because it suggests that “your life is better and you’re having a great time, nothing affects you.” He sees no term that goes beyond survivor or thriver “like to the advocacy.” This touches on the need for this study and Wood’s (2017) work that both the identities of victim and advocate need to be considered when studying, talking to, or working with advocates who are victims and victims who are advocates. Without acknowledging these multiple identities, as feminist standpoint theory demands, participants’ important and sometimes unclear or confused perspectives would have been hidden or silenced in their stories about how they became anti-sexual violence advocates and activists.

6.6 Are Participants Survivor Advocates as well as Tertiary Victims?

The five themes and pathways discussed above illustrate that the participants in this study share many characteristics to survivor advocates and tertiary deviants. It is clear that they can all be considered survivor advocates and activists. For example, as stated previously, 72 percent
(18/25) of participants were advocates/activists only after experiencing sexual victimization. However, as noted, some of the 28 percent (7/25) that engaged in general or anti-sexual violence advocacy before being sexually victimized only considered the advocacy and activism they engaged in after they were victimized to be advocacy/activism. Therefore, participants’ involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism is directly linked to their personal experiences of primary and secondary victimization like the life changing experiences of survivors who become advocates/activists related to the issue that changed their lives (McLoughlin and Fennell 2000; Wood 2017).

Additionally, all of the five themes include elements of survivor advocacy/activism such as the importance of integrating survivor and advocate/activist identities, the challenges and benefits of being survivor advocates/activists, and that advocacy can be about receiving and serving as a peer support like the advocacy and activism of other peer support workers in survivor communities (Frese et al. 2001; Hoffman and Stovall 2006; Ussher et al. 2006; Infusino 2014; Fileborn 2016; Wood 2017). Moreover, many of participants’ advocacy/activism goals and actions are similar to those of survivor advocates and activists. For example, participants have founded organizations, set up websites for others to share their victimization experiences, have given public talks, have written books, support victims privately, work with other advocates/activists, and much more. In these ways, participant narratives support the research that the advocacy/activism of sexual violence survivors serves as a mechanism to raise awareness and educate others about sexual violence, and to offer support to other victims (Infusino 2014; Fileborn 2016).

Furthermore, like other survivor advocates and activists, participants advocate both as a way to create change and as a way to manage stigma or secondary victimization as noted in the
themes that relate to secondary victimization including the disclosure/response, empathic response, and systems’ experiences themes (Repper and Carter 2011; Chavaria 2012). In fact, all of the elements of Brown’s (2006) shame resilience theory were part of participants’ process in becoming advocates and activists. Some saw their advocacy/activism as something “selfish” because of the benefits they get from it, saying, “I get as much or more than I give” and “it’s the only thing that seems to” help. Additionally, unlike the advocacy of tertiary deviants, survivor advocacy and activism are not always related to a stigmatized identity, though it can include it. Therefore, participants who reported not experiencing stigmatization or secondary victimization can still be considered examples of survivor advocates and activists because they engage in social change through advocacy and activism.

The study also raises the possibility that participants can be considered tertiary victims. This is because all of the themes illustrate how they resisted, rejected, and overcame stigma and all but the systems experiences’ theme explained the similarities between participants’ actions and those of tertiary deviants. Rejecting and resisting the stigma of primary and secondary victimization are the ways in which some participants broke the holds of silence and moved into positions of power similar to tertiary deviants (Kitsuse 1980). Participants’ advocacy and activism is focused on their victim identity like deviants whose tertiary deviance and advocacy/activism focuses on their deviant identity (Kitsuse 1980; Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). Participants redefined or perceived their personal problem of victimization as a larger social and political issue of sexual violence, like tertiary deviants in the LGBTQ community have done (Weitz 1985), like feminist standpoint theory believes is important to resistance efforts (Harding 1991; Karmen 2007; Allen 2011), and the like the consciousness raising efforts of other survivors (Fileborn 2016; Loney-Howes 2018). For example, one participant discussed
disclosures and the resulting advocacy/activism as having created “a movement.” Additionally, the centrality of stigmatization on their path to advocacy, including their acts of stigma resistance and resilience through advocacy/activism, are the foundation of tertiary deviance showing that stigmatization can be overcome (Osborne 1974; Kitsuse 1980; Riessman 2000a; Clair et al. 2016; Lamont 2016). This also applies to participants who did not experience additional stigmatization because simply experiencing victimization can be stigmatizing.

Furthermore, even if a participant did not consider the victim/survivors identity to be negative, there is, nevertheless, an identity transformation involved in becoming an advocate and in line with all of the research on tertiary deviance, participants discussed how they have transformed the negative identity of victim into the positive one of advocate/activist (Heckert and Best 1997; Kitsuse 2000; Shoenberger et al. 2015). For example, they said that advocacy/activism is a way to “try to make something good” out of the bad thing that happened to them and advocating is a way to “lean into it” and “embrace it.” Others said that victimization was “something I can turn into a positive, something I can learn from and grow from.” They discussed how becoming an advocate/activist made them feel valuable, a feeling they lost after being victimized, as well as how “lucky” and “fortunate” they were as survivors to have come out the other side of victimization. One said, “Most people don't survive shit like this. To come out of this with some set of professional skills they can use against this issue.” All of this seems to support the inclusion of a tertiary phase of victimization that is parallel to tertiary deviance.

Moreover, the five themes show participants’ acknowledging their victimization and their status as victims or survivors, finding supports through their disclosures and advocacy/activism, rejecting and resisting primary and secondary victimization and stigmatization, and building survivor and advocacy communities through their advocacy/activism. This is what the three
phased deviance process entails (Knous 2006). However, participant narratives also show that while primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization are connected, and experiencing one phase of victimization may lead to another, not everyone experiences all three phases of victimization. This is similar to how some deviants do not experience tertiary deviance (Heckert and Best 1997; Knous 2006; Shoenberger et al. 2015). Though Weitz (1985) and Sorensen and Siemsen (2006) focus on the advocacy and activism of tertiary deviants, Shoenberger et al. (2015), Nack (2000), and Knous (2006) agree that to be a tertiary deviant is to be open and proud about one’s deviant identity. Kitsuse (1980:2) also maintains that whether or not one’s stigma is visible or invisible tertiary deviance and disclosing are about no longer living “in shame and embarrassment.”

Extending this to victimization would suggest that to be a tertiary victim one would have to be public about one’s status as a survivor. As noted previously, however, several participants said that even though they are public about their advocacy/activism activities, they are not public about being victims and survivors. One participant referred to herself as being “a survivor in the dark.”

_Survivors in the Dark: Silences in Advocacy and Activism_

The fact that some participants discussed that they are not public about being victims, even as they advocate, shows that silence may extend beyond primary and secondary victimization. For example, the silence may apply in situations where participants expressed their previous hesitations or fears about becoming advocate/activists because of the stigma around the topic of sexual violence or that they are not public about their work in this area. As one said, “Most people don't know what I'm doing.” Furthermore, participants’ silences about their victimization and advocacy are linked. There were ways in which participants’ survivorship status made them feel less vocal as advocates or their advocate status made them fearful to be
vocal about being survivors. For example, participants discussed being silent about being a victim because they worry about how those they advocate with “would look at it” and they don’t want their fellow advocates to “tiptoe around” certain topics of conversation in front of them. This differs from Wood’s (2017) finding that victim advocates working in advocacy environments are more comfortable disclosing there and supports the literature on the dangers of disclosing, even in seemingly supportive environments (Repper and Carter 2011). As previously noted, participants also worry that identifying themselves as victims would delegitimize their advocacy work. Therefore, some discussed the strategy of using “coded language” in their advocacy to signal to survivors that they are victims as well as advocates. Consequently, becoming an advocate/activist may involve self-silencing.

Several participants expressed being unhappy with their silence, saying “it just shows me where that still has control over me and I guess that kind of makes me angry, the fact that I can't talk about it and it's still got some control.” For some participants, countering the silence and stigma about being a victim and/or advocate involved choosing to be identified by name in this study and 56 percent (14/25) of participants made this choice. Like primary and secondary victimization, silence is also gendered and it is assumed to be a feature of those who have been made or are perceived to be feminine (Glenn 2004). It is, therefore, noteworthy that 80 percent (or 4/5) of the men chose to be identified while 47 percent (or 9/19) of the women chose to be identified. Weiss (2011:459) notes that men may “be more reluctant” than women to self-identify as victims of sexual violence but that accounts that emphasize their resistance allows them to present themselves “as strong and masculine.” Though Weiss (2011) is referring to physical resistance at the time of victimization, it is possible that this study’s focus on the trajectory from victim to advocate including resistance contributed to male participants’ decision to be
identified. Furthermore, the research on the silencing, labeling, and blaming of female victims of sexual violence may explain female participants’ desire to remain anonymous (Karmen 2007; Smette et al. 2009; Grubb and Turner 2012; Walklate 2014). It is possible, then, that silence continues to be a factor for women even when they actively resist victimization through advocacy and activism. The following chapter discusses the implications of the findings of this study and outlines its conclusions.
Chapter 7. Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter discusses the implications of the study’s findings to victims, survivors, advocates, and activists. It also explains the implications of using feminist standpoint and labeling theories, as well as the literature on tertiary deviance and survivor advocacy and activism, to understand how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. In outlining the implications of each of the five processes and pathways in which participants became advocates and activists, the chapter offers recommendations to victims/survivors and advocates/activists, those who interact or work with them and those who research their experiences, and the public. The chapter also outlines the limitations of the study and offers ideas for future research as well as concluding thoughts.

7.2 Implications and Recommendations

There are several implications to the study’s findings and discussion presented in the previous chapters. While focusing on a particular group of people, this study and its identification of five processes and pathways into advocacy and activism has broad applicability to victims, survivors, advocates, and activists, both in and outside of the area of sexual violence. Regarding sexual violence specifically, this study is a contribution to the gap left in the dearth of research conducted on how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates. In listening to participants explain how they integrate their identities and experiences of survivorship and advocacy and what these identities mean to them, the study examined how they have drawn from their experiences to effect change.

The study has shown that the combination of research on survivor advocacy/activism, labeling theory and tertiary deviance, and feminist standpoint theory are necessary and
fundamental to its inquiry. These bodies of research help explain that it is not simply that participants are victims who became advocates, or that they became advocates only because they were victimized. While these may be parts of their story, it is not their whole story. Looking at these three bodies of research and inquiring about the advocacy process from a narrative feminist standpoint perspective uncovered participants’ agency through and towards advocacy/activism following primary and secondary victimization. Doing so disabuses us of the romantic notion that when someone is victimized and decides to do something about it, it is easy to become an advocate or activist while demonstrating the inherent strength that comes with claiming one’s agency (Brockes 2018). It also demonstrated that to view participants’ advocacy and activism involvement without understanding how primary and secondary victimization impacted them would be incomplete. Understanding their move from silence to voice is key to understanding their process and the ways that silence continues to be a challenge for them. In this way, this study demonstrated that moving from one phase of victimization to another is not linear or static but instead non-linear and dynamic.

Taken together, the five processes and pathways in which participants became advocates and activists suggest that victims of sexual violence are, in some ways, both survivor advocates and tertiary victims. They also show the variation in responses to primary and secondary victimization through advocacy and activism. The victimization/aftermath theme suggests that

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72 For example, explaining how Tarana Burke, the founder of the #MeToo movement, became an activist Brockes (2018) writes, “Burke has been through this experience herself; as a child, she was assaulted by some boys in her neighbourhood, and it is one of the things that motivated her to become an activist.” Additionally, one of the women who came forward as a victim in the Ghomeshi case “was chastised for becoming a victim’s advocate and that was seen as her creating a name for herself, or for furthering publicity for herself, not as part of her healing process or trying to find a voice in all of this” (Brothers 2016).

73 Quoting Tarana Burke, Brockes (2018) writes, “There is inherent strength in agency. And #MeToo, in a lot of ways, is about agency. It’s not about giving up your agency, it’s about claiming it.”
involvement in advocacy is one way to respond and resist the victimization itself as well as what comes afterward. It also demonstrates the work victims must do around language and acknowledgement that is involved in disclosing to oneself. The disclosure/response theme suggests that disclosures are another way to resist one’s previous silence about victimization and internalized messages about shame, blame, and guilt. It also explains that victims are often afraid to disclose because of societal messages around what will happen if they do. Since participants discussed their surprise at being embraced and supported after they disclosed, the messages that the media, professionals, religious leaders, and the public send to both potential and actual victims should focus on what they might gain instead of only on what they might lose. Since positive responses to their disclosures also motivated some participants to become advocates, the aforementioned groups should also understand the power of their responses to victims’ disclosures. The broader public should also be educated on how to respond to disclosures in a supportive way.

The empathic response theme suggests that victims are motivated by stories of other victims in ways that they were not by their own. This may lead them to advocate and to also share their story, thereby releasing the shame and stigma they once held. It also suggests that ensuring that victims’ stories go beyond individual narratives can help draw attention to the larger social problem that is sexual violence and raise others’ consciousness about sexual violence. The systems’ experiences theme implies that positive and negative interactions with systems may lead victims into advocacy which may include speaking out against those systems. Victims may do this as a way to stand up for themselves and to protect others. In these cases, their resistance may go beyond themselves and their perpetrators and extends to larger institutions whose job it is to ensure that victims receive proper care. Positive systems’
experiences might also motivate victims to become advocates and activists within those same systems. Finally, the learned advocacy theme suggests that in a similar way that disclosures beget disclosures, advocacy can beget advocacy. People can learn to advocate through watching others do so, but more importantly, by being given opportunities to lead.

In examining the dual identities of victim/survivor and advocate/activist, the study has shown that victims of sexual violence who have become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists can be added to the group of individuals known as survivor advocates. The five themes demonstrate that a crucial element of participants’ advocacy is peer support, similar to the models of peer support that exist in other fields or areas in which survivors become advocates. Additionally, participants have been influenced by the peer support they have received from others, whether as victims or as advocates. However, the study found that more participants found support as advocates and activists among other advocates and activists. Therefore, just like there are formal peer support groups for victims, an implication of the study is that advocate and activist peer support groups should be established as well. These could assist advocates/activists, especially those that have been victimized, to deal with the challenges of being an advocate as well as the stigma that can come with advocating (Knous 2006; Sheehy 2012; Fileborn 2016).

The five themes also suggest that in many ways victims who become advocates can also be considered tertiary victims. This is because their advocacy focuses on victimization, they turn what some see as a negative victim identity into a more positive one of advocate, and because becoming an advocate involves stigma rejection, resilience, and transcendence. The same is true of tertiary deviants. Often, participants’ identity transformation began with disclosures, which are also important to tertiary deviants and survivor advocates. The study’s exploration of a parallel tertiary victimization process to that of tertiary deviance, therefore, considers whether
tertiary victimization is one potential pathway for victims to overcome the negativity that is embedded in the identity of victim.

In explaining how participants have overcome victimization and stigmatization, the study has also explained the positive things they have gained on their way to becoming advocates and activists. In doing so, it has supported the research on the impermanence of stigmatization (Osborne 1974; Riessman 2000a). This is not to say that people are happy at having been sexually victimized or that they welcome the experience, nor is it meant to minimize what it takes to overcome or transcend the mark of stigma left by victimization. Instead, as opposed to the negative narratives about vulnerable or suffering victims, the study shows that becoming advocates and activists has allowed participants to find joy, value, and power even as they hold onto their anger. Those who write the stories of victims who have become advocates should, therefore, learn to find a way to hold their subjects’ many emotions including anger, pain, and joy. Victims, too, can learn that leaning into their joy rather than their trauma is possible (Harris 2018). Policymakers and service providers can also consider survivors’ needs and how best to help them move out of victimhood through positive engagements, such as helping them be change-makers should they so desire.

Though a negative-to-positive transformation and community building through advocacy and activism are key features of tertiary deviance, so is being ‘out’ about one’s deviant identity. Therefore, it is possible that victims who advocate and are not public about being a victim, specifically because they are ashamed and embarrassed about it, may not be considered tertiary

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74 Harris (2018) interviewed Tarana Burke who says, “I want to teach people to not lean into their trauma. You can create the kind of joy in your life that allows you to lean into that instead.” Burke also says that the Me Too movement she started will involve collecting stories but that “We don’t believe in collecting stories of people’s trauma because I don’t think the trauma should be curated. We believe in sharing peoples’ stories of healing. When you start talking about what you’ve done to cope and how you have developed practices around healing, that’s something that people need to see.”
victims. This is not a moral judgment and reaching the tertiary victimization phase does not make one a better advocate or a more worthy victim. It simply means that tertiary victims include sexual violence survivors who are open about their victimization as they work to create change on behalf of other victims or in the area of sexual violence. As the study has shown, victims who do not reach the tertiary phase, however, are just as involved in creating change but have chosen, or feel it necessary, to keep their survivorship hidden. Therefore, survivors should know that while sharing one’s story privately is important and part of healing and recovering from trauma (Ullman 2010), sharing it publicly is their decision, and one can advocate without doing so (Harris 2018).

The study also contributed to a greater understanding about how each participant’s multiple identities impacted the ways in which they became an advocate. For example, the voices of female, male, and LGBTQ+ participants in this study explained how primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization are gendered and how intersecting identities can compound to create more trauma and stigma that they tried to overcome as they became advocates and activists. This may also suggest that becoming an advocate or activist is not a possible or desirable path for all survivors. Their identities and experiences also impacted the ways in which they defined sexual violence, advocacy and activism, and the terms victim and survivor. Like tertiary deviance, and in line with feminist standpoint theory, tertiary victimization as imagined in this study promotes the definitions and labels of victimization experiences by those most impacted by them, as opposed to the definitions and labels attributed to them by others. It made space for participants who identify as victims, survivors, advocates, and activists as well as those who identify by a

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75 Additionally, it is important to stay away from “simplistic assumptions about the benefits of disclosing or of suggesting that we should or must disclose as a means of reclaiming power” and to note that silence about sexual violence “may be a political act” (Fileborn 2018:12).
combination of these terms and those who have chosen or created their own labels such as professional survivor, story healer, and truth-teller.

The five processes and pathways also demonstrate some of the ways in which victims have talked back to power and the study did not view participants through a disempowered lens. The power they speak to includes that of their perpetrators and institutions especially when they confront them, those who stigmatized them, their own internalized stigma and shame, and the power of sexual violence on their lives. This is why it was important to ask about how, when, and why they became involved in advocacy/activism because these questions can provide a more fulsome understanding of their process. Specifically, these questions allowed for the revelation that becoming an advocate is a result of several experiences including primary, secondary, and at times, tertiary victimization.

But speaking back to power and being heard are not the same thing. As Serisier (2018:7) notes, “the transformative potential of survivor speech is shaped not only by what survivors say, but the circumstances under which they are heard, and the relationship of feminist politics to other discourses.” Since silence breakers need power or else they will be ignored (Zerubavel 2006), this study has raised questions about who can speak and be heard as well as why, when, and by whom. This is because intersectionality informs not only how one’s identities are situated on various axes of oppression, but of privilege as well, and at times oppression and privilege simultaneously (Fileborn 2018). This leaves one wondering about the factors that shape survivors’ abilities to participate in advocacy and activism or transition from being victims or survivors to advocates or activists. Not all survivors have the same capacity to recognize their experiences as constituting sexual violence, the same capacity to speak, or the same capacity to be heard and recognized when they do speak. These are influenced by power relations and have
substantial implications for who (which victims and survivors) can become advocates and activists.

However, the study showed how victims may be able to regain power through advocacy and that there are several ways they put that power to use. It considered their experiential knowledge of both victimization and anti-sexual violence work and sought their opinions about the advocacy field and their advice to the public, victims, and other advocates. Similarly, those who work with, speak to and about, or study victims and/or advocates should embrace victims who have become advocates as professionals and partners, rather than tokenize them. They should also offer them opportunities to lead and inform the work in the field with their experiences. Spaces where victims who are advocates work should also be aware of whether the environment they have created is open to also seeing and hearing an advocate’s ‘victim’ voice or whether it is silenced.

Kitsuse (1980:2) saw deviants as “coming out all over.” One could argue the same about victims of sexual violence as they privately and publicly disclose and become involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism efforts. In the two years from when this study was proposed to its completion, the cases raised in the introduction have found their way back into the news. An outcry followed an article written by Jian Ghomeshi explaining what has happened to him since his acquittals on sexual assault charges (Kingston 2018) and Bill Cosby has been sentenced to 3-10 years in prison for sexual assault (Durkin 2018). In a haunting callback to the testimony of Anita Hill at the confirmation hearing for then-nominated Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, Dr. Christine Blasey Ford recently testified about the alleged sexual assault she suffered at the hands of the now-confirmed Justice Brett Kavanaugh (Edwards 2018). Like with the #MeToo movement, this event led many victims of sexual violence to publicly disclose
their victimization experiences (Andone and Zdanowicz 2018). For some, this was an act of advocacy because they disclosed in the hopes of convincing senators not to confirm Kavanaugh (Boboltz 2018).

Furthermore, in 2017 Statistics Canada found that “more than half of the increase” in “the overall volume and severity of violent” police-reported crime was a result of higher rates of reported sexual assaults, robbery, and homicide (Allen 2018). The report considers the impact that news and social media coverage of both the #MeToo and Time’s Up movements, which was created to address “systemic inequality and injustice in the workplace,” may have had on victims’ decisions to report their victimization (Time’s Up 2017; Allen 2018). It also considered whether an investigative series by journalist Robyn Doolittle on the classification of sexual assaults by Canadian police as founded or unfounded led to an increase in reporting of sexual assault (Doolittle 2017; Doolittle et al. 2017; Allen 2018). This has led “Canadian police forces to examine how they handle sexual assault cases” (van Koeverden 2018).

Women who were victimized or harassed by Canadian politicians also came forward, leading to a discussion about what happens when those who work on Parliament Hill are implicated and how to change politics to protect people from victimization and harassment (Kirkup 2018; Wherrey 2018). Additionally, Canadians in the film industry founded #AfterMeToo and brought together survivors, lawyers, and trauma experts to craft recommendations on preventing and addressing sexual misconduct and harassment (Omar 2018). However, a recent survey conducted in the U.S. “a year after the #MeToo movement took root” found “a small but clear shift against victims” especially among women and those who voted for Donald Trump (Panetta 2018; The Economist 2018). Experts commenting on the findings noted that “party identity is usually far more predictive of a given person’s views of sexual misconduct
— or any issue — than their gender” (Panetta and Collman 2018). Furthermore, those surveyed believe that sexual harassment complaints lead to more problems rather than solutions and that false reports of sexual assault are a greater problem than unreported or unpunished sexual assault (The Economist 2018). Nevertheless, and even in the face of the backlash to the raising of women’s and other victims’ voices through #MeToo, for example in the Canadian industries of business and academic medicine, victims’ and their involvement in advocacy do not appear to be going away any time soon (Deschamps 2018; Roussy 2018; Tolentino 2018).

7.3 Limitations

Though there are important implications to this study as noted above, there are also limitations to consider. A major limitation of this study is that only 12% of the sample (3/25 participants) was made up of people who identified as non-white. Furthermore, there were no black participants in the study.76 This limitation is important to note because of the research finding that black women are victimized at an equal or higher rate compared to white women, are less likely to disclose than white women, and tend to be delegitimized when they come forward (Williams 1986; Randall 2010; Tillman et al. 2010). Research has also noted the ways in which African American women may minimize or not recognize the sexual violence they experience so that they can protect African American men and their own identities (Tillman et al. 2010:64). Additionally, culturally-black spaces, such as churches, hair salons, and community centres, may be sites of resistance that can be enlisted to help African American women following sexual violence (Tillman et al. 2010). A study with a greater emphasis on black participants would have been able to incorporate an examination of these issues.

76 The study’s recruitment materials were made both publicly on social media and privately, to advocates/activists and potential participants.
This limitation is also important to raise because of the argument that awareness raising and prevention efforts around sexual violence have been made by, and for, white women as several participants noted. Additionally, the “concerns of women of color and poor women have received far less attention in research and policy related to sexual assault” (Ullman 2010:41). Similarly, one wonders whether anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism has been centered on the experiences of white middle-class women while other survivors have either inadvertently or explicitly been excluded from these activist spaces. It is, therefore, crucial to give voice to the ways black communities, and other non-white groups, are impacted by sexual violence, have been able to impact change around sexual violence, and how their silence and voice are related to their histories and social structures. For example, studies on the sexual victimization, resistance, and advocacy of Indigenous women would be particularly relevant in Canadian contexts. Therefore, further studies that examine interlocking and intersecting forms of oppression and exploitation that victims may experience are needed (Grabham et al. 1986; Harding 1991).

Because studies on the labeling of victims of sexual violence should more closely examine the variables of gender and race, another limitation concerns the lumping together of variables that may be better understood if examined separately (Furnham 2003; Suarez and Gadalla 2010; van der Bruggen and Grubb 2014). These include the variables of gender, race, age at victimization, type of sexual violence experienced, and religious affiliation. Though some comparisons were made between female and male participants’ experiences of primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization, a more in-depth examination of the differences may have provided a richer understanding of how each of these phases impact various genders differently. Similarly, experiences of child sexual abuse and adult sexual violence were not separated out in a meaningful way to understand the differences in experiences, and reactions to, these experiences.
There was no discussion about the various forms of sexual violence participants experienced or the possibility that the variability in a range of experiences may impact one’s advocacy involvement. The different religious groups represented in participants’ stories were also not distinguished so as to examine how different groups respond to both sexual violence and victims.

There were also questions that were not asked that could have provided more context for participant stories. These includes questions about participants’ education level and their sexual orientation. When participants self-disclosed this information, it enriched their narratives about becoming advocates and activists and prior research has shown that individuals who identify as gay or lesbian are more likely to experience sexual assault than those who identify as heterosexual (Conroy and Cotter 2017). Additionally, the definitions and explanations given for the sample inclusion criteria around being a survivor of sexual violence and being involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism were very broad. Though this was intentional and in line with feminist standpoint theory, as well as a way to counter labeling theory’s focus on societal labeling of offenders as opposed to offenders’ views and labeling of themselves, it is possible that set definitions would have produced a different sample and findings. Additionally, participants were at various stages of experiencing and processing their primary and secondary victimization experiences, at different stages of disclosing, and at different stages of advocacy/activism involvement. The times between victimization and disclosure and from victimization to becoming an advocate and activist ranged from occurring close to the interview up to and including a period of many years. However, these were rarely noted in the study.

Additionally, because the study did not seek a representative sample of people who have experienced sexual violence and became advocates, and because the sample inclusion criteria were specific and the sample self-selected, the study did not draw comparisons between its
participants to general data about victims of sexual violence. However, it did present recent data on sexual assault victimization in Canada. Furthermore, one of the criticisms of narrative inquiry is that it relies on participants’ memories and that there is no clear step-by-step process to conducting it (Richmond 2002; Alaggia 2004). However, while some feel that its story-like feel is a limitation of narrative research, it can offer insights otherwise unattainable or not conceivable at the outset of the project (Overcash 2003). Finally, I alone analyzed the interviews and identified the five processes and pathways. Another coder would likely have identified different themes and pathways in the data.

7.4 Future Research

In addition to research that can address the above limitations, such as studies conducted on specific groups of victims of sexual violence and comparing them to other populations, the study has opened up several avenues for future research. As more victims become involved in advocacy, future research should consider viewing survivors on a continuum of advocacy as opposed to those who advocate and those who do not. It should also study what advocates and activists do, how the field of sexual violence is informed by both research and experience, and replicate Wood’s (2017) research on other survivor advocates that recognizes and asks about their multiple identities. However, the two most important areas for future research that were highlighted in this study include researching tertiary victimization and researching silence and voice.

Researching Tertiary Victimization

To better understand how victims become advocates, future research should further study the concepts of both tertiary deviance and tertiary victimization to identify the features and characteristics of each. This is because the literature on survivor advocates and activists is
extensive, but the literature on tertiary deviance is less so, and very little has been written on tertiary victimization aside from Kenney’s (2002) suggestion that the corresponding aspect of tertiary deviance is tertiary victimization. Additionally, the three phases of victimization that were studied here can be applied to other victims or survivors of sexual violence who become advocates to analyze whether their process of doing so, and acts of resistance, differ from the participants here. The concept of tertiary victimization should also be investigated further to see whether and how it applies to victims/survivors of other crimes and events who have become advocates surrounding their experiences. Examples include survivors of mass shootings, survivors of torture, those living with invisible illnesses, and those who are HIV-positive (Ammann 2018; Blahovec 2017; Lynden 2018; Sadiq-Tang 2018; Valeii 2018; Vassolo 2018; Wolfman-Arent 2018). Studies on these groups and individuals can offer further insight into how their respective experiences as survivors shaped their advocacy involvement including any stigma they have faced, what they have had to overcome to become advocates including whether and how they have been heard, and the specific activities they engage in as advocates. They can also explain the challenges and possible benefits to being an advocate for a cause with which one has personal experience.

Because Kitsuse (1980:1) maintains that “coming out as an act of self-affirmation is not limited to the matter of the visibility of the stigmatizing condition,” future research can study and compare how individuals with visible stigma deal with socially affirming themselves and become tertiary deviants and tertiary victims to those with invisible stigma. This is important because the literature on survivors who have become advocates that was reviewed here involves individuals surviving events that they would need to disclose for another to know about their experiences. Future research can also study how, like the tertiary deviance of the LGBTQ+
community, different types and groups of victims come together to build an anti-sexual violence movement by establishing themselves as separate from the movement and then drifting back and getting assimilated within the collective movement (Sorensen and Siemsen 2006). For example, a similar study could examine how diverse types of victims come together to demand to be heard and to create change including women, men, victims of different races and religions, and individuals victimized as children and adults. The examination could also involve studying whether anti-sexual violence movements privilege one type of victim while leaving others out. Future research can also study victims who become advocates that have not disclosed their victimization and whose victimization stories are not part of their advocacy as well as the differences between professional advocates with expertise in the field and volunteer advocates or those who are self-appointed.

*Researching Silence and Voice*

There is much about violent crime that is socially avoided or ignored, including and especially the silence that allows it to happen, and the topics that are avoided socially remain undertheorized (Zerubavel 2006; Hallsworth and Young 2008). The study has shown that silence, rather than being an absence which is easy to overlook, is very present in primary, secondary, and at times, tertiary victimization (Hallsworth and Young 2008). The combination of feminist standpoint theory, labeling theory, the concept of tertiary deviance, and narrative methods to study sexual violence victimization and advocacy have allowed this study to begin uncovering these silences. For example, the literature reviewed for this study did not discuss confrontation, but many participants (68% or 17/25) explained that confronting their perpetrators or institutions in which they were victimized was part of their process in becoming advocates or activists. Confrontations could be studied as a resistance strategy or to examine whether and how
they enable or promote resistance and healing following sexual violence. Such research can consider the outcomes of these confrontations on victims and those they confront, as well as whether confrontations can be better facilitated so that they are beneficial to all. One example may be restorative justice processes (Julich 2006; Stubbs 2009). Future research should similarly make use of a combination of theories, literature, and methodology that can focus on uncovering the silences around sexual violence and other violent crimes.

As noted above, there is currently a wave of victims of sexual violence telling their stories publicly. As victims continue to come “out all over” and disclose publicly and privately, there is an opportunity to study the outcomes of these disclosures. Research can be conducted to determine whether or not the disclosures are acts of advocacy, whether they lead victims into advocacy, how public disclosures are portrayed in the media, and whether the disclosures lead to consequences for perpetrators or institutions that ignored sexual violence. Future research can also expand on this study and examine whether its findings apply to movements and their founders that have been borne out of this wave of public disclosures, for example examining the Time’s Up movement. Future research can also examine other responses to primary and secondary victimization, aside from becoming involved in advocacy and activism. Importantly, research should also examine the reasons that victims of sexual violence do not engage in advocacy and activism or are unable to reach the tertiary victimization phase.

7.5 Concluding Remarks

This study has drawn from feminist standpoint theory, labeling theory, and narrative feminist research methods to examine how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates and activists. These are complementary theories and methodologies to the study’s inquiry. Labeling theory provides a useful framework for understanding how people are
labeled and stigmatized and how this shapes their self-concept and behaviours (Lemert 1951). Feminist theories explain how victims who experience sexual violence, especially female victims, are stigmatized, which is known as secondary victimization (Suarez and Gadalla 2010; Weiss 2011). Tying these theories together is the concept of stigma which occurs in secondary deviance and victimization and can be internalized by those who are labeled, such as following disclosure about their victimization (Lemert 1951; Lamb 1999 b; Kenney 2002; Randall 2010).

In line with feminist standpoint theory, the study sought to understand participants’ agency and how they resisted and overcame stigmatization efforts. It was, therefore, centered on the voices and lived experiences of victims who have become advocates and activists, allowing them to be heard, believed, and legitimized, and exploring how they moved to positions of power (Harding 1987; Breckenridge 1999; Romito 2008). Moreover, since the methodology of narrative inquiry “is set in human stories of experience” in which people “make sense of their lives,” it was useful in understanding participants’ advocacy involvement by listening to their stories about victimization, disclosure, and advocacy experiences (Mertova and Webster 2012:16). In examining participants’ primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization experiences, the study also showed that there is a lot that happens in between the spaces of one’s victimization and advocacy involvement and that these experiences can shape victims’ futures. Adding a feminist dimension to narrative inquiry helped the study begin with, and focus on the links between, participants’ personal lives and experiences and their political efforts at creating change in a way that also gave voice to their emotions (Harding 1993; Allen 2011).

The study also reviewed the literature on tertiary deviance, survivor advocates and activists, and the advocacy and activism of victims of sexual violence. These bodies of literature informed the narrative interview questions focused on participants’ stories about their
victimization and disclosure experiences as well as their involvement in advocacy and activism. They also informed the discussion about the findings as the study considered whether and how participants can be considered tertiary victims and survivor advocates in their own right.

The study found that there are five processes and pathways that were involved in becoming an anti-sexual violence advocate or activist. They indicate that participants were motivated to become advocates/activists by their victimization and its aftermath, the disclosures and responses to their disclosures, their experiences with positive or negative systems they turned to after being victimized, their empathy for other victims, and by learning about how to advocate. Each of these processes are evidence of participants’ agency in rejecting, resisting, and overcoming stigma, both from others and that which they had internalized. They also demonstrate the agency of participants in enacting social change around sexual violence. Like Coates’s understanding of resistance (2017:117), participants’ advocacy and activism involvement is about understanding that “we do not have to be what they say about us” and about service. Participants have also demonstrated that those who have experienced sexual victimization may become active leaders in the fight against sexual violence.
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Appendix A

Core Narrative for Each Participant

Below is the core narrative answering the research question for each participant in this study about how victims of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. The narratives were formed from the individual narrative analysis that was conducted on each interview. In addition to explaining the process in which each participant became an advocate or activist, the narratives also explain what participants do as advocates and activists, why they do this work, and when they first felt like advocates/activists. They also show the ways in which participants’ advocacy/activism are linked to their experiences of sexual victimization. In these ways, participants’ narratives highlight aspects of their victimization and disclosure stories that they discussed as being important in understanding their path to advocacy/activism.

The narratives are ordered alphabetically, according to participants’ first names. Core narratives using both first and last names are about participants who chose to be identified in this study. Core narratives with no last names are about participants who chose to be unidentified. The terms used for victim, survivor, advocate, or activist are the terms participants chose to use and quotes have been taken from the narratives.

Adam Delmonico is a victim/survivor and an advocate/activist in his thirties in Canada. He was raped twice by women when he was in his twenties and thirties. The first victimization was by a stranger he had just met and the second was by a friend. The second rape happened around six months after Adam went back to school for nursing. His advocacy/activism is about getting “the word out and to change people’s minds” about sexual violence. Though he was already speaking up against sexual violence and had contributed to an anti-sexual violence campaign, going back to school led him to learn more about sexual violence and become an advocate/activist. After the second rape, he changed his electives so that he could take classes about human connections, women’s studies, and sociology that were more social justice oriented. Learning about male rape, science, and facts after the rapes “as a way to try to deal with it analytically and… theoretically” led him to speaking out because he understood that just like he had not known rape can happen to men, others would not know either. For example, he learned about how a man could have an erection during a rape because it “happens from the spinal cord
instead of the brain and so it’s a completely different circuit.” He thought, “if I could explain it to myself it would maybe lose its power.” He found himself “feeling empowered in having a voice” in these classes and “there was a line in one of the textbooks that said something like, ‘the phenomenon of like women raping men is like a curious side note, but it shouldn't take attention off men raping women’ or something like that. And I wrote an essay about why that's wrong and gave it to my teacher and she forwarded it to the publisher” to get it changed. He first considered himself an advocate/activist when he stood up in his human sexuality class and spoke about his experiences and said, “this happened to me” and tried to educate the class on a different perspective. He was also led to advocacy/activism after trying to access services on campus for support after the second rape. Because he is a man, the Women’s Centre refused to see him and the only centres he found for men were for victims of childhood abuse, which he was not, and they cost money, which he did not have. Because he identified as transgender or gender queer, the male therapist he saw was unhelpful. This, too, led Adam to educate himself.

Finding his voice led to Adam throwing himself into speaking out more when he heard people had preconceived notions about sexual violence. Many of the people he hung out with did. He also had conversations in online forums to “open people’s eyes a bit the way” his were. The combination of being rocked by the rape, the crisis of figuring out who he was outside of the army, and his divorce were all part of the process of his becoming an activist because by the time he went to school, he “was a blank page” who “wanted to know truths.” Though his advocacy/activism began with a focus on the victimization of men, he did not like that he sounded like a men’s rights activist, which he was not, and instead focused on the general awareness that sexual violence is a real problem that impacts a lot of people. While he does not think his survivor and activism identities are connected, he does not think he “would be as outspoken if it didn’t happen to” him. His advocacy/activism empowers him because while he cannot change what happened to him, he “can make sure it doesn’t happen to anyone else.” He is an advocate/activist because he “never felt not able to talk about it” and he hoped it would be therapeutic. In fact, advocacy/activism is the only thing that has seemed to help Adam in the aftermath of the rapes.

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Alissa Ackerman is a survivor and advocate/activist, though she prefers the term “professional survivor,” in the United States in her thirties. She experienced several instances of sexual victimization and did not disclose until years later. Alissa is a professor and a “sex crimes policy researcher” whose work focuses on offenders. However, Alissa did not used to consider this work advocacy/activism until years later when she went public about her experiences with victimization and was able to integrate her personal and professional lives. Three things happened around the same time that led her to become an advocate/activist.

While wring a textbook where she had asked others for narratives about victimization and perpetration, she “felt like a fraud’ for not having told her story. She wondered if it was the right time to write her narrative anonymously and include it in the book. The difficult impact of writing the narrative led her to reach out to a friend who is also a survivor and disclose her story. Alissa asked her friend about the ramifications of publicly disclosing on her career. Her friend
encouraged her to put her name to her narrative. Around the same time, Alissa tweeted using the hashtag #beenrapedneverreported. This led to a correspondence with the founder of an organization that gathers survivors’ stories. Alissa joined the organization and found a group of people who “got” her, which “helped a lot to propel me into this activist role.” Additionally, a friend suggested that Alissa watch a film about a woman who was raped and how she found her Jewish faith afterwards. When Alissa saw the film, she felt that she had “to reach out to the producer” and said, “this is my story.” Alissa started doing work for their website answering emails from survivors and began doing screenings with the producer. Her first “real public disclosure” was similar to the film’s message in that it was about “intertwining Judaism and being a survivor of rape at 16.” The first time she considered herself an advocate/activist was after she gave her first Take Back the Night speech, which was around the same time that she put her name to her narrative for the book.

A big part of Alissa’s process in becoming an advocate/activist was the support she received from the people she disclosed to: “I think without those people supporting me, I don't know that I would’ve gotten to the point that I could speak publicly.” Alissa also attributes the sexual violence she has experienced itself as part of her process because it is the reason for her advocacy/activism.

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Anne is a survivor and an advocate in her thirties in the United States. She experienced victimization at the age of 13 at school by a boy who was her best friend at the time. Anne went through a process of “confronting the reality” and “internalizing” that she was assaulted because her friends and headmistress phrased what happened as Anne and her friend having “had sex at school.” Though both in high school and college Anne would wonder whether classes about sexual victimization were talking about her experiences, she dismissed them. An activity at a summer program where she worked with teenagers was the beginning of her confronting what happened and she only did so because “it became more about” her campers than it was about her. During the activity she identified herself as someone who had experienced victimization so that if her campers had similar experiences, they would know that they were not alone. Later, when her college campus put together a program “exposing stories of sexual violence from students on campus” anonymously, her best friend suggested that it might be therapeutic for her to write and share her experiences. Anne approached the organizers to let them know that she would. They asked if she would consider sharing in a public setting and speaking at the event. Because she “was such a public presence on campus and involved with so many things” and because people saw her “as having it all together,” she felt it was “particularly important for people to see that not only does this happen in our communities, but that this happens to people who seem like they have it all together and that we're not, kind of, all what we appear to be.” She felt that she “was bringing voice to something that people didn't know about and had somebody brought voice to this in that way for me, you know, so many years back, maybe I would've been able to speak out earlier and maybe I would've been able to acknowledge what happened to me earlier and wanting to be that for somebody else.” Sharing her story came from a “sense of responsibility.” After she spoke, many survivors came forward to thank her and to share their own stories of sexual victimization. This meant that Anne was “now not just trying to hold on to my own story, but
also onto theirs and help guide them through a process of beginning to unpack their own trauma.”

Though future disclosures happened in less public platforms, being a survivor is not something that Anne hides. For example, when she worked with university students she disclosed to them during a discussion about consent so they would know they could come talk to her if they ever needed to. Being there for others in a mentor-mentee type of way around survivorship is important to her “because of the sense of like if somebody had been that for me at some point along the way, I just think about it was really six and a half years between when the trauma happened and when I first admitted to it, and like had it been five and a half years or four and a half years, how much less there would’ve been to, I don't know, less severe the post trauma would’ve been.” But since Anne works in a pastoral/clergy setting, she does not want to burden those she serves with her story unless it is for their benefit. So, she is “pretty cautious about real public advocacy that includes any kind of sharing my story.” Anne’s advocacy is not proactive because she does it “if things come up,” like a march or a speaker, to “promote things that are already going on to promote laws or to promote documentary viewings and conversation, those kinds of things, and to not shy away from talking about it when it feels important and helpful.”

Anne’s advocacy is linked to her victimization because her victimization made her more sensitive to the issue of sexual violence. She has also done work around the role of ritual for survivors of sexual violence and “exposing the fact that so much of the trauma is around the aftermath piece rather than the experience itself.” Though she’s spoken publicly about different rituals, Anne has not done so in the context of her victimization. However, even in these talks where she is not publicly disclosing, she advocates by using “coded language such that somebody in the audience who’s hearing me speak will know that I'm speaking from a place of personal experience and that they will know that I'm there with them in this and that I can be a resource for them from a personal experience perspective.” Her advocacy extends to her religious community in that she also talks about sexuality and “giving young people the language to talk about and learn about their bodies and good touch, bad touch, consent, and all of those pieces and reframing the conversation of sexual violence.” Language was something she did not have at the time of her victimization or in the aftermath, which is why a narrative of consensual sex took hold of the conversation at the time of her victimization. Anne learned the language she needed to talk about sexual violence through college courses and readings about human sexuality and gender and from her friend who majored in trauma counseling. Now, her sharing comes from a place of empowerment more than obligation and she feels like she is “making the active choice to do it.”

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Aurora De Lucia is a survivor and activist in her twenties in the United States. She experienced sexual violence four times by men she knew and also by a stranger. At the time of her victimizations she “never thought it was going to become a story or turning point in my life,” but her last two victimizations by her friend “lit the activist fire in” her. After the Access Hollywood tapes where Donald Trump was heard bragging about sexual assault, Aurora “was like I can't anymore. I'm just sobbing all the time, things are getting worse.” She had taken a
leave from school and began blogging and tweeting about her experiences. Someone from a daytime talk show found her on Twitter and asked if she would like to be on the show because “they were going to have a sexual assault survivor day.” Though Aurora taped the show, it has yet to air.

Aurora’s main form of activism is a running project which consists of “running 882 race miles…to represent the 882 Americans who are sexually assaulted every day. And then I’m raising money for three charities along the way.” Running was something she was familiar with because she ran “52 half marathons in 52 weeks” following open heart surgery for a congenital heart issues five years prior. Taking up the running project was also a way to help her deal with the isolation and withdrawal she went through after her assault and to help clear her mind and feel physically strong again. It was a way to get her out of the house and talking to people. She planned on running 882 marathon miles in one year, starting from right before Donald Trump’s inauguration which coincided with the anniversary of her sexual assault. “I started it right before both the like anniversary of my first sexual assault of this guy because I didn't want a full year to go by without me feeling like I have taken back some power and before the inauguration because I was like this is terrible that he is terrible.” She first thought of herself as an activist “very shortly before inauguration day, I think just a couple days before when my fundraising went live.”

Though Aurora had been an activist for many other causes previously, she realized that she “had all these reservations doing it for sexual assault.” She did not want to seem dramatic, or like an angry feminist, or make people uncomfortable because of the topic. But then she thought “yes, my friends’ right to get married is so important. But is their right to get married so much more important than the bodily autonomy of females all over the world and male survivors? It’s like, no! If I’m so willing to shout about that from the rooftops with no worry and no shame, how in the world can I not advocate for myself and other people in the same way? It’s just crazy, so I just sucked it up and was like, no - this is really important.” Becoming an anti-sexual violence activist was also a way for her to embrace and grab this thing that happened to her and became a “gigantic part of my life” and “make something good about it.”

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Aviva is a victim/survivor and advocate in the United States in her thirties. She was victimized by a close family friend in her Jewish orthodox community when she was in her teens. Her advocacy came about by a series of events, many of which happened at or around the same time. Though she eventually disclosed to a friend, and later her parents, a therapist recommended that Aviva contact a woman in the community that deals with sexual abuse. The woman took Aviva to meet with the rabbis who would convene a Jewish court/tribunal. The rabbis met with the woman and Aviva disclosed what happened, but in the end they said, “thank you for letting us know” and gave her a blessing to find a good marriage partner.

Eventually, Aviva got married and moved away. But every time she would go home and visit her parents, “it always came back.” One time, she saw her perpetrator on the street and she was “exploding. I was like this just can't go on, I'm not going to die with this injustice. I refuse!”
Aviva had also started a graduate degree to pursue a career in therapy, which was her “lifelong dream,” but had “anxiety and panic attacks” which she also experienced when she was being victimized. The victim advocate suggested she see a therapist, which she did, and Aviva realized that she had to drop out of the program. “That’s when I started my advocacy work.” She told the victim advocate that she wants “to make a support group for women” because she “felt like she had no purpose, no meaning, no value.” Her “inner turmoil” led her to become involved in advocacy in the first place. The victim advocate connected her to a woman who is also a therapist and together they started a group. At the same time, the victim advocate offered Aviva the opportunity to tell her story publicly at an event for his organization with which she credits with “finding her voice.” Though she did not anticipate it, her speech was videotaped and went viral the day it was posted. When the speech went viral is when she first considered herself an advocate. Later, Aviva went to the police and her perpetrator was arrested “right before the statute of limitations kicked in.”

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Bethany Mandel is a victim of sexual voyeurism and an advocate in her thirties in the United States. She was victimized twice by the rabbi who oversaw her conversion and was also her mentor for some time. He had filmed Bethany and other women in the bathroom of the ritual bath as they prepared to enter the ritual bath at the time of her conversion and during a ‘practice dunk’ that he told her was mandated by Jewish law, which was not true. Bethany did not know that she had been victimized until several years later when the rabbi was arrested. Prior to her victimization, Bethany had “never really paid attention to sexual abuse and sexual incidents in the Jewish community,” but “this sort of turned on a light” and she “couldn't stop seeing it everywhere I looked.”

When the rabbi was arrested, Bethany was already a journalist and it was common knowledge that she had an orthodox conversion. Therefore, journalists contacted her and she felt obligated to give them off the record, background information so that they would not publish misinformation about this sensational story. Because the crime involved the mikva, ritual bath, and many journalists may not be familiar with what it is or the process that happens there, Bethany felt the need to make sure they had the correct information. However, one of the journalists used her off the record comments to link Bethany to the rabbi’s crimes, thereby identifying her as one of his victims. This was something that had not been confirmed for her yet by the prosecutor, though she had a strong suspicion.
After she was outed, Bethany felt like she may as well write about it because everyone now knew and because she “had gripes that I wanted to get out. There were things that I wanted to change within the Orthodox world, especially as it pertains to conversion.” She wrote an article about having a converts’ bill of rights. She felt the moment was right for this because the case gave it the news hook it needed and because she “wasn’t afraid” that the rabbi who converted and victimized her would delegitimize her conversion. “I was free to say what I wanted to say.” But the experience that led her to write the bill of rights was when her local rabbi demanded proof of her orthodox conversion before allowing her to join his synagogue. The piece Bethany wrote went viral and a council for orthodox rabbis invited her to be on their committee where she could make recommendations on how to protect converts overall during the conversion process, not just around sexual impropriety. The invitation was the first time she felt like an advocate and she agreed to join the committee because she “wanted a ballbuster on this committee, and there was no one else,” and not caring that people knew she was a convert gave her the freedom to be open.

Right before the conversion rabbi was sentenced, he released his defense memo where he quoted six community women who said kind things about him and it was published in the Washington Post. Before his sentencing hearing, Bethany “contacted every single one” of those women who were all “universally horrified that he had used them and their words without their consent and it was just another victimization for his own benefit and betraying women’s privacy for his own benefit. Every single one of them told me that a) that was taken out of context, b) I never would have consented to this, and c) I think he should be in prison for a million fucking years.” Bethany wrote a piece about it in a Jewish publication a week before his sentencing and the rabbi’s victims as well as converts contacted Bethany to thank her.

Bethany’s advocacy is related to her public disclosure because in publicly disclosing she gained a voice. It also raised her profile and benefited her career in journalism, which she acknowledges is “bizarre.” The majority of her advocacy has been accomplished through her writing as well as through the recommendations she has made to the committee she was asked to join. She also contacts rabbis from the council with questions or concerns people who are converting bring to her and often, the issues involve sexual impropriety. Her internal strength and toughness have helped her to advocate and sit through the number of calls she has about the religious community.

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David Clohessy is a victim/survivor and an advocate/activist in his sixties in the United States. As a child, he was abused over a period of five years by a priest who was a friend of the family. However, David had no recollection of the abuse until he was in his thirties. The first time David felt like an advocate/activist was the day he filed a lawsuit under the name John Doe against the church and it dawned on him that the problem was bigger than him. He also made several copies of the lawsuit and copies of pictures of himself and the priest and drove around to every place in town the priest had worked. On the second day, a journalist called the bishop to ask if he knew the identity of John Doe and the bishop outed David to the media. “The fact that the bishop was unresponsive” and “unhelpful” to David’s previous letters disclosing the abuse and that the bishop was “mean spirited as to out” him to the media also put David in “activist
mode.” Going public about his abuse and his involvement with a survivor support group as a member, and then as a spokesperson and co-director, were part of his process in becoming an advocate/activist.

David’s background as a community organizer on issues like the death penalty or working with poor neighbourhoods influenced his involvement in advocacy/activism around sexual violence. For years he only read books about social movement and was fascinated by how “sort of seemingly powerless people could, in fact, unite and exercise some power for good.” He describes his advocacy/activism involvement as a calling, saying “that God put me in this position, that I have these skills. I’m a community organizer, I did public relations, I worked for political candidates, so I was used to working in a kind of combative atmosphere. I was used to controversy.” Given his background and his supportive spouse who was a social worker working with abused kids, he felt “if not me, then who?” He became an advocate/activist because he felt that he “could make a difference and needed to, given my skills and background. And the enormity of the problem. Had I remained convinced that this was a handful of priests, then maybe I wouldn't have.”

David’s religious background also influenced his advocacy/activism involvement in two ways: “First of all, as an agnostic, I can't comfort myself and do nothing about a known perpetrator thinking well, in the next life he'll get his just desserts. So, my lack of religious belief, I think, makes me more motivated. And secondly, I heard for years all of this talk about ‘Jesus protecting the vulnerable and Jesus caring about the wounded and Jesus caring about the powerless and the sermon on the mount and the line about Jesus would put a millstone around your neck, those who would harm the young,’ and all that kind of stuff. So, you know, even if I don't believe the religious part of that, those moral lessons were instilled in me by religion.”

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**Debra Morrow** is a survivor and advocate in her fifties in the United States. She experienced child sexual abuse by her Catholic priest for three years between the ages of nine to 12. Years later, learning that he also abused other members of her family was a turning point for her. Though Debra discusses her advocacy in terms of her professional and volunteer work with survivors of both sexual and domestic violence, she sued the church to publicly name the priest “so that anybody who had been abused by him wouldn't be so alone in it” before getting involved in advocacy. When the scandal in the Catholic Church broke, Debra was very angry and it “haunted me every day.” It helped her realize that she was not abused because she was bad, which she had thought all along, but “it was the church that was bad!” What bothered her most was the revelation that the church knew. “I was really mad that I was always having to hear more and more and more about it. The fact that such an organization that so many people put so much faith in could sit and hurt so many people, to me, that's when I got angry about it.” Debra reported her victimization to the archdiocese who asked to meet. At their meeting they said that there were other complaints but none from her community, which Debra knew was not true. They also said that the priest who abused her was dead, but could not provide proof such as a death certificate. Debra had a lawyer file a case against the archdiocese for protecting the priest and to force them to publicize his name. She was contacted about settling the case but she “did not want anything from” the church. Instead, she asked them to install a playground because she “figured that the church had hurt enough kids that they should do something for kids.”
Debra is currently the executive director of a domestic violence organization which also does rape crisis work. Her journey to this advocacy work involved leaving an abusive marriage and moving into this organization’s transitional housing. She went back to school to study criminal justice, seeing it as “a second chance at life” and an opportunity that “was really a motivator.” After obtaining her degree in criminal justice she “started working with incarcerated women” and realized how their experiences of domestic and sexual abuse intersected with their addiction issues. She helped them transition into meaningful jobs and housing and she made a lot of referrals to the agency that had helped her. When a job at the agency opened up, Debra was approached about applying for the position. “For me, that was like going full circle to being a client.” Debra has also done teen advocacy at hospitals in sexual assault cases. In her current organization, she has also done work on sexual violence prevention in high schools. Though it is difficult for her, she has also gone into churches to give presentation about her agency.

Though she gives public talks about domestic violence, of which she is also a survivor and believes it is linked to her experiences with child sexual abuse, Debra has “never really been able to do” so about sexual abuse. Advocacy, however, helps her heal and drives her passion. The first time she felt like an advocate “was when a woman stopped by my office and was talking to me and I was really trying to encourage her and using words my advocate had used in encouraging her. And it was just kind of like, oh!” She does this work because “I feel like I lost so many years of my life because I didn't have the help and support that I needed. And if I can just prevent one person and hopefully tons more from looking back that they last a lot of years that they didn't have to do lose.”

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Emily is a victim/survivor and an advocate/activist in her forties living in the United States. She experienced sexual victimization and domestic violence many times by the same person over a period of years. It began when she was dating the man who she then married. Though she was not abused by a religious figure, their shared Mormon faith was influential in keeping her silent and connected to her decision to marry him. Her advocacy/activism as a midwife is related to the ways in which she was victimized. Although Emily was involved in advocacy/activism at the time that she met him working with women and children in Indigenous communities, she characterizes that work as altruism as opposed to her current advocacy/activism which is more personal. Her previous advocacy/activism involvement “never had to do with my own life.”

Emily got pregnant before their marriage, something she did not realize was possible because of her lack of reproductive knowledge. The man she was dating, who was also sexually assaulting her, tried to force her to get an abortion, which she refused. During their marriage, she had a miscarriage and he flushed the fetus down the toilet, would block her from being able to pick up birth control, and forced sex soon after her deliveries. The midwives she used were cautiously asking her questions, which she thinks is because “they saw all kinds of red flags.” Though she was not able to disclose to them what was happening, they were able to help her and fulfill her wish to have two unmedicated births, which “is a really important part of my story.” “The only thing that I felt good about were the things that I had control over. And because I had
control over my birth and the people that were there, and the way that it happened - that it was my own ability. Like, it was really important to me.” “Finally there was something about my body that I could control.”

While she was figuring out how to leave her husband, Emily “looked up how to become a midwife because I loved my midwives so much. They were the ones who had told me you deserve better than this.” “I made a spreadsheet. I wrote down every single school. I figured out how much time it would take and what it would take to get there. It was a long process, but very deliberate process.” Her advocacy/activism is related to her experiences, as she says, “If I can help another woman, particularly a mother, feel empowered in any way, I will go to great lengths to do it. I don't care how long it takes or how much money it takes because there were women like that who helped me, and I would not be where I was right now without this help.” When she is in the hospital doing her role in “full advocacy” mode, she feels very powerful “because I know what I do and say could change everything for this woman… I feel extremely responsible that her perception of that is that she has power she has control over her body.” Her advocacy/activism is not about disclosing her experiences with sexual and domestic violence, but instead “in the way I behave, in who I am, how I care, how I manage, the options I give them. All of that.”

The first time she thought of herself as an advocate/activist was when she was “a doula to a single mom who experienced fairly intense interpersonal violence who had shared with me her story without me reciprocating with mine.” The main thing that led her to advocacy/activism through midwifery is that “the midwives that I had that recognized interpersonal violence and abuse in my life without using all of those words, offered me emotional, physical, clinical support and I felt like their modelling was the perfect segue into me realizing that I also wanted to follow that same path.” Aside from empowerment, advocacy/activism gives her legitimacy because she has credentials to do what she does and it gives her more confidence and authority to advocate. She believes that her advocacy/activism through midwifery is her “full purpose.” She sees herself “for all intents and purposes being trained to be a professional advocate within this context of health.” Advocating/Activism is also a way for her to overcome her experiences because “I want to save other women from having this happen to them so in some ways, I want to hand out IUDs for everyone ‘cause if I hadn't been pregnant, I wouldn't have been caught in it for so long.”

Though this is not a main part of her advocacy/activism, Emily has helped those in her religious community when they privately ask about reproduction and reproductive health and safety. She has also addressed small groups about midwifery. Emily does not discuss her experiences of sexual violence with others and, in fact, believes that “it’s totally inappropriate to be open about my history” in her professional work as a midwife.

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**Hank Estrada** is a survivor and advocate in his sixties in the United States. He experienced child sexual abuse by an uncle from the ages of five to 16 and sexual victimization by a priest who was his director during his time in a Catholic seminary. Years after the abuse by
his uncle, Hank suspected that a young relative may also be being abused by the uncle. When his suspicions were confirmed by the relative, Hank informed his family and also disclosed his own victimization. His guilt in feeling that his silence protected his uncle and harmed his relative continues to urge him to speak out about sexual victimization. In fact, one of his advocacy messages is that silence helps perpetrators “get more victims.” The fact that his family would not report the victimization to the police also fuels his advocacy.

Towards the end of his victimization by his uncle, Hank decided to become a priest. However, after leaving the seminary due to the victimization by the priest there and the responses to his disclosures, Hank found himself “so isolated.” He had only “heard of women survivors and books in the ‘80s were for women,” but he could relate to them. Therefore, Hank decided to volunteer for a suicide crisis line because he felt confident that he could help male survivors if they called. Volunteering at the crisis line only strengthened his belief that something was needed for male survivors, so he “took it upon myself.” At a conference, Hank heard a “tremendous speaker and advocate, and out - and not out survivor, but an out gay male. The first ever that I had seen talking on both levels, and I was inspired by him.” Hank told him his story and they became friends. “At one point, [the speaker he met] invited me to be the male speaker at a local television station doing a story on male survivors and child, and wanted me to share my story. So I said yes, and that was my first time publicly” sharing. This was also the first time Hank thought of himself as an advocate. Hank worked with this man as much as he could and continued to be invited to do public speaking at different organizations for several years including “women's organizations, survivor groups and counselling conferences on male survivors.” The “public support and positive feedback from other survivors” Hank experienced “gave me the strength to go and share more and want to get more of that feedback.” He also realized that he needed a therapist and that few therapists worked with male survivors, which led him to start “a newsletter that would focus on getting therapists that specifically worked with male survivors.” From this, Hank started a national database which led to the creation of the first national male survivors’ organization. He also self-published a book about his experiences which was a way to release any shame related to the abuse, continues to speak, and consult on sexual violence. Though his advocacy began with a focus on male survivors, Hank’s advocacy now focuses on the “sexual assault of survivors of religion.” Hank advocates “to prevent anyone in this day and age from remaining and being a victim.”

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Jack is a victim/survivor and activist in Australia in his sixties. He experienced childhood sexual abuse and physical abuse by nuns in the Catholic convent he was sent to live in and at the school he went to from three and a half until eight years of age. He was also raped multiple times by a priest when he was eight. His activism is focused on abuse in the religious realm because he believes that “religion is a powerful grooming tool.” When he got older, Jack took a job as a tour bus driver for several years and it was there that he began talking about the use of religion to abuse. Jack later used his professional internet-based business to put together a website that “documented abuse from around the world” where he also shared parts of his story. He communicated with victims and survivors and they supported each other for a couple of
years. He also had a number of Facebook groups where he would post articles and references about abuse in religious institutions. He also “built software to help people timeline their case with lawyers because that was a huge cost” and because when survivors tell their stories, they often lack structure. Jack helped people put their stories into writing by bundling the various incidents of abuse and labeling them. This came about because in trying to put his own story together he would digress and he found that “using a label is a less emotional way of referring to the whole incident.” Using the labels, they could begin writing more detailed paragraphs about the incidents and put the story in chronological order.

At some point a few years later, a therapist recommended that Jack contact the Catholic Church about his experiences. He wrote letters and was referred to the designated person that was dealing with survivors and victims. Though he was told that he was eligible for a redress package, he was asked to destroy the recording of their interview with him. They also refused to provide him with a transcript of their interview so he put up another website that had a bit of his story on it. Jack also began talking to people and “visited every Catholic body” in his city and told them his story. His neighbours said he had to stop talking about it or they would destroy everything he had. Jack later had an opportunity for a private session with the Royal Commission where his testimony was provided on camera. He also had a session at a community cabinet meeting with the commissioner of police, which he attended with his son. He has also written to “every politician in” his country and taken a hidden video camera into the police station to confront them about covering up the sexual abuse of children, which he both experienced personally and witnessed them do when people disclosed.

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Joanne is a survivor and advocate in her fifties in the United States. She was raped twice, once by a boy she was dating in high school and once by a stranger she met at an event. She never disclosed the first rape and would not have disclosed the second one had she not gotten pregnant. She told her roommate what happened, expecting him to suggest an abortion. Instead, he suggested they get married and raise the baby together with his boyfriend because at the time many gay people were not out of the closet. Joanne felt taken advantage of. She miscarried and attempted suicide soon after.

Joanne started advocating by writing about important issues in her industry that she found disturbing that were unrelated to sexual violence. Then, over thirty years after her victimizations, she read about a high-profile rape trial in the industry in which she worked. This was the beginning of her process of becoming an anti-sexual violence advocate. The things the victim in the article was saying about not wanting “her family to find out, and that's why being anonymous is so important to her” could have been coming from Joanne’s mouth. “I kept silent because I didn't want to get dragged through the mud. I didn't want everybody calling me a whore.” Joanne felt compelled to write about the case as a way to support the victim because she empathized with her. The article she wrote explained that she had been raped and like the victim in the case “didn’t want her parents to know” so she “remained silent for so many years because of the stigma society places on women.” Sharing her experience and writing the piece was her way of “standing up for the” victim.
Posting her article on social media was very difficult and pressing the button to publish and share it online was terrifying. Joanne was holding her breath because she was afraid that people would think she was a “quack” and that posting it would be “professional suicide.” But a friend encouraged her saying, “I think you'll inspire people and you might help others, so I think you should do it.” Through her writing, Joanne became connected to other advocates and continued to highlight sexual violence in her industry as well as the other issues that she previously wrote about. Joanne’s reasons for advocating as well as the first time she considered herself an advocate are the same as how she became an advocate; they all stem from the case that she read about which was the “trigger that I can't keep silent any longer.” The stigmatization she faced as teen and young adult where she was “slutshamed” for her promiscuous behaviours after the first rape are also connected to her advocacy in that slutshaming is one of the things she focuses on eradicating.

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For Julie, neither survivor nor victim “really resonate” and she is an advocate/activist in her twenties in Canada. She experienced sexual violence four times, both by strangers and by people she knew. The development of her “feminist consciousness” in university, her exposure to theories in undergraduate school, and exposure to stories about sexual violence in the media affected how she thought about her own experiences. They also gave her the tools to name her experiences as sexual violence both to herself and to others. When she entered her Master’s program, she felt compelled to do her first project on the topic of consent. She did not plan on studying consent when she entered the program, but the more she studied the more she realized how much it mattered to her. She and a friend began naming and labeling their experiences of sexual victimization, which up to that point they referred to as “bad sex,” and started using terms like rape. They had “shied away from [these terms] for a long time because we just didn't think that they applied to us.” Around this time, Julie also helped a friend identify an experience as rape and accompanied her to the police to file a report. This was the first time Julie had supported someone through this process. Julie also disclosed her experiences in class and received support from her peers and some of them disclosed their experiences to her. She felt that she was “at a place in my journey that I was equipped to hear those stories and take them in.” She also disclosed her experiences to her advisor and professors in her thesis, but will not publish the thesis through the university because it “was really personal” and she does not want it made public. The support Julie has received from the disclosures she has made pushes her to continue talking about sexual violence and to advocate/be an activist. Therefore, she says that her advocacy/activism “definitely took its form in my Master’s degree and then really came out in” her MA thesis.

For Julie, advocacy/activism is “telling my story as my story, like not feeling - really trying to work to say my story isn't the same as your story, but there are parallels. And getting other people to tell their stories, using the language that they feel comfortable with.” She wants to help herself and her friend group “name and think about our sexuality and our sexual histories” which is something she could not do before. She is interested in how their “experiences in undergraduate and very fuzzy first sexual experiences and years of that have longitudinal” effects. For example, the substance abuse they engage in both helps and hinders
their ability to deal with their sexual violence experiences, but “it’s very cyclical, it’s very hidden.” She hopes to study this in a PhD program. Julie’s advocacy/activism focus is on “the silence and stigma” and “that this is something that happens all the time.” A lot of her involvement is also “just being a body at a march” or “in a room – being present” and holding spaces where conversation about sexual violence can take place. The first time Julie felt like an advocate was when she went to a Take Back the Night event alone, and not part of a group of friends who were going. The reason she advocates/is an activist is to help people feel less alone and ashamed.

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Kathryn Borel is a victim and advocate in her thirties in the United States. She experienced three sexual victimizations; two by men she knew and one by a stranger. At the time of all three victimizations, Kathryn did not know where to go or who to talk to. It was only after the last rape by a stranger that Kathryn “leaned in to the fact” that she was a victim of sexual assault. Because the second perpetrator was a famous media personality and Kathryn was a journalist, many journalists knew about some of Kathryn’s victimization experiences with him at work. When this second perpetrator was arrested for sexual violent crimes that were unrelated to his acts against Kathryn, many journalists pressured her to publicly disclose. She was not yet ready but “wanted the story to come out, because I wanted people to stop being hurt by this person.” She felt a lot of tension over the decision of whether to publicly disclose and she decided to give journalists quotes and interviews about her experiences with the second perpetrator that were not for attribution. A journalist published a story with enough identifying information that people recognized it as Kathryn’s story and her friend suggested that she write the larger story about “an institution that protected him while he was abusing you.” This “got the wheels turning” for Kathryn and she began thinking about telling her story herself.

Soon after, a journalist asked Kathryn to participate in a documentary about the perpetrator and though she initially refused, Kathryn eventually agreed after the journalist persisted and asked “how will you feel in 5 years if you don’t participate?” Kathryn thought, “Would I be able to look myself in the mirror five years later and say, hey, you could’ve done more to help other people and to change things institutionally potentially, you know? And that was the thing that got me.” “It was like enough time had passed. There was something about a female journalist who I respected, because I was a journalist for 10 years, a female journalist I respected putting it in those broader terms.” Participating in the documentary was the beginning of Kathryn’s process of becoming an advocate because “everything just kind of dominoed from there.” This was also when she first thought of herself as an advocate because she thought, “Do I want my legacy to be someone who was, like, brave and spoke truth to power and didn’t just narcissistically tell my story but told it in a way that could potentially help other people?” After the documentary aired, journalists continued to pressure Kathryn to let them tell her story and she decided that “if there's one person who deserves to tell her own story at this point it's me.” But “it's not my story. It's the facts.” Because she thought about how this was happening in all institutions, she decided to write her story in an international outlet and the piece went viral. She received many messages of thanks as well as disclosures from strangers. She answered them all
because she wished she had had someone to go to when she was victimized. Later, Kathryn posted a speech that she gave as the keynote speaker at a rape treatment centre on Facebook after the tapes with Donald Trump bragging about committing sexual assault were leaked. In this post she “fully came out of the closet to everyone as a person who had been raped.” (Her rape, however, is unrelated to the second perpetrator.) Again, Kathryn received emails from people who disclosed their rape to her. Kathryn believes that being public about her victimization is what got her into her advocacy role. She also made a public statement on the steps of the courthouse after the second perpetrator read an apology to her in court. This, too, was an act of advocacy to Kathryn because she believes that “there’s no right way” or “script for the victim.” Kathryn’s advocacy message is also that there are many routes victims can take. She exemplified this by choosing how to proceed regarding the case of the second perpetrator, as opposed to going to court after her rape by the third perpetrator. Avoiding court allowed her to come “out as somebody” after the second perpetrator’s trial.

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Laura is a survivor and advocate in her twenties in Canada. She experienced sexual victimization two times, in her mid-teens and early twenties, by a boy she met at a party and by an ex-boyfriend. The second experience led her to become even more involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy both in volunteer and professional capacities because she felt that she “could resonate with” this work. Though she explained that she was a ‘slacktivist,’ or someone who minimally engages in advocacy and activism online since the tenth grade, going to university made her realize that there was more she could do through campus organizations and events that support survivors. She has advocated by participating in Slutwalk and through her work at an advocacy centre on her university campus. Laura got the position at the centre around the same time as her second victimization. Doing anti-sexual violence work was ‘accidental’ in that the advocacy campus office gave Laura room to work on a project of interest to her and she created a video to educate people about victim blaming. Working on the video was the first time she felt like an advocate because the message spread and she felt like she had done “something really valuable.” She has also educated groups on consent, sexual health, and sexual violence. Victim blaming is a core focus of her anti-sexual violence as Laura was blamed the first time she disclosed to a friend. Though Laura identifies more with being a survivor than an advocate, she is not public about being a survivor and very few people know that she is because she “is not ready to share that yet.” Laura’s advocacy involves speaking up when people make erroneous comments about sexual violence or teaching them how wrong victim blaming is. She said, “Part of me feels almost obligated to say something because I just feel like there are some things that you can't just let go.” She feels strongly about this because “I don’t want people, especially really young people, to feel the way I felt.” She advocates because “I didn't know how to speak up for myself” and speaking up for others “was kind of a way for me to almost take some of the pressure off.”

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Lily is a survivor and advocate in her twenties in Canada. She experienced sexual violence two times during her university years by men she knew. These experiences occurred at
a time that Lily was already doing work around gender-based violence. Lily has always had “an interest in women’s issues” and has done “work around sexual violence and gender-based violence for the longest time” as well as healthy relationships, sexuality and sexual identity. In fact, the first time she thought of herself as an advocate was “throughout my work about talking about gender and how that opens doors to talking about victimization and survivorship and stuff,” which was separate from her victimization experiences.

However, Lily’s “personal advocacy came about” because of her second victimization experience. This is because she began hearing stories about her perpetrator from other young women who were treated the same or worse than Lily had been. She felt like she had a responsibility and the ability to do something about it. She reported him to supervisors at his workplace as a way to protect students and women he worked with from him and asked for the implementation of policies and training. Lily knows “he’s going to do it again” and hopes to create “a rift in his pattern” of preying on the women he meets through his work at a university. Lily’s advocacy focus intersects with her own experiences such as asking questions about how to safely name perpetrators when complainants want to remain anonymous. Her biggest focus is to complicate things that have been simplified, such as narrowing consent to mean “a yes and no conversation,” and to talk about race and feminism regarding sexual violence experiences.

Though her work on sexual violence was a natural outcome of doing gender-based work, her personal experiences with sexual violence have pushed her away from anti-sexual violence advocacy a bit. This is because she feels that “we are preaching to the choir” and that not much has shifted in the years of anti-sexual violence advocacy. She also feels that “people who are advocating in this realm also are people who aren’t being held accountable in their own ways.” For example, she says that “people learn the language and are able to perpetrate easier. We have these male feminists who go around and declare feminism, but their actions speak a lot louder.” However, Lily believes that since “the unfortunate reality is that sexual violence exists everywhere”…“it will go with me wherever I go.” Lily considers herself “a survivor in the dark” because though she is publicly known for her advocacy, she is unsure whether she identifies more with being a survivor or an advocate. Even when she is public about being a survivor, she does not necessarily disclose what she is a survivor of.

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Madeleine Black does not “use the terms victim or survivor, really” and she is an activist in her fifties in the United Kingdom. She experienced four instances of sexual violence, one by a stranger and the others by men she knew. Madeleine’s experiences with sexual violence led her to become an activist, though for a long time she did not know what was driving her. Someone suggested that she write her story down and at first she felt “there’s no way I could.” Four years later, she “just woke up one night and my fingers were just like automatic, they were just writing and writing and 12 pages then appeared. Then somehow, through social media, I’ve got in contact with an organization” that focuses on forgiveness. The woman in charge asked if they could share it on their page without identifying Madeleine as its author. At the same time, Madeleine was in touch with a woman who was going to prison to meet the man who raped her. Madeleine thought “well, if she can go to prison to meet him, then I can share my name and
share my face.” She was also at a point in her life where she had nothing “to be ashamed about or embarrassed.” She also heard the woman from the forgiveness-based organization speak about trauma and their work on restorative justice and “saw the effect it had on the audience.” She told Madeleine, “Now you must speak,” and Madeline felt “well, I could actually do that!” because she had done so much work to heal. She thought she would write the story for herself.

When Madeleine shared her written story with her writing workshop teacher, he asked if he could share it with members of the writing workshop she was a part of. The first time Madeleine thought of herself as an activist was when she shared it with them. Approximately five months later, her story was posted on the forgiveness-based organization’s website and Facebook page. Madeleine also shared it on her personal Facebook page. She started to “get messages from people all over the world” and was asked to do talks and interviews in person and on television. She also heard from many people who disclosed to her and this “motivates me to carry on.” She really hopes that speaking out “will help people see that...we can get past anything in life.” She had underestimated the impact of sharing her story and seeing people’s reaction to it and how powerful it was to share is why she is an activist. Her activism purpose and message is “to speak out to try to end the stigma, the shame, the silence that surrounds sexual violence.” Her aim is “in finding my voice, to give other people the power to find their voice. Not to speak publicly, you know, I just encourage people even to tell themselves their own story.” She feels “like a vehicle telling my story” and views her activism as accidental or unintentional and “organic” in that she “never set out to do” this, but speaking out “opened doors.” Her activism is unique in that a lot of her “story is about forgiveness as well” because, with the help of a therapist and midwife, she realized that the people who victimized her “weren’t born rapists.” She felt that “they demonized themselves in the dehumanizing of me, and then my heart went out to them. I thought, for them to live with what they did to me must be so much harder.”

Prior to writing and speaking about her experiences of sexual violence, Madeleine worked as a support person for women fleeing domestic abuse and for rape crisis centres. From this, she decided to study to become a counselor. She went on to become a psychotherapist which she has been doing for over ten years. However, Madeleine does not consider this previous work to be part of her activism and only considers her work in the last four years where she has been speaking and writing about her story. As she says, her “advocacy started when I shared my story in 2014.” Part of why she does not consider her previous work to be activism is because it was not public, whereas her work now is. Until she saw the call for this study, Madeleine never thought of herself as an activist or advocate. She was simply someone who broke her silence and shared her story with other people and thinks it encourages others to do the same. She thinks of herself as a “public speaker,” or as the woman from the forgiveness organization calls it, a “story healer.” Madeleine has recently written and published a book about her experiences of sexual violence.

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Navila Rashid is a survivor of child sexual abuse and three instances of sexual violence in her twenties in the United States. She is also an advocate and activist, which she distinguishes
as professional and personal roles, respectively. Being an intern at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum which taught her about being an activist and an advocate in the community “laid the groundwork” for her anti-sexual violence advocacy and activism. Navila believes that the child sexual abuse was what guided her “toward the process of being an advocate and activist” and that experiencing victimization again led her to become even more involved. Her disclosures and advocacy and activism are intertwined.

Navila’s personal activism began before her first rape, which was most impactful to her, when she and a friend shared their victimization experiences with each other. They started a site for survivors to work through their trauma through art such as photography, painting, drawing, etc., where survivors could submit their work. Art was something Navila had used to work through her own trauma. They thought that giving people a creative outlet instead of talking about their trauma was a different way to offer support to survivors. She “went public with her story when we first published our site.” The site was her “introduction into doing advocacy which then shifted into speaking at workshops, being invited to events, creating outlines and toolkits for people specifically in the Muslim community in terms of response, where to go, who to go to, what to say, what not to say, and things like that.” Both publishing the site and being asked to speak were the first times Navila felt like an activist and the website eventually turned into an organization. Disclosing her experiences helped Navila “create a movement surrounding the language that we use to talk about this, especially in the Muslim community but also the South Asian community as a broader umbrella.” Soon after her first rape, Navila also participated in a documentary “where three Muslim women talk about” their experiences of sexual violence. This came about because she was “so open and public about” her site and experiences. During filming, she experienced two other victimizations.

Navila’s professional involvement with advocacy came about due to several things; her negative experiences with reporting her first rape to the police who blamed her and did not believe her, because she was “a victim and a survivor,” and because she read many stories of people going through the same things. “I decided I needed to be more proactive in terms of policy reform and doing that type of work.” In her professional work, she has worked with “sex offenders and batterers of domestic violence” and later with “with victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, and also elder abuse.”

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Nigel O’Mara is a survivor and advocate in his fifties in the United Kingdom. He experienced child sexual abuse from the ages of 12-16 by many men because a family friend who was the first to abuse him “was pimping me out” during those years. Nigel wonders about how he views his later involvement in prostitution following the years of sexual victimization. Though he does not consider the people who “used me as a prostitute as perpetrators,” he does see “a direct correlation” between his victimization and later involvement in prostitution.

When he was approximately 21 years old, Nigel responded to a call for participants recruiting young men who were involved in prostitution. He participated in the study and the researcher who was also a counselor became Nigel’s counselor, which “seriously changed my
life.” The end of his counseling time was spent figuring out what to do next in life. For Nigel, anti-sexual violence advocacy was the only thing he really knew about. He felt he was able to do it, that there was no place for male survivors, and that he had to do something about it. The counselor who was running an organization supporting men involved in prostitution knew people running a switchboard for male survivors, but neither of these forums were appropriate organizations to deal with the calls they were receiving. Together, he and Nigel and another friend decided to “set up an organization for male survivors, the first one in the country.” Nigel spent six months gathering information and talking to agencies about what types of supports were available to victims because he saw the gap and wanted to do something about it. “My ego was part of what drove that organization and my willingness to put myself forward was part of my ego because I believed that I could make a difference.”

Nigel went public with his story and began the male survivors’ advocacy organization on the same day. In fact, publicly disclosing “was strategic” to “help launch the organization and give it some grounding.” Nigel describes his decision to go public as something he had to do. He says, “As time went on, I think I realized I had to. It wasn't a case of whether I wanted to or not. I think I had to, for my own sanity. Because I just couldn't believe how badly treated, how nothing was being done. How badly treated survivors were... It was in me that I saw this as a massive injustice that had been perpetrated, not only against me, but because of the calls I'd had from the helpline, I had so many other people and I know also, right then, that there were situations that were developing which were being perpetrated where people had absolutely no control.” In running the organization, he found out that police were continuing to fail to protect children as they did with him and his anger at their reaction drove him on. He channeled his anger into energy and “a drive to do things.”

An incident at the organization where Nigel was on the phone with a survivor and had to hang up in the middle because the colleague next to him collapsed dead from an embolism sent Nigel into a “mental breakdown” at having to leave a survivor hanging like that. Additionally, achieving the passing of legislation that recognized men as rape victims left Nigel “feeling a loss. Feeling that I didn’t know what to do anymore.” Nigel left the United Kingdom for seven years and did not work on abuse issues unless he felt he had to intervene during that time. But two high profile cases brought Nigel back into advocacy work. His anger at society for ignoring abuse for so long in the first case got him organization and campaigning again. The second case was “the defining moment” that brought Nigel back to the United Kingdom because he felt it would be safe to be there again and to work on issues surrounding sexual violence. This is because “people were talking about it and it was seen as real,” whereas before it was not.

Nigel believes that his personality is part of what got him into advocacy. “I think I'm an organizing person anyway. I'm pretty good at - I'm great communicating with people. I like to communicate with people. And I'm quite good at finding ways that everybody will be happy. I'm quite a diplomat communicating with people.” He also believes that his advocacy was borne out of his surviving, therefore he is as equally a survivor as he is an advocate.

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Rachel is a victim/survivor of sexual violence and an advocate in her forties in the United States. Her two experiences of sexual victimization were by people she knew: a boy in her high school that she was dating and a friend in college. Rachel uses a pseudonym in the advocacy that she does, including her writing and posting of articles, and therefore many people do not know that she is an advocate. Before she became an advocate, Rachel learned to identify that what happened to her in high school was sexual violence and not simply a bad situation. This occurred through learning about sexual assault in university through various programs and hearing others, like counselors, identify what happened to her as rape. This disabused her of the ideas she had previously held about victim blaming and ideal victims that she had applied to her own experiences.

Before she became an advocate, Rachel went through a process of disclosing and was motivated to do so because of the flashbacks she was having from some of the books she was reading and from the news about the Bill Cosby trial. She was also diagnosed with cancer and felt that she did not “want to keep any more secrets.” Finding resources to deal with her own experiences of victimization, such as therapy and healing retreats, also led her to become an advocate. Rachel’s disclosures and advocacy are linked in that if she hears people perpetuating rape myths, she will speak up and try to explain why those myths are harmful. A widely covered campus sexual assault case led her to speak up at her Sabbath table because people were blaming the victim. In defending the victim, Rachel disclosed to those present saying, “It did happen to me. It happened to me twice.” She also pointed out how common sexual violence is, especially against women. She now considers this an act of advocacy, a “milestone,” and a “powerful moment.” However, at the time she did not recognize what she did as advocacy until her counselor told her in response to Rachel’s desire “to DO something” that speaking up “is advocacy.”

Rachel’s advocacy also came about because hearing the disclosures of others when she disclosed to them made her “so angry” because she realized that sexual violence is all around and that change is badly needed. Years after her first victimization, the perpetrator offered an apology that Rachel felt was more of a “threat.” It made Rachel feel further silenced and “incredibly guilty” about her silence because another person “might get hurt because” of it. Becoming an advocate was a way “to undo that” and to do something for others that someone could have done for her. It was a way to no longer hold “the shame and the secret” about her victimization in. Rachel recognized her ability to write as a way that she could contribute to the dismantling of rape myths. She began publishing articles and volunteered with an advocacy organization working to end the statue of limitations. She also participates in online forums trying to shine a light on the issue of sexual violence. She is mindful to advocate around things she knows best and what she learned from another advocate, which is to “stay in your lane.” Her “passion in advocacy lies with teens and teen dating violence.” Advocating is part of her “healing process” because it makes her feel like she is making a difference, which stands in contrast to her previous feelings of powerlessness.

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Sarah Beaulieu is a survivor and advocate, or “truth-teller,” in her forties in the United States. She experienced child sexual abuse by people that were close to her and later a “date rape” by a high school friend. The child sexual abuse impacted her more than the later sexual victimization. Sarah separates her advocacy, or what she calls truth-telling, into the personal and professional. The first time she thought of herself as a truth-teller was when she disclosed to her mother about the child sexual abuse, but her professional truth-telling began in her sophomore year in high school. After disclosing to some friends when she was a teenager, Sarah decided to “learn everything that I could possible learn about childhood sexual abuse. I think I called, like, organizations across the country and had them send me materials.” In high school, she met two girls who had also experienced victimization and together they would “hijack a lesson plan from our English teacher and teach the whole class about sexual consent.” She also wrote poetry about sexual violence and a first-person narrative about recovering her memories of child sexual abuse.

Sarah went public with her story in college, which goes “hand in hand” with her further involvement in advocacy. “I decided I was going to speak at a campus Take Back the Night and share my story.” This was also when she felt she was “transforming from feeling like a victim to feeling like a survivor.” In college she also did advocacy as “a women's peer counsellor,” assisting survivors of child sexual abuse and sexual assault. She and her friends would also educate men about sexual violence. However, Sarah did not go “super public” with her experiences of sexual victimization until after she “became a survivor speaker” for a rape crisis centre years later. Going through the training as a survivor speaker helped with her struggles of how to tell her story chronologically. At the centre, she worked as a medical advocate and rape crisis counselor where she would meet survivors at the hospital and she served on the centre’s board. She wrote a blog post about her experience of sexual victimization as a teenager and shared it on Facebook.

After college, though Sarah “wanted to do something about this issue” professionally and “speak out about it more,” a boyfriend’s offhand comment about “don’t be a martyr” pushed her “back into the closet in my professional world” about the fact that she was a survivor, even though it was common knowledge in her personal life. But realizing that “I had put myself back in the closet - that sparked me to bust the fuck out again because I was like, how is it that now I’ve got this huge network of national leaders and non-profit people and foundations and I’m like criss-crossing the country and meeting and like literally zero people know that this happened to me?!” In trying to do anti-sexual violence advocacy work more professionally, she went on “a listening tour. “I went to a hundred, I talked to people in the field, I talked to, I literally started using my network to understand what is happening at the national level around the issue of sexual violence.” An infographic that she and her brother made about sexual violence and posted online went viral overnight. After her second child was born, Sarah felt ready and itching to address the “gap in the way we communicate about sexual violence and I believe I figured out a way to fill - I believe I had a way to make sexual assault education scalable.” She also gave a TEDx talk on the work that she currently does. Her focus has shifted to “putting my story at the centre…what I’m doing now, it’s my voice.” She considers the work she does now as separate from her “engagement as a volunteer and as a survivor speaker with a rape crisis center.” Her work is about “how to make conversations around sexual violence that’s less uncomfortable,
particularly for men...Not sort of avoiding perpetration, but more focused being a good friend being a good ally.” She “interviewed like 40 to 50 men including a bunch of male survivors - my frame on this really is about men as allies and men as survivors versus men as perpetrators.” “The work that I do is really sort of themed around how do you have practical, realistic, not overly intense and oversharing conversations.”

Sarah does this work out of a sense of obligation because she believes that her “mission is to bring this conversion to as many people as possible.” She also feels lucky because “most people don't survive shit like this. To come out of this with some set of professional skills they can use against this is the issue.” Her work also comes from being in the right time and place in her life personally and professionally, a “sense of urgency,” recognizing her “position of extreme privilege,” and a feeling that she has nothing “to lose.” She had a strong support system, and had “gotten access to healing and recovery and support. I had financial resources” and knew that becoming an advocate would not affect her professionally. For Sarah, doing this work was a “way to pay it forward” and “bring this conversation to people who can't yet have it themselves for whatever reason.”

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Sharon is a victim/survivor and advocate in her forties in the United States. She was victimized by her older brother when she was 11 and was date raped by a boy from school when she was 14. Her advocacy is related to how her disclosures as a child were minimized and ignored and to her daughter’s experiences with sexual victimization by the child’s father. Sharon does not want people “to turn their heads or minimize” when children are sexually abused and her advocacy is a “total passion” and “a personal motivation.” Though she has been “a long time feminist” and concerned with women’s rights, the court process following her daughter’s victimization led her to have a role in “direct advocacy.” Sharon explains that the court process “totally opened my eyes to how the oppression the silencing of victims, especially child victims, is institutional,” which she “had no idea” about. She went to court thinking her daughter would be protected and instead “found out that it was all about, you know, delegitimizing the victims and protecting the perpetrator. And I was astonished how many mechanisms are at play in that.” Though she could not discuss the trial publicly, she was able to talk to other women who were going through something similar and what they could do to change it. Connecting to other parents who were trying to protect their children in parenting groups and online forums led Sharon to participate in conferences with professional advocates working on policy reform around domestic and sexual violence and on various bills. Ever since the court case, Sharon has been “researching and reading…and networking,” and volunteering for some of these professional advocates.

Sharon first thought of herself as an advocate when she began regularly “logging hours” working on policy reform with professional advocates because this made advocacy and change “tangible” for her. Sharon’s advocacy focuses on child victims, such as her work on trafficking or genital mutilation. Her most important advocacy work is on “inter-family violence,” which featured in both her own and her daughter’s victimizations. She advocates for children to not be
re-traumatized, such as when they are forced to spend time with a parent who perpetrated sexual violence against them.

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**Tamara Schoor** is a survivor and advocate/activist in her thirties in the United States. She experienced sexual victimization over a period of several years by her mentor and rabbi in Israel while she was studying there in her late teens. She became an advocate/activist as she was doing research to figure out what to do about her case because the rabbis she turned to for help said they needed more victims to come forward with her before they could do anything. “No one responded with shock” upon hearing that this rabbi had victimized her, but it was the first that Tamara heard that there were other victims. Learning that she “wasn’t the only one” led Tamara to decide to “expose” her rabbi. Prior to this, she “was content to let it go.” However, finding out that there were other victims was when she “decided that it was time to take action.”

In trying to figure out “how to address the situation,” Tamara reached out to various advocates and advocacy organizations in Israel. She told some of them her story and went with one of them to the police to see “how likely it was with just my story that they would be able to do something.” One of the advocacy organizations she had contacted put together a conference on the issue of sexual abuse in the Jewish community. Tamara attended and met other advocates. She started to understand “the issues better…and took whatever opportunities were created to volunteer my time more and try to help in any way I can.” Attending the conference was the first time she thought of herself as an advocate/activist.

Tamara later learned that the rabbis she had gone to for help “were looking to do something” in order to force her perpetrator to give his wife a get, or a Jewish divorce. At this point she “just had enough and decided it was time to share my story.” Tamara reached out to people in the hopes that they would encourage her to do it. She wrote a Facebook post about her story without naming her perpetrator at first, but eventually identified him. However, the rabbis put out a statement against Tamara’s perpetrator to the wider orthodox Jewish community and people were saying that “the rabbis should get credit” for exposing this man and “that it had nothing to do with” Tamara’s public and private disclosures. This was “extremely disempowering and a really, really horrible experience” for Tamara because “the rabbis did a whole hell of a lot of damage in taking away [my] voice.”

Tamara currently volunteers for a Jewish advocacy organization that focuses on child sexual abuse in the orthodox Jewish community. She focuses on this community because she says the people in that community “would like to believe that it doesn’t exist or it’s not the huge problem that it is.” She does this work because “child sexual abuse is a much bigger problem than I had ever realized in the Jewish community.”

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**Tim Lennon** is a survivor and advocate/activist in his seventies in the United States. He experienced child sexual abuse multiple times, including a life-threatening rape by a priest who had befriended Tim’s family in his then Catholic community. Tim did not recall these experiences of victimization for many years and only recalled the rape when his children reached
the age he was at the time of this incident. Tim’s involvement in advocacy/activism began when he joined a support group for survivors abused by clergy and became a regular member there for two years, which was where he first disclosed his victimization experiences. Disclosing to the group allowed him to later disclose privately to friends and family, which led him to eventually publicly disclose his story on television and at other events. “The support group provided me a mechanism for me to put into words what happened to me and see the importance of connecting or communicating with my family or my circles.” The support group offered training and practice at public speaking to “build up the confidence to be articulate in explaining issues of institutional abuse.” His anger at the church’s “insulting and dismissive” response to his letters of disclosure also led him to begin advocating publicly for others, but not necessarily to telling his own story, and fuels his work.

After remembering the life threatening rape at a time when he had stopped attending group meetings, Tim felt that he needed support because the memories led to “months-long troubles, which is a general constellation of PTSD, nightmares, crying, anger and anxiety.” Because there was no support group nearby, Tim and his friend started one and this was when he went from being a group participant to being a leader. His second round of involvement with the group is also when he first saw himself as an advocate and it was fueled by his anger at the church. He concentrates on “institutional abuse” or “the institutional communities of society.” Advocacy “feeds my soul, if you will. And I feel good, it gives me a good feeling because I’ve known over the years that I’ve helped people and that is very, very rewarding. It’s not the reason I do it, but it's a nice feeling to know that happens.”

Tim advocates and is public with his story because he sees it as a “mechanism to fight back” since he was “frozen, in shock, and unable to do anything” at the time of victimization, to help others come forward and get the help they need, and so that it never happens to anyone else. For Tim, advocacy is sharing your story because it allows others to see their experiences in yours and because it allows him to “incorporate more of what my story is into my life” instead of hiding what happened to him. Doing so reinforces “that acknowledgement of who you are as a person.” Tim feels no tension in being both a survivor and an advocate and identifies more with being a survivor. “Probably the biggest lesson” that he has learned is that “what happened to me is who I am, is part of my character, and it impacts me every day, it’s who I am, so I always refer to myself as a survivor.”

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Wendy is a survivor and advocate in her forties in the United States. She experienced between six and eight sexual victimizations and spoke about three in her interview. Two occurred when Wendy was a teenager and the other took place in adulthood. Years after these experiences, Wendy was “drinking and in depression” and she sought help from a hospital hoping to check in. Unbeknownst to her, the hospital called the police who put her in handcuffs, escorted her out, and put her in “protective custody, in jail” overnight where she “slept on the floor” and had to use the bathroom in “front of whoever walked by.” Wendy was released the next day when the police felt the alcohol was out of her system. This was the beginning of Wendy “trying to be an advocate in some way” and she soon found out that the hospital did this
to “over 100 people per year.” She was shocked to find out that it is a common practice. She “immediately started looking for a lawyer to get an injunction to stop them from doing that to people.” Her advocacy involved advocating for people, sexual assault victims or not, “to get proper treatment if they'd like it...through suing the hospital because they weren't going to change that policy of theirs.” She wanted “a precedent to be set to ensure that other places wouldn't do that.” Her advocacy also involved “complaining to everybody under the sun about my treatment and hoping that awareness would be raised.” Years after this, because she had been documenting all of her experiences and had been “thinking about it for a couple of years” and she had the time as well as “a good grip on the anxiety,” Wendy advocated by writing a book using her real name so that she could reach victims directly. “I wanted people to see that if I could do it, they could do it too.” “Going public” in this way was a way for Wendy to own her narrative and not allow anyone to “mess up the facts or try to twist things around.” The reasons for her advocacy are because she “believes in sticking up for the small guy” and for what she calls the “selfish side” of getting “something out of being an advocate.” She feels “personal satisfaction to feel like I am doing something positive for someone that I truly believe can change.”

Though Wendy had previously worked with abused children before the incident with the hospital, she did not consider herself an advocate. Instead, it was her experiences with the hospital and police which were the beginning of her advocacy. The reasons she advocates and when she felt like an advocate are tied to the process in which she became an advocate in that they are linked to the “secondary victimization” she experienced by how she was treated by medical personnel and by the police. She says, “The day I got out of jail and talked to the hospital right after that, I knew I was going to advocate for that cause come hell or high water, for people to be able to seek treatment...The main thing that really made it kick my advocacy into, I guess, a fuller drive is realizing that there are so few advocates out there and going through it a third time. The poor treatment that rape victims have with secondary victimization is really the kicker for me, let me put it that way.”
Victims Are Doing It for Themselves

Examining the move from sexual victimization to anti-sexual violence advocacy.

Have you experienced sexual victimization and later became involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism?

If so, you are invited to participate in a 1 - 2 hour long one-on-one interview to share your insight into these experiences.

To learn more about the study and to decide if you would like to participate, please contact Guila Benchimol at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca by Feb. 19, 2017.

This study is being conducted by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph and has received Research Ethics Board approval (REB# 16NV010)

To be included in this study participants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault)
- Have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional
- Be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism
- Be 18 years of age or older
Victims Are Doing It for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate

LETTER OF INVITATION FOR PARTICIPANT INTERVIEWS

REB# 16NV010
Who is conducting the study?
The study is being conducted by Guila Benchimol, Ph.D. Candidate in Sociology at the University of Guelph. The research is being supervised by Dr. Myrna Dawson (Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph) and the study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Guelph.

What is the purpose of the study?
The purpose of this study is to learn about the impact that victimization, and your experiences after victimization, had on your life and to gain insight into how you became an advocate or activist. We aim to identify some of the thoughts, feelings, and actions you engaged in following your experiences of victimization and disclosures and how these have influenced your decision to become involved in advocacy/activism. We are also interested in how you have navigated your relationships throughout the experiences of victimization, disclosure, and advocacy/activism involvement and understanding how the roles of victim and advocate have informed your identity. We are interested in interviewing people with these experiences from the general population as well as those from religious communities or groups.

What is involved?
This research study will explore the experiences that lead some victims of sexual violence to become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. Therefore, people who have experienced sexual victimization and have been or are now involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism are invited to participate in a one-on-one interview with the Student Investigator. The one-on-one interview will take approximately 1-2 hours and may be conducted at your convenience in person, via videoconference, or on the telephone. You will not be asked about the details of the victimization itself and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering.

How can I participate?
To be included in the study participants must meet all of the following criteria:
☐ be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
☐ have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.
☐ be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.
☐ be 18 years of age or older.

If you meet the above criteria, please contact Guila at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca by February 19, 2017 for further information about the study or to find out how you can participate. You are not required to participate in this study and if you choose to participate in this study, your consent must be free and voluntary.

Thank you for your interest.
(Appendix D)

RECRUITMENT EMAIL FOR SNOWBALL SAMPLING
TO BE SENT TO PROFESSIONALS IN STUDENT INVESTIGATOR’S NETWORK

REB# 16NV010

Hi,

I hope this email finds you well.

As you may know, I am a doctoral student researcher at the University of Guelph. I am conducting a study examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse and sexual assault, become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

I am currently trying to recruit a number of people (all genders) to take part in an interview. Specifically, I am hoping to interview individuals who have experienced sexual violence and later became involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. I am interested in interviewing people with these experiences from the general population as well as those from religious communities or groups.

To be included in the study participants must meet all of the following criteria:
- be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
- have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.
- be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.
- be 18 years of age or older.

Participants will be asked to participate in a 1-2 hour interview. Depending on participants’ location, interviews will be conducted in person, via Skype, or on the telephone. Participants who take part in face-to-face interviews will be reimbursed for their use of public transit or parking.

Attached you will find the study poster and information sheet. If you know of any individuals who may be interested in participating in this study please share this email and its attachments with them before February 19th so that they can participate. Alternatively, if you receive their consent to do so, please share their email with me and I will invite them to participate in the study.

You should also feel free to contact me at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca with any questions you may have about the study. **If you happen to meet the criteria for participating I invite you to contact me about that as well.**

Thank you in advance for helping me recruit participants for this study,
Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
gbenchim@uoguelph.ca
SOCIAL MEDIA POST FOR PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT
POSTED ON STUDENT INVESTIGATOR’S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

REB# 16NV010

My name is Guila Benchimol and I am a doctoral student at the University of Guelph. I am conducting a study examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

I am currently trying to recruit a number of people (all genders) to take part in an interview. Specifically, I am hoping to interview individuals who have experienced sexual violence, disclosed the victimization, and later became involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. I am interested in interviewing people with these experiences from the general population as well as those from religious communities or groups.

Interviews will take 1-2 hours and will be conducted in person, on the phone, or via videoconference.

Please share the attached poster and information sheet about the study.

If you or anyone you know meet the participation requirements and are interested in participating in this study please contact me at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca before February 19th, 2017 for more information.

Thank you in advance for helping me recruit participants for this study,
Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
RECRUITMENT EMAIL TO POTENTIAL STUDY PARTICIPANTS

REB# 16NV010

Dear ________________,

I hope this email finds you well.

My name is Guila Benchimol and I am a doctoral student researcher at the University of Guelph. I am conducting a study examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse and sexual assault, become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

[I received your contact information from _________________ who thought you might be interested in participating in this study.] OR [I read about your experiences with victimization and advocacy involvement in _________________ and thought you might be interested in participating in this study.] OR [You emailed me about my research study and said that you were interested in participating.]

I am currently trying to recruit a number of people (all genders) to take part in a one-on-one interview regarding their experiences of sexual victimization, disclosures, and involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism. I am interested in hearing from people with these experiences from the general population as well as those from religious communities or groups.

Participants will be asked to participate in a 1-2 hour interview. Depending on participants’ location, interviews will be conducted in person, via Skype, or on the telephone. Participants will have the opportunity to schedule the interview at a time and place that is convenient and comfortable for them. Participants who take part in face-to-face interviews will be reimbursed for their use of public transit or parking.

To be included in the study participants must meet all of the following criteria:

☐ be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
☐ have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.
☐ be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.
☐ be 18 years of age or older.

You will be asked to only discuss information that you are comfortable sharing. Your participation in this study and your consent to participate in the study must be free and voluntary. If you choose to participate, please email me at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca by February 19, 2017. Along with my contact information, the attached poster and information letter contain the details regarding what is involved in this study, the purpose of the study, and who is conducting the study. You can also keep this contact information and attachments about the study with you in case you would like some time to decide.

While I am looking for a wide range of experiences, my ability to include everyone in the study will depend on the number of people who respond that they are interested in participating. You will receive an email from me by February 26, 2017 letting you know whether or not you have
been selected to participate in this study. If you are **NOT** selected, I will delete your replies to the questions below and your contact information. If you **ARE** selected to participate you will receive an email from me by **February 26, 2017** to schedule a phone call so that we can set a time for the interview.

If you meet the criteria for being included in the study that are outlined in the study and information letter and if after reading this email you are interested in participating and you do not have concerns with my knowledge of your interest, please reply to this email and fill in the information below.

- My gender _____________________

- I have experienced sexual victimization □ once or more than once but by same perpetrator
  □ more than once by different perpetrators

- The perpetrator(s) was/were:         □ a stranger          □ known to me

- I disclosed the victimization: □ Publicly □ To people I selected to tell □ Both

- The way in which I disclosed was: □ Formal (authorities, media, religious/community leaders)
  □ Informal (private correspondence/conversations)
  □ Both

- My anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism involvement entails________________________________________________________________

Thank you in advance for your assistance in this study,

Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
gbenchim@uoguelph.ca
Hi, may I please speak to (interview participant name)?

[Only speak to the interview participant directly. If s/he is not available, phone back at a later time/date. Do not indicate who you are or your purpose for phoning. Do not leave a message with another person or voicemail.]

It’s Guila Benchimol, the Ph.D. student from the University of Guelph who has been in touch with you about a study I am conducting. I hope that this is a good time to call as you have indicated in the email you sent me.

I really appreciate your involvement in this study. I am hoping that you have had a chance to review the information sheet that I sent you. Do you have any questions about it?

[Give them time to ask questions about the study. Answer any questions they may have.]

At this point, would you like to participate in this research study?

[If no, thank them for their time and cooperation and end the phone call.]

If so, then the next step is to schedule an interview. As you know, the interview will take 1-2 hours. You will be asked to talk about your experiences of victimization, disclosing the victimization, and your involvement in advocacy/activism. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to.

[Depending on participant’s location decide whether the interview will be conducted in –person, via videoconference, or on the telephone.] I am scheduling interviews on [date to date]. Are any of those days convenient for you? If so, please pick a time for the interview where you know you will not be rushed. [If those days are not available, offer another date.]

Date: ________________ Time: _______ □a.m. □p.m.    Location: _______________________

When we get off the phone I will be emailing you the consent form. I will review it with you before we begin the interview. Feel free to read through it before the interview.

To ensure your confidentiality in the study, I will not leave messages with other people who answer the phone nor will I leave voicemails when I phone. With that said, I would like to phone you the day before to remind you of our meeting. Is this okay? Yes / No

If so, is there another number or way of contacting you that you would prefer that I use? ________

Is there a specific time that would be best for me to call at? ________

Do you have any questions for me?
In case you have any other questions before our interview or need to contact me, you can phone me at 416-731-8160 or email me at gbenchim@uoguelph.ca.

Excellent! I am looking forward to speaking with you.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. I’m looking forward to meeting with you on (date) at (time) [at __________ or on videoconference]. See you then!
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Victims Are Doing It for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate

REB# 16NV010

WHO WILL BE DOING THIS RESEARCH?
You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Guila Benchimol, a doctoral student in the Sociology & Anthropology Department at the University of Guelph. I am conducting this study as a requirement in completing my doctoral degree and it may be published in the future.
If at any time you have questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact: Guila Benchimol (Student Investigator) at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca or 416-731-8160, Dr. Myrna Dawson (Faculty Supervisor) at 519-824-4120.

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?
I am pleased to invite you to participate in a research study which explores the experiences that lead some victims of sexual violence to become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. The purpose of this study is to learn about the impact that victimization, and your experiences after victimization, had on your life and to gain insight into how you became an advocate or activist. We aim to identify some of the thoughts, feelings, and actions you engaged in following your experiences of victimization and disclosures and how these have influenced your decision to become involved in advocacy/activism. We are also interested in how you have navigated your relationships throughout the experiences of victimization, disclosure, and advocacy/activism involvement and understanding how the roles of victim and advocate have informed your identity. This study will trace the various stages that lead some individuals from victimization to advocacy involvement.

WHAT WILL THIS RESEARCH DO?
This research will draw attention to the way in which some victims of sexual violence go on to become advocates for victims of sexual violence. It is hoped that the findings will be informative about the experiences of victims who disclose their victimization and about the various influences that lead to activism or advocacy involvement. It is also hoped that the findings will allow social service providers and policy-makers to make decisions that best support victims and advocates/activists.
HOW WILL I BE INVOLVED?
Please note, participants must meet all of the following criteria to be included in the study:

- be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
- have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.
- be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.
- be 18 years of age or older.

Over the course of this research, you are asked to participate in a 60-120 minute individual interview with Guila Benchimol, the Student Investigator. We would like to audio-record the interviews so that notes will not be needed during our meeting or that they will be minimal. No one will have access to the recording but the research team named above and a research assistant who will have signed a confidentiality agreement. Recording the interview assists us to accurately keep track of everything we discuss. You will also be contacted after the study is completed so that I can send you a report of findings of the study. I will use the email you provided us with for the study to contact you.

WHERE WILL I BE INTERVIEWED?
Interviews will take place in person or via videoconference (using Skype, Zoom, or Google Hangouts). You will select a date and time to be interviewed.

- If you will participate in an in-person interview we will meet at a convenient location of your choice when we can speak openly but privately. You will be reimbursed for public transit and parking after you sign confirmation that you have received these funds.
- Videoconference interviews will take place at your convenience after you select a date and time to be interviewed from several options that will be sent to you through the email you provided when responding to the study recruitment posting/email.

*Please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for videoconference interviews. We will never share the interview recordings with anyone but we have no control over the Internet or with what you do with the interview recording should you choose to record it.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?
Sexual violence can sometimes be difficult to discuss and you may feel uncomfortable, upset, worried, or embarrassed when talking about these experiences. You will not be asked about the details of the victimization itself and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. You can also withdraw from the study at any point during or after the interview is over and up until the findings are published. Once the findings are published your participation cannot be withdrawn. If you feel upset and would like to speak to someone, please contact one of the following services:

- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network 1-800-656-4673
- The Gatehouse – Child Abuse Investigation and Support Site 416-225-5900
- Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres 604-876-2622
- Rape Crisis (female) 0808 802 9999
- Survivors UK (male) 020 3598 3898
WILL MY PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL?
To be included in the study, participants must have disclosed their experience(s) of victimization to someone other than a mental health professional. However, they do not have to have made their experience of victimization public. Some participants may have disclosed to a person or to a select group of people. Others may have disclosed their experiences of victimization publicly, for example through the media or through a post on social media. Therefore, participants will be given the choice as to whether or not they would like to be publicly identified by name in the study. However, we highly recommend that participants who have not disclosed publicly remain unidentified in the study.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS TO BEING PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED?
As an interview participant you are being asked to share sensitive and personal information and there may be potential social risks if you were to be identified through your personal information or interview responses. People who are not aware of your victimization experience(s) may have various reactions to this revelation, some of which may be difficult or negative. You may also react emotionally after this information about you is published in the study. The way in which you represent your advocacy or activism involvement may impact your ability to continue to be involved in these activities as professionals or volunteers. Therefore, participants in this study have the option to remain unidentified or identified in the study.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE MY PRIVACY THROUGHOUT THE STUDY?
- We will take extra precautions to ensure your privacy including only contacting you through the phone number you prefer, only speaking to you directly over the phone, and not leaving phone messages with others or through voicemail. If there are any additional privacy measures you would like to add, please let us know.

- If you choose to be unidentified, all identifying data collected in the interviews will be kept confidential. All interviews will be recorded and transcribed but your name will be eliminated or changed. Your personal information and responses will be given a unique code so that your name will not be directly attached. A separate master list will have your code and your name will be kept separately in a locked cabinet in a secure location. The final report findings will be written in aggregate form (e.g. group percentages) and participants will be assigned fake names if quotations or examples are used. Other possible identifying information such as a specific race will be generalized (e.g. racial minority). Only the research team will have access to identifying information. Identifiers such as demographic or cultural identifiers will not be included in the final report to make sure that your responses cannot be linked back to you.

- Audio recordings of the interviews will be transferred onto an encrypted and password protected computer within 24 hours and the original recording will be deleted from the encrypted recorder. Audio recordings loaded onto this computer will be deleted after six months to allow time for the interviews to be transcribed. Participant data including consent forms, master list of participants and their codes will be kept for five years after the study has been published after which point this information will be destroyed. The names and contact information of the participants will be kept to follow up with each participant to offer a copy of the results of the study.
• All electronic data will be kept on an encrypted laptop while all physical data will be locked in a secure lockbox or cupboard to which only the research team can access.
• Participants will not be able to review their audio recordings or transcripts.

• **If you choose to be unidentified:** All of the above points apply. Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study.
• You may withdraw from the study at any point during or after the interview and all of your personal and interview information for this study will be destroyed and will not be used in the final report. This option is available up until the point of publication after which, you can no longer withdraw from the study.

**WHAT ARE THE LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE STUDY?**
For your own safety, please do not share information with me that must be reported under the law. As a researcher, I am required by law to report any current or past child abuse where the abuser is still in a position of authority over children that you may discuss during your participation if it has not been reported to police. Also, although it is unlikely, a court may order me to provide them with information you gave during your participation in this study and I must do so under the law. 
**Please do not use names when talking about other people during the interview.**

**DO I HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?**
You do not have to participate in this study. It is your choice whether or not to participate in this study. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time until publication without any consequences. You may exercise your right to have your data removed from the study and I will do so right away. You can also refuse to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable and continue to participate in the study. You are not waiving any legal claims or rights by participating. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that call to do so.

**DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**
Guila Benchimol is a Mi-Li Victim Advocacy group board member. She also consults for Sacred Spaces and for religious educational institutions to develop policies around the prevention and intervention of sexual abuse. This work is not connected to this study, nor will any part of it be included in this study’s data, nor will any of the people involved be recruited to participate. A decision to participate or not participate in this study will have no impact on the services received from these organizations and the work that they do.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board for compliance with federal guidelines for research involving human participants. If you have any questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study (REB #...), please contact: Director, Research Ethics; University of Guelph; reb@uoguelph.ca; 519-824-4120 ext. 56606.

**Signature of Research Participant**
I have read and understood the information provided for the research as described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.
Name of Participant (please print) ___________________________ Signature of Participant ___________________________

OR □ Oral Consent

□ I have □ have not publicly disclosed my experience(s) of sexual victimization.

□ I would NOT like to be publicly identified in the study.

□ I would like to be publicly identified in the study. I understand what this means and the possible risks connected to it that have been explained to me by the student researcher.

Email address to receive the study results: ___________________________

_________________________ Date ___________________________

Guila Benchimol, Student Investigator

_________________________

Shira Kurtz, Research Assistant

CONFIRMATION OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Public Transit reimbursement (Adult $ _____) □ Participant initials or checkmark ______

Street Parking reimbursement $ ________ □ Participant initials or checkmark ______

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CODE: ______________________

Introduction - after Consent Form has been reviewed aloud together

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. As I mentioned in the consent form, I would like to get your perspective on what led you to become involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism, on the impact that the victimization that you experienced had on your life, and on your experiences with disclosing, or telling people about your victimization. I’m interested in your perspective, your point of view, and no one else’s, so please feel free to voice your opinions.

The interview will be divided into three sections: the first part will cover broad questions about the victimization, the second will discuss how you made decisions around disclosures, and the third part will cover your involvement in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. For each section, I will ask you to talk freely about your thoughts, feelings, and actions at the time of your experiences and then I will ask you some follow-up and clarification questions about what you said. I recognize that some of this conversation may be difficult or triggering so if at any point you need to stop or are unable to answer a question we can take a break and/or move on to the next question. Is that okay?

I will be using the terms victim or survivor and advocate or activist throughout the interview.

Which terms do you prefer I use? Victim or Survivor Advocate or Activist or Something else ________________________

Please remember when answering questions to not mention any names of the individuals you are talking about. And please include the ‘who, what, why, when, and where’ as much as you can when answering the questions.

Perhaps we could begin by sharing some background information about yourself.

Demographic questions

- What year were you born? (Age) ____________
-What were the ethnic or cultural origins of your ancestors? An ancestor is usually more distant than a grandparent. For example, Canadian, English, Vietnamese, Jamaican, etc. __________________________________________

-What country do you currently live in? __________________________

-What is your marital status? ______________________________________

-Did you belong to a religious group or community? _____ If so, which one? _____________

-Do you currently belong to a religious group or community? ___ If so, which one? ____________

**Review of Screening Questions and Clarification**

- My gender _____________________

- I have experienced sexual victimization □ once or more than once but by same perpetrator
  □ more than once by different perpetrators

- The perpetrator(s) was/were: □ a stranger □ known to me

- I disclosed the victimization: □ Publicly □ To people I selected to tell □ Both

- The way in which I disclosed was: □ Formal (authorities, media, religious/community leaders)
  □ Informal (private correspondence/conversations) □ Both

- My anti-sexual violence advocacy/activism involvement entails______________________________________________

- I will be unidentified/identified by name in this study. __________________________

**For participants who have experienced victimization by multiple people:**

The interview will ask about what you did or felt after victimization and to whom you disclosed. Since you have experienced victimization at the hands of multiple people I will ask you to discuss your post-victimization thoughts, feelings, and actions in a way that makes the most sense to you.

If you choose to include information about the different episodes of victimization, please be specific when answering the questions about which incidents you are referring to.
Part I. Questions about Primary Victimization

We are going to move on to questions about the victimization that you have experienced. Is that okay?

1. Please share with me what you are comfortable with about your experience or experiences with sexual violence. You do not need to tell me any details about the incident itself. But, please tell me the story about your life at that time and your relationship to the perpetrator and how the victimization came to be.
   
   -Probe: Was anyone else aware that the victimization was taking or had taken place? If so, who was it and what was your relationship to them?
   
   -Probe: Did anyone intervene in any way during the time that the victimization was taking place?
   
   -Probe: How did the victimization come to an end?

2. Please discuss what you did after the victimizing incident or incidents.
   
   -Probe: What made you decide to do that?

3. Would you have referred to yourself as a victim or survivor at that time? Why/why not?
   
   -Probe: What did you feel or think about yourself at the time of the victimization or immediately afterwards?
   
   -Probe: Looking back to that time, what labels or descriptors would you apply to yourself?

4. What role, if any, did religion play in the experience of victimization? What role did it play in the decisions you made after victimization?
   
   -Probe: Were you aware at the time that religion was influencing your decisions?

5. What do the words ‘sexual violence mean to you or how would you characterize sexual violence?

6. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience of victimization?

Part II. Questions about Secondary Victimization

7. Please tell me the story about your process of disclosure or telling people about the fact that you had experienced sexual victimization. Disclosures may have taken the form of private conversations or writings, official disclosures to law enforcement, or any other way that you communicated to someone else that you had experienced victimization.
You said that you disclosed publicly/privately/both and that the way you disclosed was formal/informal/both. Can you tell me more? Include the ‘who, what, why, when, and where’ and give me a timeline of when you disclosed to the various people you have told over time.

-Probe: Regarding the screening questions you answered about disclosures, what does publicly/privately/both mean? What does formal/informal/both mean?
-Probe: How did you decide who to tell? Did anyone encourage you to disclose?
-Probe: How did you decide how to disclose?
-Probe: Why did you disclose in those ways?

8. How long after the victimization did you disclose to anyone? Tell me the timeline of your various disclosures as best you could remember them (include private family or friends, police, clergy, etc).

9. Please discuss and describe whether or not you struggled over the decision to stay silent about the victimization or tell people about it. How did this change over time?

-Probe: Describe how the process of disclosing made you feel about yourself?
-Probe: Please discuss the role of shame or stigma, if any, in your experiences of disclosures. Stigma is defined as “a set of negative and often unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something.”

10. How did victimization affect your relationships with the people in your life? Please discuss how victimization impacted relationships with the people that you did and did not disclose to.

-Probe: How did the people you disclosed to react?
-Probe: What advice, if any, did the people you disclosed to offer about victimization, disclosures, or what you should do next?
-Probe: What strategies, if any, did you use to manage your relationships with people who became aware of the victimization, whether their knowledge came from you or someone else?
-Probe: Please discuss if the experience of being ‘outed’ as a victim or survivor applies to you. Describe any such incidents.

-Probe: In what ways would you say that your disclosure harmed you and in what ways did it help you?
11. What did the identity of victim or survivor mean to you throughout the disclosure process?
   - Probe: Did your feelings about yourself change as people were told or found out that you had been victimized? How so?
   - Probe: What labels did you apply to yourself then and what labels (i.e. victim or survivor or anything else) did others apply to you as you disclosed? Please discuss positive and negative labels.

12. Overall, what were the consequences or ramifications of disclosing? Please discuss both positive and negative outcomes of your disclosures.
   - Probe: Please describe and explain whether or not you found or created any sort of peer-support community for yourself after the victimization or throughout the disclosure process?

13. In your opinion, what role do private disclosures serve and what role do public disclosures serve? Is there a difference?

14. What role, if any, did religion play in the decisions you made regarding disclosures?
   - Probe: Did anyone use religion as a way to influence your decisions about disclosures?

15. Is there anything else you would like to share about the experiences of disclosing the victimization experience(s)?

Part III. Questions about Tertiary Victimization

16. Describe the ways in which you are or have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. How do you advocate currently?

17. Please tell me the story about how you came to be involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. Feel free to include experiences, changes in attitude, or relationships with others or yourself that led to this involvement.
   - Probe: How, if at all, has your involvement in advocacy or activism been influenced by your experiences of victimization and/or disclosures?

18. Did you receive any professional training to be an advocate either in school or on the job?
   - Probe: Do you think anti-sexual violence advocacy should be professionalized or require special training? Why or why not?
   - Probe: Is advocacy your main career or is it in addition to another job that you have?
19. In what ways does the advocacy or activism work you do challenge what people
generally think of when they think about sexual violence or victimization, or other ideas
related to sexual violence issues?

20. Please discuss how you think about or identify yourself now, giving special consideration
to the identities of victim, survivor, activist, and advocate and any other terms or labels
that you prefer to use. Please indicate whether or not your self-identity changed before or
after becoming involved in advocacy/activism.
   -Probe: Discuss any tensions involved in being both a victim/survivor and an
   advocate/activist. Do you identify more with one aspect over the other
   (victim/survivor versus advocate/activist; insider/outsider)?
   -Probe: How do you think that the people who know about your victimization
   view your activism/advocacy involvement?
   -Probe: In what ways would you say that your advocacy/activism involvement
   harms you and it what ways does it help you?

21. Please complete this sentence: The main thing that led me to become involved in anti-
sexual violence advocacy or activism was _________________________________.

22. Please complete this sentence: The first time I thought of myself as an advocate or
activist was ____________________________________________________________.

23. How do you define anti-sexual violence advocacy or what do you think it is?
   -Probe: What type of work do you consider anti-sexual violence advocacy? What
does the role look like?
   -Probe: Is there a specific area in anti-sexual violence that your advocacy focuses
   on and why?

24. What qualities do you think an effective advocate must have?
   -Probe: Do you think one needs to be a victim/survivor in order to be a good
   advocate? Why/why not?
   -Probe: Do you think that people who experienced victimization and then become
   advocates should be public about their past experiences? Why/why not?
   -Probe: Have you had positive or negative experiences with other victim/survivor
   advocates? Explain

25. What role, if any, did religion play in your advocacy/activist involvement?

300
26. Please discuss moments where you felt powerful throughout the experiences we have discussed today. Please discuss moments where you felt powerless throughout the experiences we have discussed today.

27. What would you like people to know about the experiences and/or needs of people who have experienced sexual victimization?
   
   Probe: What advice would you give to victims/survivors knowing what you know now?
   
   Probe: What advice would you give to advocates?

28. How did you hear about the study? Why did you want to participate?

29. Is there anything else you would like to share about your advocacy/activism involvement?

Thank you very much for agreeing to participate in this study. I really appreciate your time and the thoughtful way in which you answered the questions. You have been very helpful.

Any questions?
Hi ______________,
I hope this email finds you well.

As you know, I am a doctoral student researcher at the University of Guelph. I am conducting a study examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse and sexual assault, become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

I am currently trying to recruit a number of people (all genders) to take part in a pilot interview. Specifically, I am hoping to interview individuals who have experienced sexual violence and later became involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism. I am interested in hearing from people with these experiences from the general population as well as those from religious communities or groups.

The purpose of these interviews is to pilot or test run the interview questions for the study and have you assist in brainstorming, creating, and modifying possible interview questions. Therefore, your responses will not be included in the final study.

To be included in the pilot study participants must meet all of the following criteria:
- be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).
- have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.
- be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism in a professional or volunteer capacity. Participants must use their voice in some way to speak out against sexual violence (i.e. speaking, writing, performing, educating, etc.).
- be 18 years of age or older.

Participants in the pilot study will be asked to participate in a 1-2 hour interview. Depending on participants’ location, interviews will be conducted in person, via Skype, or on the telephone. Participants who take part in face-to-face interviews will be reimbursed for their use of public transit or parking. You will be asked to only discuss information that you are comfortable sharing. Your participation in this study and your consent to participate in the study must be free and voluntary.

Please review the attached study poster, information sheet, and consent form. If you are interested in participating in a pilot interview anywhere from January 29 – February 12, 2017 please contact me at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca and fill in the following information below and I will contact you.

Name __________________________________
Preferred phone number ____________________    Best time to call ____________ □a.m. □p.m.
You should also feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about the study.
Thank you in advance for helping me pilot this study,
Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
gbenchim@uoguelph.ca
Victims Are Doing It for Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate

REB# 16NV010

WHO WILL BE DOING THIS RESEARCH?
You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Guila Benchimol, a doctoral student in the Sociology & Anthropology Department at the University of Guelph. I am conducting this study as a requirement in completing my doctoral degree and it may be published in the future.
If at any time you have questions or concerns about this research, please feel free to contact: Guila Benchimol (Student Investigator) at ourvoice@uoguelph.ca or 416-731-8160 or Dr. Myrna Dawson (Faculty Supervisor) at 519-824-4120.

WHAT IS THIS STUDY ABOUT?
I am pleased to invite you to participate in a pilot interview for a research study which explores the experiences that lead some victims of sexual violence to become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists. The purpose of the study is to learn about the impact that victimization, and the experiences after victimization, had on participants’ lives and to gain insight into how they became an advocate or activist. We aim to identify some of the thoughts, feelings, and actions participants engaged in following experiences of victimization and disclosures and how these have influenced their decisions to become involved in advocacy/activism. We are also interested in how participants have navigated their relationships throughout the experiences of victimization, disclosure, and advocacy/activism involvement and understanding how the roles of victim and advocate have informed their identity. This study will trace the various stages that lead some individuals from victimization to advocacy involvement.

WHAT WILL THIS RESEARCH DO?
This research will draw attention to the way in which some victims of sexual violence go on to become advocates for victims of sexual violence. It is hoped that the findings will be informative about the experiences of victims who disclose their victimization and about the various influences that lead to activism or advocacy involvement. It is also hoped that the findings will allow social service providers and policy-makers to make decisions that best support victims and advocates/activists.

HOW WILL I BE INVOLVED?
Please note, the pilot participants must meet all of the following criteria to be included in the pilot study:
be a survivor or victim of sexual violence (including child sexual abuse or sexual assault).

☐ have disclosed their victimization to someone(s) other than a mental health professional.

☐ be/have been involved in anti-sexual violence advocacy or activism.

☐ be 18 years of age or older.

Over the course of this research, you are asked to participate in a 60-120 minute individual interview with Guila Benchimol, the Student Investigator. Your role is to test the interview questions and provide feedback. Your participation and responses will only be used to help create interview questions using wording that is easy to understand and to test run the interview questions to help with flow. This includes brainstorming, creating, and modifying possible interview questions. Your responses to the pilot testing of the interview questions will not be recorded and will not be used in the final report.

Your consent is needed to participate in the pilot phase of this study. Because you are being asked to be part of the pilot phase, we will not be collecting any personal information from you for the final project.

Once the study is completed the study findings will be emailed to you using the email you provide below.

WHERE WILL I BE INTERVIEWED?

Interviews will take place in person or via videoconference (using Skype, Zoom, or Google Hangouts). You will select a date and time to be interviewed.

- If you will participate in an in-person interview we will meet at a convenient location of your choice when we can speak openly but privately. You will be reimbursed for public transit and parking after you sign confirmation that you have received these funds.

- Videoconference interviews will take place at your convenience after you select a date and time to be interviewed from several options that will be sent to you through the email you provided when responding to the study recruitment posting/email.

*Please note that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed for videoconference interviews. While we will not be recording the interviews by video or audio, we have no control over the Internet or with what you do with the interview should you choose to record it.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY?

Sexual violence can sometimes be difficult to discuss and you may feel uncomfortable, upset, worried, or embarrassed when talking about these experiences. You will not be asked about the details of the victimization itself and you do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable answering. You can also withdraw from the pilot study at any point during the interview up to and including the end of the interview. If you withdraw, anything you shared will be kept confidential and will not be used in the study. If you feel upset and would like to speak to someone, please contact one of the following services:

- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network 1-800-656-4673
- The Gatehouse – Child Abuse Investigation and Support Site 416-225-5900
- Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres 604-876-2622
- Rape Crisis (female) 0808 802 9999
- Survivors UK (male) 020 3598 3898
As an interview participant you are being asked to share sensitive and personal information and there may be potential social risks if you were to be identified through your personal information or interview responses. Your participation will be limited to the pilot phase and your responses will not be used in the final report. However, there are possible social risks if your pilot test answers were to be identifiable since you may be sharing personal information when engaging in the pilot testing of questions. To minimize these risks, you will be assigned a unique code and your name will only appear on a master list that will be securely stored at a research centre together with this consent form at the University of Guelph. Only the research team will have access to this list which we will keep so that we can provide you with the study findings in the future. Furthermore, your responses will only be used to review and improve the flow of the interview questions. These responses to the flow and clarity of the questions will be kept on a password protected and encrypted laptop. Once the interview question guide is finalized, your responses to the interview and probing questions will be destroyed.

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE MY PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY THROUGHOUT THE STUDY?

- Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study.
- We will take extra precautions to ensure your privacy including only contacting you through the phone number you prefer, only speaking to you directly over the phone, and not leaving phone messages with others or through voicemail. If there are any additional privacy measures you would like to add, please let us know.
- All identifying information collected within the interviews will be kept confidential. All electronic data will be kept on an encrypted laptop while all physical data will be locked in a secure lockbox or cupboard to which only the research team can access.
- Each participant will be assigned a unique code. A separate master list with the participant’s name will be kept in a secure location which only the research team will have access to. The names and contact information of the participants will be kept to follow up with each participant to offer a copy of the results of the study.
- Since you are being asked to participate in the construction and pilot testing of the interview questions your answers will only be used to modify questions and ensure the interview questions flow and will not be published in the final report. Therefore, you may withdraw from the study at any point during the pilot interview, up to and including the end of the interview. Since pilot interviews will not be recorded, pilot participants will not be able to review their pilot interviews.
- Pilot participant data including consent forms, master list of participants and their codes will be kept for five years after the study has been published after which point this information will be destroyed.
- Your name will not be identified in the study materials or documents, other than the original pilot study master recruitment list, on this consent form, and in our emails to each other about the study. Emails will be deleted as soon as the pilot interviews are completed. Interview responses will be deleted once the interview guide is finalized. Consent forms and master lists will be destroyed after a period of five years after the study has been published. Only the research team will have access to identifying information. Identifiers such as demographic or cultural identifiers will not be included in the final report to make sure that your responses cannot be linked back to you since, as indicated above, your responses are solely being used to create and modify interview questions and to test for the flow and therefore will not be part of the final results.
WHAT ARE THE LIMITS TO CONFIDENTIALITY IN THE STUDY?
For your own safety, please do not share information with me that must be reported under the law. As a researcher, I am required by law to report current child abuse, or past child abuse where the abuser is still in a position of authority over children that you may discuss during your participation if it has not been reported to police. Also, although it is unlikely, a court may order me to provide them with information you gave during your participation in this study and I must do so under the law. Please do not use names when talking about other people during the interview.

DO I HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?
You do not have to participate in this study. It is your choice whether or not to participate in this study. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time during the pilot interview, up to and including the end of the interview, without any consequences. You may exercise your right to have your data removed from the study and I will do so right away. You can also refuse to answer any questions that make you feel uncomfortable and continue to participate in the study. You are not waiving any legal claims or rights by participating. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise that call to do so.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Guila Benchimol is a Mi-Li Victim Advocacy group board member. She also consults for Sacred Spaces and for religious educational institutions to develop policies around the prevention and intervention of sexual abuse. This work is not connected to this study, nor will any part of it be included in this study’s data, nor will any of the people involved be recruited to participate. A decision to participate or not participate in this study will have no impact on the services received from these organizations and the work that they do.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board for compliance with federal guidelines for research involving human participants. If you have any questions regarding your rights and welfare as a research participant in this study (REB #16NV010), please contact: Director, Research Ethics; University of Guelph; reb@uoguelph.ca; 519-824-4120 ext. 56606

If you have any questions about the information we discussed please feel free to ask me now. If not, please confirm that you have read the information provided for the study “Examining the move from victim to advocate.” Your questions have been answered to your satisfaction, you are giving free and informed consent to participate in the pilot phase of this study and you have been given a copy of this form.

Signature of Research Participant

______________________________ OR □ Oral Consent
Name of Participant (please print)   Signature of Participant

Email for Study Findings: ______________________________________

________________________________________ Date ____________________
Guila Benchimol, Student Investigator
CONFIRMATION OF REIMBURSEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION
Public Transit reimbursement (Adult $_____ ) □ Participant initials or checkmark ______
Street Parking reimbursement $_________ □ Participant initials or checkmark ______
Pilot Interview Probing Questions

- We have just completed the pilot interview. Now I would like your feedback in terms of the clarity and flow of the questions from the pilot interview:

- Which questions were hard to understand, if any?
  - Probe: In other words, were any of the questions unclear or confusing?
  - Probe: In your opinion, were there any words that you felt could be changed to understand the questions more easily?

- Were there any areas where you felt more sensitive language was needed?

- Please point out any areas where you feel the interview did not flow well.

- Were there any questions that you felt would be better suited somewhere else in the interview? If so, where would you place these questions?

- Were there any questions that you felt should be removed from the interview? If so, please explain why.

- Are there any questions that you think may be helpful to add into the interview? If so, please feel free to share your suggestions with me.

- Thank you for participating in the pilot interview. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me using the information on the consent form.
(Appendix M)

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND APPLIED HUMAN SCIENCES
Department of Sociology and Anthropology

RESEARCH ASSISTANT CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Study Title: Victims Are Doing it for Themselves: Examining the Move from Sexual Victimization to Anti-Sexual Violence Advocacy/Activism.

Primary Investigator: Dr. Myrna Dawson

Student Investigator: Guila Benchimol

Research Assistant:

REB# 16NV010

I ______________, the Research Assistant, understand that I will have access to data for transcription, data entry and management purposes that is strictly confidential. I will be hearing tapes of confidential interviews. The participants who participated in this research project have revealed the information in good faith that the information would remain strictly confidential.

By signing this statement, I am indicating my understanding of my responsibilities to maintain confidentiality and agree to the following:

1. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the researcher(s).

2. Keep all research information in any form or format secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
   • keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews on specified lab computers and files;
   • closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer;
   • keeping all printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet;
   • permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data

3. Return all research information in any form or format to the researcher when I have completed the research tasks.

4. After consulting with the researcher, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the researcher (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).
5. I agree not to divulge, publish, or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons or to the public any information obtained in the course of this research project that could identify the persons who participated in the study.

6. I understand that all information about study sites or participants obtained or accessed by me in the course of my work is confidential. I agree not to divulge or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons any of this information, unless specifically authorized to do so by approved protocol or by the local principal investigator acting in response to applicable law or court order, or public health or clinical need.

7. I understand that I am not to read information about study sites or participants, or any other confidential documents, nor ask questions of study participants for my own personal information but only to the extent and for the purpose of performing my assigned duties on this research project.

8. I agree to notify the local principal investigator immediately should I become aware of an actual breach of confidentiality or a situation which could potentially result in a breach, whether this be on my part or on the part of another person.

Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

___________________________  ____________________________  ________________
Shira Kurtz, Research Assistant       Signature            Date

___________________________  ____________________________  ________________
Student Investigator                   Signature            Date
Study Title: Victims Are Doing it for Themselves: Examining the Move from Sexual Victimization to Anti-Sexual Violence Advocacy/Activism.
Primary Investigator: Dr. Myrna Dawson
Student Investigator: Guila Benchimol
Research Assistant:

REB# 16NV010

I ______________, the Research Assistant, understand that I will have access to data for transcription, data entry and management purposes that is strictly confidential. I will be hearing tapes of confidential interviews. The participants who participated in this research project have revealed the information in good faith that the information would remain strictly confidential.

By signing this statement, I am indicating my understanding of my responsibilities to maintain confidentiality and agree to the following:

9. Keep all the research information shared with me confidential by not discussing or sharing the research information in any form or format (e.g., disks, tapes, transcripts) with anyone other than the researcher(s).

10. Keep all research information in any form or format secure while it is in my possession. This includes:
   - keeping all transcript documents and digitized interviews on specified lab computers and files;
   - closing any transcription programs and documents when temporarily away from the computer;
   - keeping all printed transcripts in a secure location such as a locked file cabinet;
   - permanently deleting any e-mail communication containing the data

11. Return all research information in any form or format to the researcher when I have completed the research tasks.

12. After consulting with the researcher, erase or destroy all research information in any form or format regarding this research project that is not returnable to the researcher (e.g., information stored on computer hard drive).
13. I agree not to divulge, publish, or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons or to the public any information obtained in the course of this research project that could identify the persons who participated in the study.

14. I understand that all information about study sites or participants obtained or accessed by me in the course of my work is confidential. I agree not to divulge or otherwise make known to unauthorized persons any of this information, unless specifically authorized to do so by approved protocol or by the local principal investigator acting in response to applicable law or court order, or public health or clinical need.

15. I understand that I am not to read information about study sites or participants, or any other confidential documents, nor ask questions of study participants for my own personal information but only to the extent and for the purpose of performing my assigned duties on this research project.

16. I agree to notify the local principal investigator immediately should I become aware of an actual breach of confidentiality or a situation which could potentially result in a breach, whether this be on my part or on the part of another person.

Any violation of this agreement would constitute a serious breach of ethical standards, and I pledge not to do so.

___________________________  __________________________ ______________
Beverley DiSalvia, Research Assistant    Signature    Date

___________________________  __________________________ ______________
Student Investigator         Signature    Date
EMAIL TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY

REB# 16NV010

Dear ______________.

Thank you for expressing your desire to participate in the study I am conducting examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

This email is to inform you that you have been selected to participate in the study and to express appreciation at your willingness to do so.

If you would still like to be interviewed, the next step is to schedule an initial phone call so that I can introduce myself and set a date and time for the interview. This phone call should take approximately 5-10 minutes. It is also an opportunity for you to ask me any questions that you may have.

During the interview, you will be asked to only discuss information that you are comfortable sharing. Your participation in this study and your consent to participate must be free and voluntary. I have attached the information letter to this email so that you can review the details of the study and interview.

If you choose to participate, please reply to this email by **February 19, 2017** letting me know when I can call you. Following our conversation, I will email you the consent form so that you have a chance to review it before the interview. I will also go over it with you before we begin the interview.

Preferred phone number ______________

Best time to call (& time zone) ____________ □ a.m. □ p.m.

Thank you again for helping me conduct this study,
Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
ourvoice@uoguelph.ca
EMAIL TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN SELECTED TO PARTICPATE IN THE STUDY

REB# 16NV010

Dear ______________.

Thank you for replying to my email and expressing your desire to participate in the study examining how some victims or survivors of sexual violence become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists.

This email is to let you know that you have not been selected to participate in the study. While I greatly appreciate your willingness to participate in the study and share your experiences, due to the overwhelming responses to participate that I have received I am unable to include everyone.

To ensure your privacy and confidentiality, I will delete the information you sent me when you replied to the recruitment email and answered the screening questions.

Thank you again and I wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Guila Benchimol
Doctoral Candidate – Sociological Criminology
University of Guelph
ourvoice@uoguelph.ca
gbenchim@uoguelph.com
University of Guelph
Research Ethics Board (REB)
Application to Involve Human Participants in Research (REBApp)

**DIRECTIONS**

Email the completed form with all accompanying documentation (*each document should be submitted as an individual file* – do not merge documents into one long file) to reb@uoguelph.ca

You will find, as you proceed through this form, that some questions do not seem to apply to your research. Please be aware that there is a wide range of disciplines which use this form to apply for ethics clearance. If something does not apply – please feel free to choose the n/a option, or explain in a text box.


The questions asked in the REB-App are drawn from the TCPS2. There is an online tutorial – [the CORE tutorial](#) - discussing the TCPS2 which anyone can take. Create a new account using your University email address so completion can be tracked by the ethics office. This tutorial is highly recommended.

**Filling out your REB-App:**

As you fill out the REB-App you will see this symbol:  
It means that there is an information entry in the table below that corresponds to that question.
Find the entry using the section letter and question number.
The notes provide further information about the question, and the Tri-Council Policy Statement quotation (*in italics*) will provide a reference to the section of the TCPS2 which generated the question.

This form is ‘unlocked’ to allow the ‘cut and paste’ function and the ‘track changes’ function to be used. You can use Ctrl F to navigate the form.
### SECTION A: ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

A.1 Title of the research project: Victims Are Doing It For Themselves: Examining the Move from Victim to Advocate

A.2 Investigator Information

Note that in the case of student research, the Principal Investigator is the faculty advisor for the purposes of this submission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name &amp; position</th>
<th>Principal Investigator</th>
<th>Faculty Co-Investigator</th>
<th>Student Investigator</th>
<th>Other Investigator</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
<th>Receives Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Myrna Dawson</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sociology and Anthropology</td>
<td>519-824-4120, x53523</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdawson@uoguelph.ca">mdawson@uoguelph.ca</a></td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guila Benchimol</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>☑</td>
<td>Sociology and Anthropology</td>
<td>416-731-8160</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gbenchim@uoguelph.ca">gbenchim@uoguelph.ca</a></td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>☑ Yes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>☑</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Provide name of person who completed this form: Guila Benchimol

A.3 Are there any issues or concerns regarding the timeline for approval that you would like to raise?
☑ N/A

A.4 Research Ethics Approval (other than University of Guelph)

A.4.1 Will any other Research Ethics Board be asked for approval? ☐ Yes ☑ No

If YES, please specify:

Copy of the clearance certificate or approval will be provided to the REB when available

Yes

☑ Attached
A.4.2 If you are undertaking research in a country other than Canada, submit a copy of the clearance certificate/approval from the Research Ethics Board in that country.

Attached

OR discuss what alternative measures are being taken (see information guide):

A.5 Level of the Project: please check all that apply

- Faculty Research
- PhD Thesis
- Master’s Thesis
- Masters Major Research Paper
- M.Sc by Coursework
- Undergraduate
- Honours Thesis
- Class Project Specify course:
- Internship
- Practicum
- Independent Study
- Administration
- Contract – for profit sponsor
- Other – please specify:

A.6 Funding of Project

A.6.1 Has funding been granted for this project?  Yes  No  Pending

A.6.2 Agency or Sponsor
### A.6.3 Contract

- **Question:** Will there be an agreement with a research partner/funder (i.e. data sharing agreements, research funding agreements, confidentiality agreements etc.)?

  - **Answer:** N/A

  - **Comments:**

### A.7 Peer Review

- **Question 1:** Has this project undergone peer review for scholarly merit during the course of funding approval?

  - **Answer:** No

- **Question 2:** Has this project undergone peer review for scholarly merit by a graduate advisory committee?

  - **Answer:** No
A.7.3 Comments: Dr. Myrna Dawson has reviewed a first draft of the proposal. Once I make the changes she has suggested, I will be submitting the next draft to the full committee.

A.8 Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

A.8.1: Will the researcher(s), members of the research team, and/or their partners or immediate family members receive any personal benefits. This might include a financial benefit such as remuneration/income, intellectual property rights, rights of employment, consultancies, board membership, share ownership, stock options etc.  ☐ Yes  ☑ No

If YES, please describe the benefits below. Include details of all fees and/or honoraria directly related to this study, such as those for participant recruitment, advice on study design, presentation of results, or conference expenses.

☐ N/A

A.8.2 Describe any restrictions regarding access to or disclosure of information (during or at the end of the study) placed on the investigator(s), including those related to the publication of results. Note the nature of these restrictions and who is applying these restrictions.

☐ N/A

A.8.3 Describe the possibility of commercialization of the research findings.

☐ N/A

A.8.4 Describe any personal or professional relationship between a member of the research team and any participants aside from the researcher/participant relationship.

☐ N/A

Because I sit on the board of two victim advocacy organizations, Mi Li and Sacred Spaces, and because I have been involved in publicly speaking about sexual violence in Canada and the United States, it is possible that I may have crossed paths with some of the participants. As a member of the Orthodox Jewish community, it is also possible that I may be familiar with participants since I will be recruiting participants.
from religious communities. To mitigate these issues, during the recruitment phase I will not select individuals with whom I have a previous relationship.

A.8.5 Disclose any employment that research team members have outside the University of Guelph, if it is related in any way to the study (e.g. as the source of research participants.)

- N/A

I currently work as a consultant to a religious educational institution in Toronto to develop policies around the prevention and intervention of child sexual abuse. However, that work is not connected to this study, nor will any part of it be included in this study’s data, nor will any of the people involved be recruited to participate.

A.8.6 Describe any consultancy or other contractual agreements, financial, partnership, or business interests within the last two years that might be perceived as a conflict of interest pertaining to this study.

- N/A

In the last two years the student investigator has spoken in Toronto, Chicago, Vermont, and Florida about sexual violence and have published several articles. It is therefore possible that, when recruiting participants for this study, they may be familiar with her work. However, other than being about sexual violence these lectures and articles are not related to this study in that they did not introduce, detail, or recruit for this study.

A.9 Experience and Licensed Qualifications

A.9.1 What experience does the principal investigator have with the kind of research undertaken in this project and in this context, including the nature of the participants, methods of data collection, etc.?

- The Principal Investigator has conducted sensitive research on violence for the past two decades. This has included interviews with victims of violent crime and with those who work within the systems that respond to these victims with a particular emphasis on victims of intimate partner and domestic violence. Narrative semi-structured interviews with victims/advocates is the primary method to be used in this research. In addition to the Principal Investigator’s experience, this is the second qualitative study that the student investigator will conduct where she will be collecting
primary data. She has also worked under Dr. Dawson’s direction as her research assistant since 2012 on both quantitative and qualitative projects and has been trained in conducting interviews and interview techniques through qualitative research methods courses. She is also a Senior Research Assistant for the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence and have worked on various research projects including data collection.

**A.9.2 What is the role of each member of the research team?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact with Identified Data</th>
<th>Direct Participant Contact</th>
<th>CORE Tutorial Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guila Benchimol</td>
<td>As the Student Investigator I will be responsible for recruitment, participant selection, and conducting interviews.</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Myrna Dawson</td>
<td>Principal Investigator</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Research Assistant</td>
<td>Transcribing interviews and editing documents</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Assistant</td>
<td>Transcribing interviews</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
<td>☑ Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**A.9.3 How will the faculty with principal responsibility ensure that each team member has the expertise and experience necessary to carry out the research? How will s/he ensure that all team members are familiar with the contents of the ethics protocol? Discuss for each team member.**

1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Review confidentiality requirements</th>
<th>Review recruitment process</th>
<th>Review consent process</th>
<th>Direct oversight of procedure/process</th>
<th>Review of debrief post deception</th>
<th>Completion of graduate level method's course</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Details:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Myrna Dawson</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Dr. Dawson has reviewed my dissertation proposal and has advised me along the way as to any ethical considerations that I must make. She will not be involved in the recruitment of participants or data collection though I will check in with her throughout the duration of this study for advice and guidance. She will be in close contact with the student investigator to ensure the oversight of processes and procedures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guila Benchimol</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>In addition to having the appropriate training to do this research from research assistantships and research methods courses I have also successfully completed the TCPS Ethics tutorial. I will ensure that the research design is in line with the ethics requirements. Since there is no deception involved in this study, a debrief review is not necessary. I will also make sure to review the ethical considerations and responsibilities with anyone involved in the study.</td>
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<td>Name</td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>Aboriginality</td>
<td>Disability</td>
<td>Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shira Kurtz, Primary Research Assistant</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beverly DiSalvia Research Assistant</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The research assistant is someone who has worked with me on other academic projects in the past. She is an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto and also works as a medical transcriptionist for St. Michael’s Hospital. Due to the sensitive nature of her work she is already very familiar with ethical considerations. Even so, she will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement regarding her work with the data and participant information which I will extensively review with her.

Beverly DiSalvia Research Assistant

The research assistant is someone who has worked on other academic projects for graduate students regarding victims of violence. She is the Court Watch coordinator for Women at the Centre. Due to the sensitive nature of her work she is already very familiar with ethical considerations. Even so, she will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement regarding her work with the data and participant information which I will extensively review with her.

If more space is required, please add information here:

A.9.4 Does any specific procedure require professional expertise/recognized qualifications (e.g. performance of a controlled act)?

☐ Yes  ☒ No
If **YES**, describe, and specify which team members have this expertise:
SECTION B: SUMMARY

Provide a summary below, of the research to be undertaken. Please do not attach copies of detailed proposals submitted to a funding agency or sponsoring agency protocols; these will not be reviewed.

B.1 Describe the purpose and background rationale for the proposed project, as well as any hypotheses and/or research question to be examined.

In 2016, stories of sexual violence have been highlighted in the media, popular culture, politics, and more. Many of the stories have been fuelled by the voices of victims. While victims who go on to become advocates are not a new phenomenon, the process and experiences involved in the move to advocacy has yet to be studied.

Therefore, purpose of this research is to understand how some victims of sexual violence, including child sexual abuse and sexual assault, become advocates for victims of sexual violence. It will be guided by the research question: How do some victims of sexual violence later become anti-sexual violence advocates or activists?

The study will identify and describe the parallels between primary, secondary, and tertiary deviance and primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization through analyzing participant narratives about their experiences of victimization and their move to advocacy involvement. The study will also further develop the theory of tertiary deviance and tertiary victimization.

B.2 Describe in clear and concise detail and sequentially each of the procedures in which the research participants will be involved. Use flow charts, diagrams, and/or point form.

Procedure 1 – Recruitment - Potential participants who have been public about their victimization and advocacy experiences will be contacted directly by the student investigator. The student investigator will also contact professional anti-sexual violence activists and advocates and others in this field to ask them to share her study with people who they think may be interested in participating. Contact will be made through email (Appendix D and F) and will include a poster about the study (Appendix B) and an information letter (Appendix C). This recruitment poster including the study details and information letter will also be posted on the student investigator’s social media accounts such as Facebook and Twitter with a short post about the study (Appendix E). Potential participants will be invited to contact the student investigator by email if they meet the sample inclusion criteria and would like to be interviewed for the study.

While recruiting, the student investigator will also contact three anti-sexual violence advocates that she knows from her professional work in anti-sexual violence advocacy by email to invite them to participate in a pilot study (Appendix J). These
individuals fit the sample inclusion criteria and have publicly disclosed that they have experienced sexual victimization. The email will include the study poster and information letter. It will inform them about the purpose of the study and ask them to select a time if they would like to participate in a 1-2 hour pilot interview via telephone or webcam so that the interview questions to be used in the study can be tested. Participants will be provided with consent forms (Appendix K) which we will review prior to testing any of the interview questions. Pilot study participants will also be informed that their responses will not be included in the study since their role is to test the study questions.

Procedure 2 – When potential participants email the student investigator saying that they would like to participate in the study they will receive a reply email from the student investigator (Appendix F). This email will outline the details about participating in the study and ask people who want to continue with the participation process to reply that they want to participate and answer the three screening questions that are in the email. They will not be asked for their names or numbers. It also explains that only those who are selected as participants will be contacted by the student investigator to schedule an interview. All emails and information from the people who reply to this email and answer the screening questions but are not chosen as final participants will be deleted.

The screening questions (Appendix F) ask about participants’ gender, whether they experienced victimization by one or multiple perpetrators, whether the perpetrator was a stranger or known to them, whether they disclosed publicly or privately, whether they disclosed formally or informally, and a description of their advocacy involvement. The answers to these questions will help me select a cross-section of participants and ensure that a multitude of experiences are captured in this study.

People who reply to the recruitment and are not selected will receive an email letting them know that they have not been selected to participate (Appendix P). Those who have been selected will receive an email to set up an interview date and time which will ask for their name and phone number if they still want to participate (Appendix O).

The final list of 10-12 participants will be contacted by phone by the student investigator to discuss the study, explain the interview, confirm that they want to participate, and set up a time for the interview. The verbal script for this call is in Appendix G. After the phone call, the student investigator will email the consent forms (Appendix H) to participants.

Procedure 3 – Depending on participants’ location, the interviews will be conducted in person, on the phone, or via Skype. The student investigator will explain the limits to confidentiality when using videoconference to the participants who are interviewed on Skype and it is also explained in the consent form. All participants will provide consent before the interview begins after being presented with, reading together, and
signing the consent form. Participants who live out of town will sign and scan or fax the consent form. Interviews will be recorded using audio recording.

Procedure 4 – Once the interview is complete, participants will not be called upon again. However, the findings of the study will be shared with participants. Participants will provide their email address on their consent forms and once the study is complete, the findings will be sent to participants through email.

B.3 Indicate the location(s) where the research will be conducted (check all that apply):

- University of Guelph
- South Western Ontario
- Ontario
- Canada
- State Country: United States
- Participant’s home
- Participant’s place of business or workplace
- School
- University or College
- Health Institution
- Correctional Institution
- Senior’s Institution
- Other – please describe: As I am not yet sure who will be participating in this study or where they will be from I cannot determine where interviews will take place. However, I will ensure that interviews take place in a location that is comfortable for and accessible to study participants. Since I will be travelling to the United States for conferences, I am hoping to be able to interview participants in the US as well.

B.4 List and submit all documents used for data collection:

- Published scale/survey
- Researcher generated survey
- Focus group probing questions
- Screening questionnaire – these are included in recruitment emails and social media posts so that only those that fit the sample inclusion criteria contact me about participating (Appendix F).
- Interview questions (Appendix I)
- Health questionnaire
- Other – please describe: Confidentiality agreements for the research assistants (Appendix M and Appendix N); Pilot study information (email, consent, questions) (Appendix J, K, L). Email to selected participants (Appendix O)
Submit each applicable document as an individual attachment with your application—do not merge the documents into one long file.

B.5 If you are using a survey or questionnaire, please indicate if this survey or questionnaire is a published scale or has been created by the research team.

All attached documents have been created by the research team.
SECTION C: METHOD

Answer each question below for each of the procedures/methods discussed in Part B.

C.1 Time required of participants

N/A

For each type of interaction listed in B.2, describe the time required of participants. Also state the total time required over all interactions:

The total time each participant will be interviewed is approximately 1-2 hours. Since 10-12 participants will be interviewed, the total time required over all interactions is approximately 10-24 hours.

The three pilot study participants will require 3-6 hours of time altogether for the pilot interviews (1-2 hours each).

C.1.1 Do you plan to re-contact participants for any purpose? If YES, this must be discussed here and in the consent form.

Participants will be re-contacted via email to facilitate providing them with the study findings.

C.2 Language

In what language(s) will the research be conducted?

☑ English

☐ French

☐ Other

☐ N/A

C.2.1 Is the participant sufficiently fluent in this language to understand the consent process? ☑ Yes ☐ No

C.2.2 Is interpretation available? ☐ Yes ☑ No

C.2.2.1 How will interpreter(s) be recruited? From what organization? From what region and cultural background?

N/A
C.2.2.2 Discuss the possible relationship between the interpreter(s) and the participants.

N/A

C.2.2.3 Sample of Confidentiality Agreement or script for interpreter is:

☑ attached (submit as an individual attachment with your application)

☑ pending – will be provided to the REB.

C.2.2.4 Project documents (such as consent forms, information letters, surveys) should, where possible, should be made available to participants in translation. Will this occur for this project?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If NO, explain:

I will not be interviewing people who do not speak or understand English.

C.2.3 Discuss any issues there may be with literacy in your participant population, and how you intend to address literacy issues

☐ N/A

I do not anticipate literacy issues with participants. However, interviews will be conducted orally and the student investigator will review the Consent to Participate form by verbally reading its contents to each participant along with providing them with a written copy of the form. After reading the consent form to the participant, the interviewer will ask if they understand it and if they have any questions regarding its content.

C.3 Participants

C.3.1 Estimate the number of participants you will be recruiting

10-12

C.3.2 Estimate the size of the pool from which you are drawing participants, if possible

This study is a first foray into this issue so I am not sure about the size of the pool from which I am drawing participants. Furthermore, since sexual violence is often not reported or underreported it is difficult to accurately assess the size of this pool.

C.3.3 Will you be recruiting either males only or females only?

☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A

If YES, please state the rationale:
C.3.4 What is the age range of the participants you will be recruiting?  
N/A

Lower Age Limit: 18

Upper Age Limit:

Justify both the upper and lower limit. Children and the elderly should not automatically be excluded from research based solely upon their age.

In order for the interviews to help effectively answer the research question, participants must have had enough time to experience all three stages of victimization. This includes experiences of victimization, experience navigating relationships and identity following the disclosure of victimization, and experience advocating for victims of sexual violence. Anyone younger than 18 would likely not yet have had the full range of those experiences. Regarding the upper age limit, the more life experience the more fully will participants be able to answer interview questions. Interviews will only be enriched by interviewing participants who have much to say about their experiences with the three stages of victimization.

C.3.5 Are participants University of Guelph students?  
No

Are participants affiliated with (formally or informally) a particular organization/institution (other than the University of Guelph)?  
No

If YES, please name and provide details of the affiliation:

Participants may be from the University of Guelph or other universities since, currently, many victim-advocates are people who have been sexually assaulted on campus. Participants may be affiliated with other organizations through the work they do as advocates, or through professional or personal ties.

C.3.6 Participant Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: List all inclusion/exclusion criteria.  
Indicate with an asterisk (*) those criteria which will be included in the Letter of Information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusion Criteria</th>
<th>Exclusion Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Experienced sexual violence, including child sexual</td>
<td>Under 18 years old.</td>
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<td>abuse or sexual assault.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disclosed victimization to someone other than a mental health professional.</td>
<td>Does not speak and understand English.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Is involved in advocating for victims of sexual violence through writing, speaking, or performing. Advocacy involvement can be formal (official occupation) or informal (volunteer).</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

C.4 Recruitment

C.4.1 What form will recruitment take: *(please check all that apply):* □ N/A

- [ ] Poster
- [ ] Advertisement
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Web page
- [ ] Letter of Invitation
- [ ] Telephone Call
- [ ] Social Media
- [ ] Verbal Script
- [ ] SONA - Psychology
- [ ] SONA – Marketing & Consumer Studies
- [ ] Office of Research Participant Recruitment Site
- [ ] Other – describe below

*Attach a copy of the above with your submission. Submit each document as an individual attachment with your application – do not merge the documents into one long file.*

*Note that the REB# should be quoted on all recruitment documents and consent forms.*

Describe how/where you will use each of the instruments selected above:

- **Poster** – *(Appendix B).* A poster about the study will be posted to the student investigator’s social media accounts. It will also be attached to the emails that will be sent to professionals and participants for recruitment purposes as well as to those participating in the pilot study.

- **Email** – The student investigator will be emailing potential participants directly with a brief description of the study and invite them to participate if they meet the sample inclusion criteria *(Appendix F).* The student investigator will also be emailing
individuals who can be described as anti-sexual violence advocates, or those who work with victims and advocates and ask them to help spread the word about the research or suggest people who can be participants (Appendix D). The student investigator will provide people with her email address where she can be reached if they would like to participate.

Email will also be utilized to contact pilot study participants as outlined above (Appendix C).

Letter of Invitation – (Appendix C). An information letter inviting people to participate in the study will be posted to the student investigator’s social media accounts. It will also be attached to the emails that will be sent to professionals and participants for recruitment purposes as well as to those participating in the pilot study.

Social Media – (Appendix E). The student investigator will be posting a brief description of the study onto her social media accounts with an invitation to participate. The poster and information letter will be included in these posts. She will also request that people share her work with others so as to widen the pool of participants. Many of the student investigator’s network on social media are involved in advocacy and anti-sexual violence work.

C.4.2 Indicate the location of the participant at the time of recruitment. Is the physical location of the participant at the time of recruitment of importance? For example, could contacting the individual at their place of business increase risk of harm? □ N/A

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<td>At home</td>
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<td>At work</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>Other – describe below</td>
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Discuss for each of the instruments selected in C.4.1, as appropriate:

Since recruitment will only be taking place online it is difficult to control where people read their email, Twitter, or Facebook. While reading about sexual violence can be triggering, the fact that the study seeks participants who have become advocates after experiencing victimization means that the study participants are involved in work around sexual violence regularly making it potentially less triggering for them.

C.4.3 If you are proposing to use Mass Testing as part of this project, provide the REB number under which the mass testing item was approved. Provide a copy of the Mass Testing questions.

N/A
C.5 Incentives and Reimbursement

**C.5.1** What is the dollar value of incentive payments and other forms of reimbursement to participants?

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participants will be reimbursed for costs incurred while participating be</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Travel: If participants use public transit to arrive at a face-to-face interview, they will reimbursed. Adult Fare $6 (Based on TTC rates, includes return fare. Participants in the US will be reimbursed the appropriate fare costs.)</td>
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<td>Child Care: Parking: If in-person interviews take place at a location where paid parking is required, participants will be reimbursed for parking. Rates vary per location.</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Participants will receive incentives to encourage participation</td>
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<td>Gift card: Cash:</td>
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<td>Lottery or draw: If yes, describe in C.5.2.</td>
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<td>Course Credit: Name of course:</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td>Participants will receive non-financial benefits</td>
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<td>Food and Drink: Water, fruit, and cookies will be provided on the table in the room where interviews are conducted. They will be purchased by the student investigator using her own funds.</td>
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<td>Other:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Other – describe:</td>
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**C.5.2** If you have indicated in C.5.1 that you will be using a **Lottery or Draw**, please provide the following information:

- Estimated chances of winning
- Number of prizes
- Value of prizes
- Give detailed description of how draw will be managed.

**C.5.3** If you have indicated in C.5.1 that you will be providing payment to participants, how will you record dispersal of funds for audit purposes (i.e. reporting to Financial
(Shira Kurtz) hired for this study and the student investigator will oversee all allocation of reimbursements to participants and recording them. Since this study has not received funding the funds will come out of the personal account of the student investigator. Receipts will be retained where applicable (e.g. food and drink). When receipts cannot be obtained but funds were dispersed, participants will be asked to initial or check the appropriate areas on the consent form (e.g. public transit, street parking).

C.5.4 If you have indicated any incentives or reimbursement in C.5.1, detail how will you deal with incentives, reimbursements if participants choose to withdraw? (Cash payments should be prorated.)

If participants withdraw during the interview they will still be reimbursed for travel and parking. If participants who were reimbursed for public transit or parking withdraw after they were interviewed at any point they will not be asked to return the money they were paid for travel or parking.

C.5.5 Are the participants likely to incur any expenses or inconveniences in addition to those described above as a result of their participation in this project?  Yes  No

If YES, describe:

Participants may need to make child care arrangements or other arrangements so as to participate in a 1-2 hour interview. Therefore, participants will be able to arrange a time to be interviewed that is best suitable for them and their schedules.
SECTION D: THE INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

Are you planning on providing participants with a hard copy consent document, which they will sign? If so, fill out D.2.

Are you planning on obtaining oral consent? If so, fill out D.3.

Are you planning a survey, which will display the consent information at the front of the survey, and you will assume participants consent if they complete and return the survey? If so, please fill out D.4.

Will your participants be unable to give consent themselves, but must have a parent or guardian give consent on their behalf? These participants might be children, or an adult with a cognitive impairment, for example. If this is the case, fill out D.5.

Section D.6 should only be filled out if your project involves deception. Please see Guideline 1-G-020 for information about deception.

Section D.1 is seldom used, and is a waiver of prior informed consent. See the information guide for an explanation of when D.1 applies.

You may fill out more than one type of consent section. You need not fill out ALL consent sections – only what you need.

Note that the REB# should be quoted on all recruitment documents and consent forms.

D.1 Alteration of Informed Consent:

If you are applying for a waiver of prior informed consent, see the information guide, and discuss Article 3.7 (a) to (e).

☐ N/A

D.2 Written Consent: Will you be obtaining consent with a signature? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If NO, please explain why signed consent is not appropriate in this case then go to D.3.

If YES to consent with a signature, please answer the following:
D.2.1 What consent documents will be used to inform potential participants about the details of the project and to obtain consent for participation?

- Separate information letter, and consent form with signature section
- Consent form with signature section
- Other – Specify

Discuss:

Once a participant has been selected and a time has been arranged for the interview, participants will be sent the information letter with the consent form. They will be informed that we will review it together prior to beginning the interview but that they should feel free to review it on their own beforehand. The information letter and consent form will include the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks and discomforts, potential benefits to participants and/or to society, payment for public transit and parking details, confidentiality, and participation and withdrawal information.

A part of the consent process for this study will involve education about identification. Because many advocates who have experienced victimization are purposefully public about their past experience as a ‘victim’ it is possible that participants have already been identified publicly as both victims and advocates and want to be named in the study so that their stories can be shared. However, it is also possible that, while being led to advocacy because of past victimization, some participants may have not publicly disclosed their past experience with victimization. Therefore, participants in this study will be given the option to be publicly identified or to remain anonymous and instead, have a pseudonym attributed to their narratives and any direct quotes used in the study report. Prior to beginning any of the interviews, the student investigator will have a conversation with participants to educate them about the ramifications to being publicly identified by name in the study which will also be outlined in the consent form. The student investigator will suggest that participants who have not yet publicly shared their past victimization experiences continue to remain anonymous and unidentifiable in the study report.

D.2.2 How will consent documents be delivered to participant?

All participants will have the consent documents emailed to them directly.

In-person interviews: The student investigator will bring the consent documents to every in-person interview and review them with the participant before the interview begins. The participant will sign two copies of the consent form in the student investigator’s presence after it has been reviewed and after having an opportunity to ask any questions about consent. One will be given to the participant to keep and one will be retained by the student investigator.
Videoconference interviews: Before beginning any of the videoconference interview questions the student investigator will review the consent documents that the participant has already received via email and ask if they have any questions.

D.2.3 How will consent documents be returned to researcher?

If the interview will take place face-to-face, the student investigator will be take the consent form directly from the participant once it has been signed. For Skype interviews, after the student investigator has reviewed the consent documents, participants will sign the form while on the webcam with the student investigator and then scan, fax, or mail a copy of the consent form to her.

D.2.4 Which member of the research team will manage the consent process?

Guila Benchimol, the student investigator.

D.2.5 Has this individual had the necessary training to administer consent? Describe the training received or planned.

The student investigator has received training in obtaining consent from the undergraduate and graduate courses in research methods that she has taken throughout her academic studies. She has also previously administered consent prior to conducting qualitative interviews for a qualitative research methods course.

D.2.6 Verify the following:

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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of consent form is attached to this application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of consent form will be given to participant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Script for introducing consent process is attached to this application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Letter of information is attached to this application</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of information letter and/or consent form shows</td>
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</table>
Submit each applicable document as an individual attachment with your application – do not merge the documents into one long file.

D.2.7 Will the participant have an opportunity to have questions about the project and their role as a participant answered? How will this opportunity be communicated to them?

☐ N/A

Once a participant contacts the student investigator about wanting to participate they will have the opportunity to ask questions about the project and the role of participants. If selected to participate, participants will be contacted via phone and/or email to schedule the interview. While scheduling, participants will have the opportunity to ask questions about the study and their role in it. Following a review of the consent documents participants will have another opportunity to ask any questions they may have about the research study and process. Finally, at the end of the interview participants will again have a chance to ask any questions.

If this written consent is from a parent or guardian, please fill out section D.5 as well.

D.3 Oral Consent: Will you be obtaining oral consent? ☑ Yes

☐ No

If NO, please go to D.4

If YES, to oral consent please answer the following:

D.3.1 What documents will be used to provide participants with information about the project to supplement the oral consent?

☒ Information letter
☒ Consent script
☐ Other – Specify

Discuss:

The student investigator will read the consent form out loud to each participant which contains information regarding the purpose of the study, procedures, potential risks and discomforts, potential benefits to participants and/or to society, payment for participant travel and parking, confidentiality, participation and withdrawal, and the rights of research participants.
D.3.2 How will the written information be delivered to participant?

The student investigator will orally read any written information to the participant and the student investigator will also place a copy of the consent form in front of participants before beginning the interviews.

D.3.3 How will oral consent be documented by the researcher?

If the participant gives oral consent, the student investigator will check the tick box indicating oral consent on the consent form.

D.3.4 Which member of the research team will administer consent?

Guila Benchimol, the student investigator, will administer consent.

D.3.5 Has this individual had the necessary training to administer consent? Describe the training received or planned.

The student investigator has received practice in obtaining consent in an interviewing assignment for a graduate level qualitative research methods course.

D.3.6 Verify the following:

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Submit each applicable document as an individual attachment with your application – do not merge the documents into one long file.
D.3.7 Will the participant have an opportunity to have questions about the project and their role as a participant answered? How will this opportunity be communicated to them?

☐ N/A

Participants will be given opportunities to ask questions about the project and their participant role towards the end of obtaining consent and also at the end of the interview. Both of these opportunities will be communicated to them orally.

D.4 Assumed Consent: Will consent be assumed or implied?   ☐ Yes   ☒ No

If NO, please go to D.5

If YES to assumed or implied consent, please answer the following:

D.4.1 What consent documents will be used to provide potential participants written information about the details of the project to supplement the assumed or implied consent?

☐ Information letter
☐ Consent form
☐ Other – Specify

Discuss:

D.4.2 How will the written information be delivered to participant? For online surveys, invite the participant to print the consent information.

D.4.3 How will consent be documented by the researcher (for example, by return of the completed questionnaire)?

D.4.4 Which member of the research team will administer consent?  ☐ N/A
D.4.5 Has this individual had the necessary training to administer consent? Describe the training received or planned. □ Yes □ No □ N/A

D.4.6 Verify the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Copy of information letter will be available to participant (provide PRINT button for online survey)</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
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</table>

D.4.7 Will the participant have an opportunity to have questions about the project and their role as a participant answered? How will this opportunity be communicated to them?

□ N/A

D.5 Proxy Consent: Will you be obtaining proxy consent (e.g. of parent/guardian)?

☐ Yes ☒ NO

If NO, please go to D.6

If YES to proxy consent please answer the following:

D.5.1 Why is proxy consent necessary?

D.5.2 How will competence of the participant be established, and who will determine this?
D.5.3 Will you be obtaining informed assent from the participant?  

☐ Yes  ☐ No  

If NO, explain why not:

D.5.4 How will oral assent, if used, be documented?  

☐ N/A  

D.5.5 Verify the following:

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of written assent form attached to this application</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Written assent form printed on University of Guelph letterhead</td>
<td>Comment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of written assent form will be given to participant</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of oral assent script attached to this application</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Copy of written information for participant providing oral assent attached to this application</td>
<td>Comment</td>
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</table>

Submit each applicable document as an individual attachment with your application – do not merge the documents into one long file.

D.5.6 Attestation regarding Proxy Consent: Article 3.9 TCPS2
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>the researcher will involve participants who lack the capacity to consent on their own behalf to the greatest extent possible in the decision-making process</td>
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<tr>
<td>the researcher will seek and maintain consent from authorized third parties in accordance with the best interests of the persons concerned</td>
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<td>the authorized third party is not the researcher or any other member of the research team</td>
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<td>the research is being carried out for the participant’s direct benefit, or for the benefit of other persons in the same category. If the latter, the researcher has demonstrated that the research will expose the participant to only a minimal risk and minimal burden, and that the participant’s welfare will be protected throughout the participation in research</td>
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<td>when authorization for participation was granted by an authorized third party, and a participant acquires or regains capacity during the course of the research, the researcher shall promptly seek the participant’s consent as a condition of continuing participation</td>
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</table>

D.5.7 Are provisions planned for participants, or those consenting on a participant’s behalf, to have special assistance, if needed, during the consent process  ☐ Yes ☐ No

If YES, discuss:

D.6 Deception: Are you using partial disclosure or deception (i.e. the participant may not know that they are part of a project until it is over or is not informed of the true purpose of the research in advance)?

☐ Yes ☒ No

If NO go to question D.7

If YES to deception or partial disclosure, please answer the following:

D.6.1 Describe the deception(s) or partial disclosure(s) being used and why they are necessary.

D.6.2 Describe how and when the deception or partial disclosure will be revealed.
D.6.3 State who will debrief the participants regarding the nature of the deception or partial disclosure, and describe how they have been trained.


D.6.4 Verify the following:

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<td>☐</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>☐</td>
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<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submit each applicable document as an individual attachment with your application – do not merge the documents into one long file.

D.7 Is community or institutional consent required for your project? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☒ N/A

Please discuss why this is required, how it will be managed.


D.8 Will the participant be free to give consent, or refuse, without any undue influence or coercion? ☐ No ☐ Yes
Explain any details you feel are relevant.

Participants are free to refuse to consent to participate in this study. This will be clearly stated in the consent form which will be reviewed with participants before the interviews begin. Since participants who know the student investigator through religious communal connections or through mutual advocacy involvement may feel uncomfortable refusing to participate if asked to be involved in this study, the student investigator will initially be contacting all potential participants via email to make it easier for them to ignore the invitation. If a participant who was selected and scheduled an interview refuses to consent to the interview, they will not be pushed to participate by anyone on the research team.

D.9 How will you ensure that consent is ongoing throughout the project? How will you ensure that necessary information is provided to participants on an ongoing basis?

☐ N/A

The student investigator will ensure that consent is ongoing by letting participants know before, during, and after the interview that they can withdraw from the study at any time, even after they have been interviewed. Should any new information arise during the course of the study that may affect participants, the student investigator will ask them whether or not they would like to continue participating in the study.

D.10 Discuss the likelihood that the confidentiality offered to participants may be limited by the legal obligation to “report information to authorities to protect the health, life or safety of a participant or third party” or that “a third party may seek access to information obtained and/or created in confidence in a research context” through either “voluntary disclosure” or “force of law”. [TCPS2, Article 5.1]

☐ N/A

Since the study involves questions about experiences of sexual violence, it is possible that a participant will disclose the sexual assault of a minor that has not been reported to the authorities or abuse committed by an individual who continues to have access to minors. Therefore, prior to the asking of any interview questions, participants will be made aware of the legal limits to confidentiality and asked to not use names when answering interview questions.

D.11 Participant withdrawal

D.11.1 Participants must have the right to withdraw from the project at any time. Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw and outline the procedures that will be followed to allow the participants to exercise this right.
Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw for any reason during the discussion on obtaining free and informed consent. Participants will also be reminded of their right to withdraw consent during any point during the research if a situation arises where it appears necessary to reiterate this point. If participants choose to withdraw consent during the course of the interview, the interview will end immediately. Upon the decision to withdraw (during the interview or later), the participant will be thanked and reminded of the counseling services available on the consent form. If applicable, participants will be provided with the reimbursements for public transit or parking. Participants can withdraw from the study up to the publication of the study. Pilot study participants can withdraw up to and including the end of the pilot interview.

D.11.2 Indicate what will be done with the participants’ data and any consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study. Participants must have the right to withdraw their data from the project. Exceptions include anonymous data and collectively recorded data (such as focus group recordings).

If a participant decides to withdraw from the study at any point, all data pertaining to them will be immediately destroyed and will not be used in any of the materials related to the study and its findings.

D.11.3 If the participants will not have the right to withdraw from the project, please explain.

N/A
SECTION E: DESCRIPTION OF THE RISKS AND BENEFITS

E.1 Risks: Itemize your response by each method/procedure employed during this research.

Risk (check all that apply)

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Physical (including bodily contact or administration of any substance)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Psychological (including feeling demeaned, embarrassed, worried, or upset)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Social (possible loss of status or reputation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Economic (risk to livelihood or income)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.1.1 If you indicated YES to any of the above, are any of the risks indicated greater than the participant would encounter in their everyday life? ☒ Yes ☐ No

E.1.2 For each risk identified above describe how the risk will be managed and include an explanation as to why alternative approaches could not be used.

Psychological Risks: There is the possibility that participants may feel triggered when discussing their experience(s) of sexual victimization and what happened after they disclosed. Difficult emotions may arise as they relay their stories and reflect on how they came to be involved in advocacy work. Alternative approaches to having them share their stories of the different stages of victimization are not appropriate because eliciting stories from victims directly is necessary to understand how they moved through the different stages of victimization and what they were thinking and feeling at the time. To mitigate this risk, questions about the details of the initial victimizing experience will not be asked nor will this be the focus of the interviews. Questions about the initial victimization will be more broad. All participants will be provided with a list of counselling services available in their community should they feel the need to seek further support.

Additionally, the fact that participants must have disclosed their victimization to someone other than a mental health professional to be included in the sample means that the interviews are not the first time that participants will be disclosing their experiences. Furthermore, participants must be involved in advocacy work meaning that they encounter discussions about sexual violence on a regular basis. The student investigator’s academic studies and professional work training individuals
who work with victims will inform her approach to asking the interview questions in a sensitive manner that is mindful of participants’ experiences.

Social Risks: There is a possibility that participants may be subject to social risk should they be identified as participants in the study during the recruitment stage or in the writing of the findings. Alternative approaches are not appropriate because this study requires the direct participation of people who have experienced victimization and are now advocates in order to elicit their stories of primary, secondary, and tertiary victimization. The fact that participants are advocates for victims of sexual violence means that people are aware of their involvement on this issue which can mitigate the social risks. Further ways in which the social risks can be minimized includes ensuring not to leave voice messages when calling participants or messages with someone other than the participant. The student investigator will also contact participants by email to recruit, to send the consent forms, and to schedule an interview time which gives participants the freedom to decide if and when to respond to the student investigator. The student investigator will ensure strict confidentiality is adhered to throughout the study by having unique codes as identifiers relating to each participant. A separate master list linking the codes to the participant will be kept in a locked cabinet at the home office of the student investigator.

When writing up the results, the findings will be reported in aggregate form and the participants will be given a pseudonym if any direct quotations or examples are included in the report and they have chosen to remain anonymous. When reporting direct quotations or examples, any information that could potentially be linked back to the participant will be removed and/or replaced with more generalized information to avoid the possibility of being identified. For example, if a participant is from a particular religious sect, only the broader religious group will be referred to and not the particular sect thereby making it difficult to identify the participant.

Economic Risks: Participants for this study may be officially employed as advocates or they may advocate as volunteers. Either way, it is possible that participants may experience some economic risk in participating in this study. This can occur if the way participants represent their advocacy involvement or work they do impacts whether or not they continue to be welcome in the advocacy community, as volunteers or as professionals. Alternative approaches are not feasible because in order to understand the move from victim to advocate this study needs to hear directly from people who have become advocates. In addition to not identifying participants who choose to remain anonymous, to mitigate the economic risks, the student investigator will not refer to the organizations that participants work or volunteer for, whether or not the participant has chosen to be identified. Instead, it will refer to the type of advocacy work that the participant does broadly such as ‘provides legal advice’ or ‘provides training services’. Participants’ references to particular advocacy agencies in the interviews will be removed when the interviews are transcribed and replaced with a description of what they do as advocates and the original audio recording will be deleted.
Overall: The student investigator will not ask potential participants for their names or numbers until they have been selected as one of the 10-12 study participants (Appendix O). She will only have access to potential participants’ email addresses unless people choose to share their personal contact information with her. This will be done to protect the privacy and confidentiality of those who are not selected but have still answered the screening questions in the recruitment email (Appendix F). They will be informed that they have not been selected to participate and that the information they shared with the student investigator in the recruitment email will be deleted (Appendix P).

**E.2 Possible Benefits** Describe any benefits to the participants/discipline/society that would justify to participants why they should be involved in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Participant</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants may benefit from sharing their experiences and voicing their opinions on the highly sensitive topic of sexual violence and being viewed by the student investigator as the experts on both victimization and advocacy. Participants may feel empowered by speaking about experiences of victimization and resistance. Participants may have become advocates because they believe that, after experiencing victimization, it is their mission and responsibility to create change in the area of sexual violence. Participating in this study will allow them to further create change around this issue.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Discipline</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This study will benefit both sociology and criminology by extending stigma and labelling theories. These theories assume that stigma and labels are difficult and sometimes impossible to overcome. In exploring how people who experienced sexual violence become advocates this study will demonstrate the various ways that stigma and labels can be transcended. Additionally, the third stage of deviance and victimization has not been well researched nor has labelling theory been applied to victims of sexual violence as this study will do.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits to Society</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Society will benefit from this study in several ways. Firstly, this study will allow society to hear directly from people who have been stigmatized and labeled as opposed to the more common approach of hearing from the stigmatizers and labellers. Secondly, participants can offer society a unique perspective on the needs of victims of sexual violence</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

352
because they have experienced both victimization and are now involved in changing how sexual violence is addressed. Finally, this study can demonstrate how victims can and do move out of victimhood to more positive identities. While focusing on a particular group of people, this work will have broad applicability to victims of and advocates for victims of sexual violence around the world. It will explore whether tertiary victimization is an effective way for victims to overcome the negativity that is embedded in the identity of victim and explore whether advocates who have previously experienced victimization can best lead the fight against sexual violence. The study can also inform policymakers and service providers about victims' needs and how to help them move out of victimhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E.2.1 Research results should be provided to participants where possible.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Will aggregate research results be provided to participants? ☒ Yes ☐ No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If YES, explain what information will be provided to the participants upon completion of the project, and how will they receive this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants will receive an executive summary of the findings via email. They will be invited to keep the student investigator informed of any changes to their contact information to ensure that they receive the study findings if they so desire. The summary will provide a general overview of the ways in which the three levels of victimization, primary, secondary, and tertiary, manifest themselves in some victim-advocates lives and experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If NO, explain why this is not feasible or desirable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| E.2.2 Will an individual’s research results be provided to participants? ☐ Yes ☒ No |
| If YES, explain what information will be provided to the participants upon completion of the project, and how will they receive this. |
| ☐ Yes ☒ No |
| If YES, explain what information will be provided to the participants upon completion of the project, and how will they receive this. |
SECTION F: CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA SECURITY

F. 1 Indicate what type of information will be collected

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<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Directly Identifying Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☒ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
<td>Indirectly Identifying Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☒ Yes</td>
<td>☐ No</td>
<td>Coded Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
<td>☒ No</td>
<td>Anonymized Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Yes</td>
<td>☒ No</td>
<td>Anonymous Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F.2 Describe any personal identifiers – both direct and indirect - that will be collected during the course of the research and justify the need to collect them. Researchers should reduce the number of identifiers to a minimum.

☐ N/A

The following direct and indirect personal identifiers will be collected:

First and last name, phone number, and email address – These are necessary for recruitment purposes, to schedule interviews, and to follow up with participants and provide them with the study findings.

Age – This is necessary for socio-demographic purposes and to compare the various ages in which participants moved to the last stage of victimization and became advocates.

Racial/ethnic background - This is necessary for socio-demographic purposes. It may also help contextualize the responses given by participants in which racial and ethnic concerns are mentioned and how race/ethnicity relates to their experiences of victimization and advocacy.
Country of Birth; Current Country of Residence - This is necessary for socio-demographic purposes.

Marital Status - This is necessary for socio-demographic purposes.

Religious Group Affiliation - This is necessary for socio-demographic purposes. It may also help contextualize the responses given by participants in which religious concerns are mentioned and how religion relates to their experiences of victimization and advocacy.

Audio Recordings – These are necessary to collect to gather the responses of participants to interview questions and to be able to refer back to them when analyzing the data and writing up the study.

F.3 Under some circumstances, identified data must be made available to authorities. This may occur at the request of auditors (e.g. Health Canada, Tri-Council), or under subpoena (see D.10). Describe the likelihood of this applying to this research project, and how or if you plan to communicate this possibility to participants.

☐ N/A

Since participants will be relaying experiences of victimization there is a possibility that identified data from this study may have to be made available to authorities, specifically in cases where child abuse has been disclosed. The researcher is obligated to report this information. The student investigator will raise this concern during the consent process so that the participant is informed that the researcher is legally mandated to report any incidents of unreported child abuse to police if they disclose this during the interview. At the beginning of each interview, the student investigator will request that the participant not mention any names when talking about other people during the interview. If the student investigator feels the participant may disclose ongoing child abuse or past abuse where the abuser is in a position of authority over children during the interview, the student investigator will interrupt the participant and reiterate the obligation to report if this information is disclosed. Furthermore, questions about the details of the primary victimization will not be asked.

In the event that identified data is requested by authorities, the student investigator will contact the principal investigator and REB immediately for advice before providing any identified data. The committee will also be informed.

F.4 Describe any action that should be taken by the Principal Investigator prior to beginning the project, or any information which should be communicated to participants in the consent process, which deals with potential incidental findings.

☒ N/A ☑
F.5 If any personal identifiers will be retained once data collection is complete, provide a comprehensive rationale explaining why it is necessary to retain this information – including the retention of master lists that link participant identifiers with unique study codes and de-identified data

☐ N/A

It is necessary for the researcher to retain a master list after the data collection is complete for the purposes of following up with participants to give them the opportunity to obtain a copy of the final report. Since it will only be used to follow up with participants, this list will not link identifiers with the data through a participant ID number. It will have participants’ names and email addresses. This information will be stored in a locked box at the Principal Investigator’s research centre, the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence. It will be retained following a five year period after the study has been published. This will provide enough time for the study findings to be sent to participants, after which this information will be destroyed. This will be communicated to the participants during the consent process.

F.6 If existing records (e.g. health records, other records/databases) are to be used, describe how permission was obtained.

☒ N/A

Submit Supplement III – Secondary use of Data

F.7 What would the impact be on the participant should privacy be breached?

If privacy were to be breached it may pose several levels of risk to participants. Psychological risks may include participants feeling upset or embarrassed that their privacy has been breached because they participated in the study. Social risks may include the potential loss of personal status or reputation within the specific communities that the participant may be involved in (e.g. religious, cultural, professional). To minimize this risk and the likelihood of a privacy breach, only the master list will have the personal identifiers of participants along with their unique codes which will be stored in a secure location at the home office of the student investigator.

F.8 State who else will have access to the identified data. If they are not members of the research team, they should sign a confidentiality agreement

☐ N/A
The research assistants will have access to the identified data and will be transcribing the interviews. They will sign the attached confidentiality agreement. Also, Janice Hicks is a computer technician for the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph and she may, at times, have access to the laptop being used to store the audio recordings when she conducts maintenance and updates on the laptop. As a University of Guelph employee, Janice Hicks is already bound by a confidentiality agreement.

F.9 Describe the procedures to be used to protect the identity of the participant and/or ensure the security of the data:

F.9.1 During the conduct of the research:
N/A

As indicated previously, unique codes will be used on the interview schedule and a separate master list with the names of the participants and their codes will be kept in a secure location at the home office of the student investigator in a locked box to which only she has the key. This way, only the student investigator is able to match this information when needed. The names and contact information of the participants will be retained for the purposes of later providing them each with a copy of the study findings. However, the names of the participants will not be identified in audio recordings or notes, unless the participant chooses to be identified, and this information will be stored on a password protected and encrypted laptop. All data including consent forms, master list of participants and their codes, interview transcripts, and field notes will be retained following a five year period after the study has been published after which point this information will be destroyed.

F.9.2 During processing of data:
N/A

Interviews will be recorded on the student investigator’s password protected cellular phone and immediately transferred to an encrypted and password protected laptop through a USB key at which point the original audio recording will be destroyed. The audio recordings saved on the laptop will be destroyed once the recording has been transcribed and reviewed. Field notes will also be typed onto an encrypted and password protected laptop after which the hard copy notes will be destroyed. To ensure confidentiality when writing up the final report, the student investigator will take careful steps to ensure that no identifying information is reported that could possibly link any of the responses back to the participant, unless the participant has chosen to be identified.

F.9.2.1 Will data be transcribed?
[](https://example.com) Yes  No
If YES, attach copy of transcriber confidentiality agreement as an individual attachment with your application (if transcriber is not part of the research team)

☑ Attached

The transcribers are part of the research team (research assistants) and will sign the attached confidentiality agreement about their involvement in this study and handling of the data.

F.9.2.2 Will the identified data be transferred electronically? ☑ Yes ☐ No

If YES, by what medium and how will it be protected during transit?

The interviews will be audio recorded onto the student investigator’s password protected cellular phone after which she will transfer them directly onto a password protected and encrypted computer using an encrypted USB key.

F.9.3 After research is complete:

N/A

The consent forms and the master list of participants and their codes will be kept in a secure location at the home office of the student investigator. Interview transcripts and field notes will be retained on an encrypted and password protected laptop. These materials will be retained following a five year period after the study has been published. Following that time this information will be destroyed.

F.9.4 In the release of findings:

N/A

Participants who would like to remain anonymous will be given a pseudonym and any direct quotations or examples included in the study will be attributed to that pseudonym. In describing participant narratives, more generalized information will be used instead of using information that could be linked back to participants. For example, the ethnicity of a participant will be referred to generally as opposed to using specific ethnic information. Furthermore, all participants will be informed during the consent review of their right to withdraw from the study at any point and have their responses to interview questions destroyed up until the point that the findings are published. They will also be asked to respond to the interview questions as they feel comfortable.
F.10 Long Term Data Security

Discuss how long data will be stored, justify the duration of the storage period, discuss the security measures which will be employed, and name the individual who will be charged with stewardship of the data:

The data will be stored for 5 years after the publication of the dissertation. This will allow me to use the data in the future for research and writing purposes. Following five years, the data will be destroyed. A master list containing the names and contact information of participants will be retained in a locked box that only the student investigator has access to so that participants can be provided with the study findings. The transcribed interviews will be stored on encrypted and password protected computers to ensure the safety and security of this information. Dr. Myrna Dawson is charged with the stewardship of the data.

F.10.1 ☑ Will paper records be retained, and if so, which of the following apply?
- Confidential shredding after 5 years from publication date.
- De-identified data will be retained in secure location
- Identified data will be retained in secure location

Describe secure location:

Paper records will be stored in a locked cabinet in the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence.

F.10.2 ☐ Will audio/video recordings be retained, and if so, which of the following apply?
- Destruction of audio/video recordings after interviews are transcribed onto a password protected and encrypted laptop and transcriptions are reviewed to make sure that nothing was missed and that the words are clearly heard and understood.
- Will be retained in secure location

Describe secure location:

F.10.3 ☑ Will electronic data be retained, and if so, which of the following apply?
- Secure erasing of electronic data after
- De-identified data will be retained in secure location
Identified data will be retained in secure location

Describe secure location:

All electronic data will be immediately transferred to the password protected and encrypted laptop described above. Identified data will be stored on this laptop for 5 years after publication debate. Any hard copies of this data, such as consent forms and master lists, will be stored in a locked box at the Centre for the Study of Social and Legal Responses to Violence at the University of Guelph.

F.11 Do you intend to link the data you have gathered with any other set of data?

Yes ☒ No

Describe:
**SECTION G: POST APPROVAL**

G.1 Continuing Ethics Review

Minimum requirement for Continuing Ethics Review is the submission of a Status Report at least annually. The principal investigator’s responsibility for the project must notify the REB using the Status Report when the project is completed, or if it is cancelled.

Indicate whether any additional monitoring or review would be appropriate for this project.

☒ N/A

G.2 Adverse Events

Unanticipated consequences or results affecting participants must be reported to the Research Ethics Board and the Ethics Office as soon as possible using the <<adverse event report>>.

G.3 Additional Information

Please add any other information relevant to the project that you wish to provide to the Research Ethics Board.

☒ N/A
SECTION H: SIGNATURES
DIRECTIONS
Create a jpeg of your signature and insert it on the signature line
OR Sign the last page of the REBA app, scan it, and submit it as a .pdf with the application.
OR Send an email to reb@uoguelph.ca from your @uoguelph.ca account stating:

I acknowledge that, as required by TCPS2, I am responsible for ensuring that the consent process as described in this application is followed and I am responsible for the actions of any member of the research team involved in the consent process. I have read and am responsible for the content of this application. If any changes are made in the above arrangements or procedures, or adverse events are observed, I will bring these to the attention of the ETHICS OFFICE.

In the subject line, quote the project title to which this email will be attached

REVIEW WILL NOT PROCEED UNTIL A SIGNATURE IS RECEIVED BY THE ETHICS OFFICE.

TITLE OF PROJECT: Victims Are Doing It For Themselves: Examining the Move From Victim to Advocate

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR SIGNATURE:

I, Dr. Myrna Dawson acknowledge that, as required by TCPS2, I am responsible for ensuring that the consent process as described in this application is followed and I am responsible for the actions of any member of the research team involved in the consent process. I have read and am responsible for the content of this application. If any changes are made in the above arrangements or procedures, or adverse events are observed, I will bring these to the attention of the ETHICS OFFICE.

PLEASE SEE .PDF ATTACHED TO APPLICATION
November 4, 2016

Signature
Date

Graduate Student Signature (optional)
Date