

(RE)PRESENTATIONS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:

AN ANALYSIS OF MEDIA REPORTS OF RAPE

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	4
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	5
I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	6
II. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1 Gendered Violence: Rape in North America.....	11
2.2 What the Numbers Do(n't) Tell Us	16
2.3 Shame, Stigma, and Secondary Victimization	20
2.4 Society and Socialization	21
2.5 Rape Myth Acceptance.....	23
2.5.1 Propelling Myths through the Media	25
2.5.2 The Narrative of a Myth: Defining Rape Myths.....	29
2.6 The Problem at Hand	33
III. CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	34
3.1 A Feminist Analysis of Rape	34
3.1.1 Rape-Supportive Culture: A Social Problem.....	38
3.1.2 The Importance of Intersectional Analysis	41
3.2 Criminology and the Analysis of Crime in the Media	44
3.3 Newspapers as Constructing Sexual Assault.....	45
3.3.1 Newspaper Language: Discourse, Ideology and the Production of Truth	45
3.3.2 The Power of Language	48
IV. CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY.....	51
4.1 Positionality, Epistemology, and the Critical Paradigm	51
4.2 Method: Content Analysis.....	53
4.3 Operationalizing Rape Myths: Analytical grid.....	54
(1) Sexual assault is about uncontrollable male lust, not about violence	55
(2) The victim provoked the sexual assault	56
(3) Women regularly lie about rape	57
(4) Exonerating the perpetrator / men of good standing do not sexually assault women.....	58
(5) Only certain types of women are raped.....	60
(6) The perpetrator is the “other”	61
(7) The new myth of the female perpetrator and male victim	62
4.4 Data	63
4.5 Research Strategy: Analytic Stages.....	65

V. CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS	67
5.1 <i>The Toronto Star</i>	67
5.1.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex.....	67
5.1.2 Rape Myth #2: The Victim Provoked the Sexual Assault.....	68
5.1.3 Rape Myth #3: Women Often Lie about being Raped.....	69
5.1.4 Rape Myth #4: Men of Good Standing do not Rape.....	71
5.1.5 Rape Myth #6: “Othering” and the Myth of Stranger Rape.....	74
5.1.6 Rape Myth #7: Over-Representations of Female Perpetrators.....	75
5.1.7 Reporting of Certain Types of Rape.....	76
5.1.8 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape.....	76
5.2 <i>The Globe and Mail</i>	79
5.2.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex.....	79
5.2.2 Rape Myth #4: Men of Good Standing do not Rape.....	80
5.2.3 Reporting of Certain Types of Rape.....	81
5.2.4 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape.....	83
5.3 <i>National Post</i>	89
5.3.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex.....	89
5.3.2 Rape Myth #6: “Othering” and the Myth of Stranger Rape.....	90
5.3.3 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape.....	90
VI. CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	95
6.1 Discussion	95
6.2 Limitations	104
6.3 Implications of this Research	105
6.4 Directions for Change and Future Research	105
6.5 Conclusion	106
VII. APPENDIX A: LIST OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES	108
VIII. APPENDIX B: SUMMARY SHEET	112
IX. REFERENCES	113

ABSTRACT

There is a problem with attitudes that blame the victim of sexual assault: these attitudes are widespread and show popular adhesion to assumptions about rape that have been criticized and combatted by feminists. These assumptions are known as “rape myths.” It is important to look at the role newspapers play in contemporary discourse around rape and the extent to which they reproduce rape myths or, alternatively, incorporate a feminist critique. This research examines how sexual assault is constructed in three English-language newspapers, *The Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *The National Post* in the year 2012. Using qualitative content analysis, themes of rape myths and the presence of feminist discourse are categorized. The power of language when describing rape in the media is recognized and a description of rape-supportive culture, within a feminist theoretical framework, is provided. The ultimate aim of this research is to identify and challenge myths and stereotypes surrounding rape as well as identify possible feminist discourse on rape in print news media in Canada.

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I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

“It is almost but not quite impossible to become pregnant on the basis of rape. The odds are one in millions and millions and millions. And there is a physical reason for that...rape, obviously, is a traumatic experience. When that traumatic experience is undergone, a woman secretes a certain secretion, which has a tendency to kill sperm.¹”

“If it is inevitable, just relax and enjoy it.²”

“Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized.³”

“Rape victims should make the best out of a bad situation.⁴”

“If it is a legitimate rape, the female body has ways of shutting that whole thing down.⁵”

“I struggled with it myself for a long time, but I came to realize life is that gift from God, and I think even when life begins in that horrible situation of rape, that it is something that God intended to happen.⁶”

American politicians and a Canadian police officer³ made the above statements regarding rape. They are but a handful of publicized quotes made by the people who create and enforce the law in North America. Are these types of statements a representation of how a few misguided individuals think, or does it reflect a larger, more systemic way that we as a society think about women and rape? In this thesis, I argue the latter, and that this type of thinking is embedded in a broader public discourse about rape. These ways of thinking are not novel; they are rooted in ideologies that support victim-blaming which have been in place for centuries. The words and ideas presented in these statements are powerful and have real consequences. They can serve to limit the understanding of violence against women and normalize physical and emotional harm

¹ Statement made by Stephen Friend (American state representative), 1988. http://articles.philly.com/1988-0323/news/26277205_1_freind-woman-secretes-luigi-mastroianni

² Statement made by Clayton Williams (Republican Texas governor candidate), 1990. <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/03/26/us/texas-candidate-s-comment-about-rape-causes-a-furor.html>

³ Statement made by Michael Sanguinetti (Toronto police constable), 2011. <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/06/slutwalking-policeman-talk-clothing>

⁴ Statement made by Rick Santorum (Pennsylvania senator and presidential candidate), 2012. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/23/rick-santorum-abortion-rape_n_1224624.html

⁵ Statement made by Todd Akin (American state representative), 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/20/us/politics/todd-akin-provokes-ire-with-legitimate-rape-comment.html?_r=0

⁶ Statement made by Richard Murdoch (Fox news corporation CEO), 2012. http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-250_162-57538757/

and social control of women. These words are told in a persuasive rhetoric by (mostly) men in positions of power and parallel deeply seeded and misunderstood notions surrounding rape that serve to minimize and invalidate the experience of women who have experienced sexual violence.

This research project examines the presence of these messages in print news media. Since news media can reflect social norms, one way researchers can establish the content and potency of these social beliefs is by examining the way the media construct sexual assault (Sampert, 2010: 302). The main research questions that guide this project are the following:

RQ1. How do Canadian newspapers construct the issue of sexual assault in print news articles?

RQ2. To what extent do these articles reproduce ‘rape myths’ or, alternatively, articulate elements of a feminist discourse on sexual assault that reject rape myths?

This research examines news articles regarding sexual assault in three Canadian newspapers, two of which are national and one of which is most widely circulated: *The Globe and Mail*, *National Post*, and *Toronto Star*, respectively. The year 2012 marks approximately three decades since major changes were made to the rape provisions of the Canadian Criminal Code in 1983, which saw the implementation of Bill C-127⁷. The purpose behind these reforms was to increase the rates at which sexual assault are reported to police, increase victims’ confidence in the criminal justice system, increase conviction rates, and improve police efficiency when dealing with sexual assault (Sampert, 2010: 302). However, reporting rates remain low, and if the quote above about “dressing like sluts” (which was made by a Toronto

⁷ See Criminal Code, R.S.C. 1985, c. C-46, ss. 150 – 61. The reforms replaced the crime of rape with a three-tiered, gender-neutral definition of sexual assault; see Christine L.M. Boyle, *Sexual Assault* (Toronto: Carswell, 1984).

police officer) reflects the way the police (and general population) think about victims, then can laws really make a significant difference? My argument throughout this thesis is that legislation on its own cannot make significant positive changes in the way we think about sexual assault or in the way that victims are treated. In fact, laws may have had negative unintended consequences by eliminating the legal term “rape” from the Criminal Code and imposing lighter sentencing, which has substantially downgraded rape as a crime (Tempkin, 2002: 162). There is a concern that de-gendering the law has disadvantaged women in that the impact of rape on women is lost by erasing the crime of rape (Sheehy, 2002: 480). By eliminating the term ‘rape’, which has a particular shared meaning for women, it may have created laws that are actually harmful.

McIntyre et al. (2000) argue that “gender neutral language and rules only obscure gender specific problems and, particularly the linkages between sexualized violence, systemic social inequality and the systemically unequal treatment of rape survivors in and by law” (79). Almost all offences are coded as level one (minor) offence, perhaps as lesser charges are easier to prove; both rape and unwanted sexual touching can occupy lesser offence categories (Tempkin, 2002: 162). In Sampert’s research (which looks at the presence of rape myths in newspapers from different geographic regions in Canada), it was argued that “legislative changes cannot work if the underlying social beliefs continue to support rape myths and stereotypes about sexual violence” (2010: 302), and they cannot work if the implementation of these laws remains androcentric (for example, obscuring gender specific problems) in nature (Gottell, 2007). How the law is used is an issue of particular importance and beyond the scope of this thesis; looking beyond legislative change and focusing on root causes and prevention more generally is also essential.

The method used in this research study is a qualitative content analysis informed by feminist theory; it explores how gendered sexual violence is constructed in English language articles found in the *National Post*, *Globe and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star*. There is research that

has been conducted concerning the depiction of rape in the media (especially in the American media), and there has also been research, especially in the field of psychology, regarding “rape myth acceptance”. There is limited research on the topic of rape myths within a Canadian context. Sampert (2010) conducted an analysis of Canadian newspapers in 2002, which utilized both content and critical discourse analysis; my research will build on this and will use a more up-to-date qualitative analysis of Canadian content.

Why is the examination of rape myths in Canadian newspapers important? Myths often expose underlying paradigms that can often tell us more about societal values (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 2), and myths can be defined as narratives that a culture deems important (Dijk, 1993 as cited in Sampert, 2010: 304). When many members of a culture believe something, it can be translated to have factual credibility that produces knowledge. This is the power of discourse. Du Mont and Parnis (1999) suggest that these myths “underlie and fuel violence against women and inform negative societal reactions to those who have been sexually assaulted” (as cited in Sampert, 2010: 304). A feminist challenge to these narratives surrounding rape myths could help intervene in the knowledge produced by powerful media outlets and help to challenge information that perpetuates systems of oppression against marginalized populations.

Outline of the thesis

This thesis is divided into six chapters. Following the introduction, Chapter 2 contextualizes this research by exploring how rape is an act of gendered violence. Subsequently, the chapter explores how sexual assault is defined within the Canadian criminal justice system. The focus then shifts to the shame and stigma that victims of rape experience and processes of socialization and how concepts of domination and subordination are important when understanding broader issues of gender relations. Next is a section on rape myth acceptance and

how rape myths are propelled in the media and concludes with Bohner's (2009) definition of rape myths.

Chapter 3 builds the theoretical framework for this study by explaining what a feminist analysis of rape supportive culture would look like, drawing from the theories of bell hooks (2002, 2005), Carol Smart (1990), Michel Foucault (1980), Andrea Smith (2005), as well as the importance of intersectional analysis. Next, there section on the criminological literature on crime in the media focusing on Doyle's (2006) research on the subject, followed by a section on how newspapers may construct the issue of sexual assault, including explanations of newspaper discourse and the power of language that draw from drawing from Van Dijk's (2008) theory of discourse analysis and Fowler's (1991) classic text on newspaper reporting as a socially constructed product.

The methodological approach unfolds in Chapter 4. First, this chapter discusses positional, epistemological, and critical paradigms of the project. Next, it presents the method chosen for this project—qualitative content analysis—and the data sample. There is an analytical grid with descriptions of the seven rape myths I have compiled from various feminist writings for the purposes of this thesis. The chapter concludes with a description on the analytic stages of the research project guided by Huckin's (2008) guide for content analysis. Chapter 5 is then composed of the analysis and results of my research with a breakdown of the themes found in each of the three newspapers I examined.

Chapter 6 concludes the study with a discussion of the results, limitations of this research, the significance and implications of this research, and directions for change and future scholarly research.

II. CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Gendered Violence: Rape in North America

The ways in which violence is commonly understood and defined often ignore the systemic and structural factors that lead to the ways in which violence operates in women's lives (for example, Prime Minister Harper's refusal to launch a public inquiry to study the "high number of missing and murdered aboriginal women." He commented on the death of Tina Fontaine, a 15-year-old aboriginal girl who found dead in Winnipeg, as not to be viewed as a "sociological phenomenon" [Chartrand, 2014: 1]). Commonly, ideas of what violence includes embraces physical and psychological dimensions and emphasize the use of force and the abuses of power intrinsic to all types of violence; what they fail to capture are the levels at which violence occurs and the differential treatment of various kinds of violence (Jiwani, 2006: 7). Furthermore, violence is one effective way in which particular groups are marginalized through coercive, physical, and institutional power which includes the very nature, instruments, and goals of domination; in this case, it is the domination of women by men through the use of violence (Jiwani, 2006: 4). Gendered violence reflects the discrepancies in power relations between men and women and perpetuates the subordination of women. This violence exists within a framework of patriarchy, colonialization, and white-supremacy, and the distinguishing feature between this type of violence and other kinds of aggression and coercion lies in the "fact that in this case the risk factor or source of vulnerability is the mere fact of being a woman" (Rico, 1997: 6). In this sense, gendered violence (and violence generally) can be understood as an application of domination and power over a marginalized group, and these multiple systems of power are at play at the same time, reinforcing and sustaining one another. However, it should also be noted that it is not only men who hurt women, men also hurt other men. This is a key

feature of gendered violence and important in the study of hegemonic masculinity, but violence against women will be the focus of this paper.

Sexual assault is a violent and pervasive crime within our modern culture, and it is one that is implicitly condoned (Grubb & Harrower, 2008, 2009). Sexual assault differs from other forms of violence due to its impact on victims and other women in the wider community, the stigma linked with victimization, the notorious and extensive acceptance of myths surrounding these acts, and in the low reporting rates (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 93). Under Canadian law, any form of sexual activity is a crime if it is forced or unwanted; this includes “forced intercourse or attempts, forced genital contact, forced penetration by foreign objects, or any other sexual contact” (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 93). Rape (forced sexual intercourse) is one of the several behaviours incorporated under the legal definition of sexual assault in Canada; a trend in research in this area has been to utilize broad definitions of sexual assault in order to account for the range of sexual violations rather than restricting the focus to rape (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 93).

Indeed, it is useful to consider sexual violence, assault, rape, and harassment on a continuum in that they all stem from the same root causes (as opposed to creating hierarchies and polarizing different forms of sexual assault, which can be alienating and unnecessarily harmful to women and their experiences). The notion of a continuum enables a more fluid movement between otherwise rigid categories of analysis, and this model allows the range of sexual violence to be extended to include different forms of behaviors that are hurtful to women (Teo, 1996: 193). This model of a continuum of sexual violence can also include intersections of gender and patriarchy (Farwell, 2004: 389-90) (which will be defined and explained in Chapter 3); therefore, it is not just physical harms, but it can also include entire ideologies and discourses

that are violent and harmful to women (and which can, in turn, promote and lead to physical, emotional, economic, and psychological harms).

Liz Kelly has outlined her conceptualization of a ‘continuum’ based on meanings in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the first of which is “a basic common-character that underlies many different events” and secondly, “a continuous series of elements of events that pass into one another and which cannot be readily distinguished” (1988: 76). According to Kelly, the first meaning allows us to create a discourse surrounding sexual violence in a generic sense since the basic underlying characteristics in many different types of violence include the following: “abuse, intimidation, coercion, intrusion, threat, and force men use to control women” (1988: 76). The second meaning enables us to name the range of these different types of violence while, at the same time, acknowledging that there are no clearly defined analytic classifications into which we can place men’s violence towards women (Kelly, 1988: 76). An important point about using this term when it comes to sexual violence is that it should not be misunderstood to imply that there is a linear straight line that connects a variety of different experiences. It is not an idea of how serious certain events are in relation to others; rather, it is important to view all forms of sexual violence as serious, and it is unfitting to create a hierarchy of abuse (Kelly, 1988: 76). This concept recognizes the harms of seemingly ‘minor’ events such as sexual harassment where ‘nothing happened,’ which is a form of social control that reminds women of their vulnerability. By utilizing this concept, there can be a greater focus on understanding the underlying causes of sexual violence, which is overall more helpful to moving forward with finding solutions to address violence against women and in helping us understand women’s realities.

In terms of limitations and wording used in this thesis, some object to treating women as victims (Teo, 1996: 193) and questions of agency and word use in particular are important. The term ‘survivor’ is sometimes preferred to the term ‘victim’ because it acknowledges women’s

agency when responding to and resisting rape and is largely used by feminist activists. The term ‘survivor’ is helpful in the sense that it can help women who have been raped by men as it allows them to feel empowered and presents the woman as someone who plays an active role in her own survival (Faulkner & MacDonald, 2009). However, it is often the woman herself who will adopt the title of survivor. I am mindful of this going into my research, but because most of the literature on this topic uses the term ‘victim’ when discussing rape, the term ‘victim’ will be used throughout this thesis⁸.

Rape as an Act of Gendered Violence

It is crucial to critically analyze the discourse surrounding rape against woman because it is gendered — it is overwhelmingly and undisputedly men who rape woman (and also rape other men). Gender is the most important variable to consider when looking at sexual violence: 97 percent of those charged with sexual assault by police in Canada in 2007 were men and boys (Brennan & Taylor-Butts, 2008), and males accounted for 98 percent of persons in court cases involving sexual assault, in Canada (Boyce, 2013: 7).

In addition to gender, police statistics indicate that age is also a primary risk factor for sexual assault victimization: 86 percent of victims were female, of which 42 percent were women age 18 and over, and 44 percent were girls (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 95). Sexual assault and harassment are commonplace for young women in high school, college, and university; according to DeKeseredy & Kelly (1993), it is estimated that 45 percent of female Canadian college and university students have experienced some form of sexual victimization. According to American researcher, Koss and her colleagues (1987), studies have routinely show

⁸ Concepts such as agency and resistance are crucial to understanding sexual assault, however discussing it in the detail it deserves is beyond the scope of this thesis. See Faulkner & MacDonald’s (2009) “Victim No More: Women’s Resistance to Law, Culture, and Power.” Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

that around 1 in 4 women have experienced rape or attempted rape, among college and university students in the United States, and more recent studies confirm that rape is a persistent problem on college campuses (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Additionally, findings reveal that acquaintance rape is more common than stranger rape (Clay-Warner & Burt, 2005; Fisher et al., 2005; Deming et al., 2013).

The normative term ‘gendered violence’ is often used to distinguish violence perpetrated by males and females, which can be confusing and a-theoretical. As is general knowledge to feminist scholars, sex is a biological or physical construct (male, female, and intersex, although it is usually presented in a dichotomous manner, which is limiting), and gender is a social construction, the non-physiological aspects of being male or female and the cultural expectations for the way we perform acts that can be placed on a continuum of masculinity or femininity (which can also include androgyny and being undifferentiated). Rape cannot only be understood in reference to the biological categories of male and female but also within a framework of the socially-constructed system of gender differences. The gender system may also be described as one in which there are gender hierarchies and power relations. These distinctions of sex and gender do not always line up. They are more nuanced, and things are not always placed into simple binaries (which are dangerous as they leave no room for deviation). Rape is a gendered act that can be understood in terms of masculinity and homophobia. These gendered aspects of rape are also important to take into account and are no “less real than the biological realities” (Cahill, 2001:33). However, above all, it is important to note that when gender-specific “elements of rape are denied, when it is perceived as merely another kind of violence, the patriarchal aspects of rape are lost” (Cahill 2001: 33). I argue that, although patriarchy may be a simplistic or limiting theoretical framework for other areas of feminist research, it is central in an analysis of rape, as is structural misogyny. Sexual hierarchy gives meaning to violence and

power within the context of rape, and to consider rape in a neutral manner away from sexed or gendered meanings is to completely miss the point (Cahill, 2001: 36).

2.2 What the Numbers Do(n't) Tell Us

Quantifying sexual assault – estimating the number of women victimized in the population (prevalence) or the number of sexual assault incidents (incidence) – is quite a challenge, as the majority (90 percent or more) of these crimes are not reported to the police (Brennan & Taylor-Butts, 2008: 8; Epstein & Lagenbahn, 1994; Gilmore & Pittman, 1993; Gregory & Lees, 1999; Kelly, 2002; Mack, 1998 as cited in Grubb & Turner, 2012: 443-4). About one in ten sexual assaults are reported to police in Canada, and the conviction rate is about one in four (Brennan & Taylor-Butts, 2008: 6). Johnson's (2012) examination of the filtering effect of the criminal justice system reveals that only 0.3 percent of perpetrators are convicted and 99.7 percent are never held accountable for their crimes, which is almost a complete failure rate when it comes to how sexual assault is dealt within the criminal justice system⁹ (613).

The statistics collected by self-reported victimization surveys, such as Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, which is conducted every five years, indicate that about 472,000 incidents of sexual assault against women occurred in one year compared to the police-recorded sexual assault counts of about 24,200 offences recorded in 2007 (Brennan & Taylor-Butts, 2008: 8; Sinha, 2013: 31). Early research by Koss (1988) found a reporting rate of only five percent among college women who had been raped (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444). Consequently, attrition of rape cases within the system begins even before the criminal justice system becomes involved, due to the victim's unwillingness to report the crime committed

⁹ Even though police data can be critiqued as biased and unreliable, I thought it important to report on the data that is actually available to the public today, in order to relay a sense of the information that is collected.

against her. Attrition has been studied extensively within the sexual assault literature, and the research suggests that individuals drop out of the criminal justice system at different points during the legal process, and this results in a very low conviction rate. Statistics Canada reports that sexual offences are less likely than other violent crimes to result in a guilty verdict (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444; Brennan & Taylor-Butts, 2008: 10).

Numerous factors, including victim's self-perception and attitudes of those she turns to for help, influence attrition and research shows that victims fail to report rape for many reasons including the fear of being degraded by the criminal justice system (Gunn & Linden, 1997: 155). Victims are further deterred from reporting the crime by the belief that there will be no consequences for the perpetrators by the legal system, (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008: 601) which is true for a majority of cases. In fact, justice for sexual assault victims is often disrupted by unsympathetic police officers (Campbell & Johnson, 1997), prosecutors (Frohmann, 1991), and juries (Koss, 2000) (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008: 601). Women who are victims of rape often have adverse and traumatizing experiences within the legal system (Frazier & Haney, 1996; Frohmann, 2002; Larcombe, 2002; Martin & Powell, 1994; Matoesian, 1993; Taslitz, 1999 as cited in Mair, 2008: 787). Many of these cases can be affected by rape myths and by gender scripts. This may very well be the case when it comes to a crime being 'founded' by police. 'Case founding' refers to the initial decision by officers on whether the incident actually happened or, in other words, if it can be classified as a sexual assault under the Criminal Code (Alderden & Ullman, 2012: 530; Johnson & Dawson, 2012). Now, cases in which the officers do not believe a crime occurred are classified as 'unfounded' (Alderden & Ullman, 2012: 531; Johnson, 2012). Feminist activist and spokesperson for the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres, Lee Lakeman, recognizes the power that officers hold and highlights problems with access to justice for those who are victimized:

if a woman lives in a poorer neighbourhood, a rural area or on a reserve, if English isn't her first language, if she's reporting about a man with any social privilege, or if she has none, then she is likely to have her case labeled unfounded. Our biggest problem ... is women are not taken seriously when they report and are immediately questioned as to their integrity" (as cited in O'Connor, 2009: 1).

When looking at a few Ontario police services, 2 to 34 percent of sexual assault cases were considered unfounded, and these rates are significantly higher for sexual assault than for other crimes in the same forces for which similar data is available (Nicol, 2013: 1). Studies have shown that police officers' views of the features of typical rape scenarios are influenced by stereotypes (Tempkin & Krahe, 2008: 38; Edward & MacLeod, 1999 & Schuller & Stewart, 2000 as cited in Sleath & Bull, 2012: 648). According to Campbell & Johnson (1997), these types of personal definitions have been shown to be different than those outlined in the law and Loftus (2008) argues that this type of thinking stems from a larger police culture, which is dominated by a "white, heterosexist, male culture" (as cited in Sleath & Bull, 2012: 648). Researchers have identified the presence of a "culture of skepticism" that is salient in police culture which, in turn, becomes established in many areas of the criminal justice system (Kelly, 2010: 1352; Sleath & Bull, 2012: 648). Research also demonstrates that changes to sexual assault laws do not have much of an effect on changing police perceptions of rape (Maier, 2008: 788). It is more common for a case to be founded if the sexual assault was committed by a stranger (adhering to the myth that most assaults are committed by someone unknown to the victim), and research suggests this is more likely to be picked up by the media, painting a distorted picture of rape as a crime (McCormick, 1995: 28). It is, therefore, quite difficult to convey a clearer picture of what is occurring to the public, and as a result, the public is misinformed. This demonstrates how salient rape myths can be in the public, police, and legal systems, which in turn can be very damaging to victims of sexual violence.

Because sexual assault and rape are under-reported, the impact the crime has on its victims is misunderstood and misperceived. In order to rectify the way victims are treated by the media, legal and criminal justice system, and society in general, there needs to be an understanding of why rape is not reported and why the cases that are reported do not result in conviction; this must happen for there to be an improvement in the response given to victims as well as perpetrators. Numerous studies published during the 1980s and 1990s (Bell, Kuriloff, & Lottes, 1994; Burt, 1980, 1991; Cook, 1995; Frazier & Seales, 1997; Jackson, 1995; Kahn, Mathie, & Torgler, 1994; Shotland & Goodstein, 1983; Yescavage, 1999) have revealed the extent to which social stereotypes contribute to the public's reluctance to recognize sexual violence against women as a serious crime (Weiss, 2009: 810).

Legal reform

In 1983, there were significant changes to the Criminal Code of Canada regarding sexual assault; before this, rape was defined as a male forcing a woman who is not his wife to have sexual intercourse; in fact, a husband's sexual access to his wife was guaranteed in the law as she had no say (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2007: 1.4). These laws were based on heteronormative standards and were used to maintain a patriarchal system. Forced vaginal penetration was required to prove rape, so men could not be considered victims of rape, and the victim's sexual history could be used to attack her credibility in court (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2007: 1.4). The "doctrine of recent complaint" was applied uniquely to rape cases such that women who failed to report to police at the first opportunity were considered to be fabricating the complaint. Lesser forms of forced sexual assault or other forms of penetration were not considered serious, which shows that the law was also based on phallogocentric ways of thinking. The new 1983 law classified sexual assault according to three levels of "seriousness": sexual assault (Criminal Code [CC] 271), sexual assault with a weapon

(CC 272), and aggravated sexual assault (CC 273) (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 107). The addition of a Rape Shield Law (introduced in 1982, revised in 1992, upheld by the Supreme Court in 2000) (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 107) was due to privacy and equality concerns for the victims, and as such, questions about a victim's past sexual history, as one example, are deemed not to be relevant, and sexual assault no longer requires proof of penetration. The emphasis now is on violating a person's sexual integrity (gender neutral language) (Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 2007: 1.4). The adoption of the laws was considered a gain, and their aims were to empower and de-stigmatize victims and broaden the definition of sexual assault. However, as the data above indicates, attacks are going as unreported as ever, police charging practices are poor, and sentencing is more lenient. Legislative changes do not effectively reduce shame and stigma about sexual assault and women continue to be held responsible for the attack by the criminal justice system. Some may argue that the *criminal* justice system is not in place to help victims but to hold violators of the law accountable. But is it even effective in doing this? From what the statistics tell us, it is not.

2.3 Shame, Stigma, and Secondary Victimization

Research suggests that observer attitudes and perceptions held towards the victims of rape can play a vital role in the victim's treatment and recovery (Yamawaki, 2007: 406). Ullman (1996) reported that emotional support has been strongly correlated with recovery outcomes and that negative social reactions, including mitigating the incident, blaming the victim, and exonerating the perpetrator and his actions, were significantly correlated with increased psychological distress, delayed recovery, as well as poor perceptions about physical health (Ullman, 1996: 505-6; Ullman & Siegal, 1995: 289). Research also illustrates that insensitive treatment by members of the criminal justice system can intensify feelings of powerlessness and

shame for victims of rape, producing feelings of guilt and lowered self-esteem (as cited in Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444). Consequently, it is not only the experience of the sexual assault that the victim suffers from but also the secondary victimization that includes the stigma, negative reactions, blame, disbelief, lack of support and sympathy, and inadequate responses in general that she receives from the individuals around her, the criminal justice system, and the media. This can lead to victims blaming themselves and prompting feelings of guilt or shame for their conduct in relation to the crime committed against them (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444; Anderson & Doherty, 2008: 10). When taken to the extreme, this victimization can take on a form of “blatant and illogical victim-blaming” (Williams, 1984: 67) where the focus of discussion shifts to the “contribution” of victims on their own victimhood (Anderson & Doherty, 2008: 10). The social environment that the victim faces in the aftermath of an assault is one of main reasons that she does not report or seek help which results in being isolated, and this type of response to a crime is quite distinctive to those who experience sexual violence. One of the main themes throughout the literature and documentation of the experiences of individuals who are victimized is a culture that tolerates violence against women and explicitly and implicitly condones this violence, blames the victim and exonerates the perpetrator.

2.4 Society and Socialization

Gender-differentiated socialization is deeply rooted and largely unquestioned. Men in most North American cultural settings receive cultural messages that masculinity equates with aggressiveness, competitiveness, and the idea that real men suppress their emotions; this type of socialization may lead to an over-emphasis on hyper-masculine ideals. In our heteronormative culture, men and women are regarded to be polar opposites and gender is assumed to be biologically determined and natural, rather than variations of one human model (Buchwald,

Fletcher, and Roth, 2005: XV). This type of socialization not only has potentially harmful consequences for women, but it does not help men either since it is known that men do not only commit violence against women but against other men as well; indeed, the best indicator of criminality is the sex of the individual. Research has unearthed a correlation between traditional or demeaning gender attitudes to rape and sexual assault perpetration (Burt, 1980, 1991; Carr & VanDeusen, 2004; Check & Malamuth, 1983; Rosenthal, Heesacker, & Neimeyer, 1995; Glick et al., 2002 as cited in York, 2011: 1), and consequently, when there is an overarching belief that men should be dominant and have certain entitlements over women, there is a climate ready which breeds support for rape, sexual assault, and violence against women (Burt, 1980). Rape is prevalent in cultures that are patriarchal, in which there is a distinct separation between genders and where women's social roles are devalued, and those with high prevalence of interpersonal violence (York, 2011: 2).

Andrea Dworkin asserts that, as long as male sexuality is intertwined with aggression and a sense of entitlement and superiority over others as well as having contempt and hostility in their attitudes toward women, there will be rape (2005: 16-7). Additionally, homophobia is very important to the way male supremacy works. Dworkin (2005) also maintains that the power of men, as a class, depends on keeping men sexually inviolate and women sexually used by men; homophobia helps to maintain this gendered class power.

Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony helps explain domination and subordination. Foucault's concept of 'regimes of truth' may also help us to understand, and this will be further discussed in Chapter 3. The concept of hegemony helps us to understand "how subordinated people consent to, or become submerged by, dominant conceptualizations of the way things are" (as cited in Howe, 2008: 88). Feminist scholars Connell and Messerschmidt describe hegemonic masculinity as a form of masculinity and gendered practice that subordinates (rather than

eliminates) less dominant masculinities and establishes the groundwork for the patriarchal system of gender relations as a whole (Connell, 1987; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Messerschmidt, 1993; 1997). Concepts such as these are important to consider when understanding broader issues of gender relations, and these can help us to deconstruct the larger, more structural, and cultural issues that help make up the ‘disease’ of sexual violence against women. A more elaborate discussion of these theories is important but beyond the scope of this paper; feminist theories that help to explain rape will be further developed in the theoretical framework of this thesis.

2.5 Rape Myth Acceptance

Numerous studies have shown that rape myths are endorsed by a significant segment of the population and that men are almost always more accepting of rape myths than are women (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994: 142). In general, men are more likely than women to endorse beliefs about rape, perceive a smaller range of behaviours as violent, show less empathy for the victim, minimize the harm associated with sexual assault, and view behaviours that encompass violence against women as less serious (Flood & Pease, 2009: 127). Rape myth acceptance is viewed as a form of victim blaming (Hammond et al., 2011; Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; Jimenez & Abreu, 2003; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, 1995; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010 as cited in Hayes et al., 2013: 206) which is a key feature of most rape myths. When rape myths are salient, they influence sexually aggressive behaviour (Bohner et al., 2005; Bohner et al., 1998; Hill & Preston, 1996; Malamuth et al., 1995), and provide perpetrators with the language to mitigate the negative consequences of committing rape (Chapleau & Oswald, 2010: 68). Overall, rape myths have serious consequences for victims of sexual assault (Franiuk et al., 2008a: 290).

Previous research has demonstrated a strong correlation between attitudes and behaviour (Sheppard, Hartwick, & Warshaw, 1988, as cited in Emmers-Sommer et al, 2006). It also suggests a correlation between exposure to sexually explicit and sexually violent material and more negative attitudes toward women (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2006: 311). It has also been found that people who endorse rape myths are less likely to label a scenario as sexual assault, even when it meets the legal criteria (Muehlenhard & MacNaughton, 1988; Norris & Cubbins, 1992 as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 290). In terms of the way rape is represented, hooks (2002) argues that it is possible to embrace the knowledge that there is a direct link between representations and choices we make in our lives, but that does not make that link absolute. If one sees enough of these images (of rape), there could be a development in a way of thinking that certain forms of male violence and coercion in relation to female bodies is acceptable (hooks, 2002).

Muehlenhard and MacNaughton (1988) show that women who endorsed rape myths are three times more likely to be victims of coerced sex than those who did not strongly endorse rape myths, and Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) show that there are associations between support of rape myths and hostility toward women, support of stereotypical attitudes and sex roles for men and women, and negative assessments of rape survivors (as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 290). Additionally, the acceptance of rape myths has been shown to lead to greater blaming of victims, lower conviction rates of accused rapists, and shorter sentences for convicted rapists by juries in mock trials (Finch & Munro, 2005; Lonsway & Fitzgerald as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 290). Similar research corresponds with the beliefs that rape myths correlate with a tendency for victim-blaming; for example, in 1994, researchers Epstein and Langenbaum found that jurors in rape cases are usually in agreement about popular ideas of what rape is rather than legal definitions, which minimize the harm that is experienced by rape victims (Bufkin & Eschholz,

2000: 1318). Understandably then, rape myths could lead others to advise a victim of sexual assault not to press charges, entice law enforcement to doubt the legitimacy of a women's claim, and discourage legislators from reforming legislation (Franiuk et al., 2008a: 290). This knowledge contributes to the evidence that rape myth acceptance has real implications for victims and that it is therefore important to conduct research on how this can be mitigated or rectified. If language is a way that rape myths are perpetuated and endorsed, then being aware of this and challenging it may have real and positive impacts on people's lives.

2.5.1 Propelling Myths through the Media

While various social institutions disseminate messages about how we think about sexual assault, the mass media is considered one of the most pervasive communicators of such myths. The media can choose what problems they present for public consumption (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 6), and how they will frame and define sexual assault. Newspaper articles are one of the ways that the media can have an influence on what our understandings of what rape entails, who is responsible, and why. These kinds of representations (which are highly partial) can have a hand in and "often promote a series of unhelpful stereotypes and myths" (Kitzinger, 2009: 74). Television, film, and now the Internet are also important media in which information is disseminated and explored. For the purposes of this thesis, only newspaper articles were examined but future research should also include emerging media such as discourse surrounding sexual assault in social media.

Rape myths are part of shared culture, and the news media is one way ideas and attitudes regarding rape are transmitted. The media's treatment of sexual assault not only primes and reinforces rape myths in those that already adhere to them but may also help to encourage these beliefs for those who do not hold them (Franiuk et al. 2008a: 291). Studies from around the

world have shown the ways that news reports of rape and sexual assault sensationalize sexual violence, decontextualize sexual abuse, misrepresent its incidence and nature, trivialize women's experience, encourage racist discourses, and report rape in a way that makes it arousing (Gill, 2008: 135; Kitzinger, 2009: 76).

Cuklanz proposed that the "fragmented nature of news" perpetuates traditional, stereotypical views of sexual assault and rape by taking elements out of context (1996: 50). One way this is done is through a common theme of victim-blaming that is found throughout newspaper accounts of sexual assault cases (Korn & Efrat, 2004; Los & Chamard, 1997; Smart & Smart, 1978 as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 291). For example, one way that elements of a sexual assault story could be taken out of context is if it were describing a 'drugged' victim; it is not clear if the victim was drugged or if she was taking drugs before or during the incident. Gill (2008) identified the following rape myths that were found in news reports: discrediting the witness/victim and women's reputation, implying that rape is sex and that unwanted sex is trivial, claiming that the attacker is motivated by lust, that women cry rape for revenge, and that rapists are deranged strangers (139-44). These myths about rape have also been found in other research on the journalistic reporting of sexual violence (Soothill & Walby, 1991; Benedict, 1992; Meyers, 1997; Ussher, 1997; Carter, 1998; Kitzinger, 1998), and although not all of them will appear in every report of sexual violence, many continue to structure the way sexual assault and rape are reported in the twenty-first century (Gill, 2008: 145). Furthermore, racist and nationalistic themes are highly prevalent in the reporting of cases of sexual assault (Gill, 2008: 147). Additional research examining Canadian newspapers in the early 1980s found that, although stranger rapes were reported more frequently during the five year timeframe, acquaintance rape cases received more attention, with the reputation of the victim being a prime focus most of the time (Los & Chamard, 1997 as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 291). Another

way this is accomplished is through news media accounts of sexual assault cases focusing on the stereotypical stranger rape, unusual cases, and rare cases in which the accusation has been found to be false (Caringella-MacDonald, 1998; Gavey & Gow, 2001; Los & Chamard, 1997; Soothill & Walby, 1991; Surette, 1992 as cited in Franiuk et al., 2008a: 291). Although a majority of sexual assaults never get any publicity, the ones that do play an important role in shaping and maintaining the way people think about sexual assault and rape, and ultimately, this perpetuates rape myths (Franiuk et al, 2008a: 291; Gill, 2008: 137). For example, if the media restricts their reporting to stranger rape, then that is what the public will define as a legitimate rape — one that is committed by strangers. This leaves no room for the fact that most sexual assaults are committed by acquaintances and if a victim is assaulted by someone she knows, she may not identify it as rape. A researcher interviewed one 16 year old who could not even define that what her father had done to her since she was a child was in fact rape (Klinere, 79). She subscribed to the myth that rape was an encounter in a “dark alleyway with a man with a knife” and argued that she had never been raped by her father because “I would just lie down and take it, to get it over with” (Kitzinger, 2001, 2004 as cited in Kitzinger, 2009: 79). What this example illustrates is that, in the absence of a framework to identify what happened to her as rape, this young woman blames herself for her own victimization. When rape myths are so deeply believed, the victim often holds herself responsible for the assault she experienced.

Cuklanz (1996, 2000) found that sexual assault was being sensationalized on American television news and was structured in a way that was adversarial (“her word against his”) and individualistic (each individual rape case as a unique incident) (Carter & Weaver, 2003: 37). Reporting the cases in this way does not encourage the audience to develop an understanding of the structural explanations for rape (Carter & Weaver, 2003: 37) and, in a parallel way, reinforces rape myths. Meyers maintains that journalists represent incidents of violence against

women in ways that are “socially distorted, rooted in assumptions, myths, and stereotypes that link it to individual and family pathology rather than social structures, and gendered patterns of domination and control” (1994: 48). In other words, when reports are rooted in rape myths and stereotypes that blame individual pathology for violence, instead of situating it as the end result of unequal and gendered social structures, it limits the opportunity to provide a critical way of looking at the problem and helps to maintain victim blaming as a normalized way of reporting and understanding violence.

Research finds sexual assault crimes in Canada are often not reported to police due to fear of publicity. This suggests that the way media report sexual assaults is seen by a substantial number of women as a barrier to reporting their sexual victimization (Sampert, 2010: 302). However, it should be noted that this ‘fear of publicity’ is broader than the media; it is very common for victims to be afraid of family and friends finding out about the assault and of their reactions. With the advent of social media women may be fearful of information being leaked onto social platforms, which can lead to harassment, torment, and harsh judgment from an even larger social circle.

Sampert’s (2010) analysis examines how rape myths are deeply ingrained in newspaper articles about sexual assault. She argues that understanding the way sexual assault myths are reproduced in English Canadian newspapers is crucial as these myths “underlie and fuel violence against women and inform the negative societal reactions to those who have been sexually assaulted” and “serve to trivialize, justify, and deny sexual assault” (Du Mont & Parnis 1999 as cited in Sampert, 2010: 304). Sampert’s (2010: 303-4) analysis shows that even with the implementation of changes in laws (twenty years before her study), the use of rape myths in English-Canadian newspapers had continued and that a majority of 1,532 stories she examined (56.8 percent) contained at least one rape myth.

A great deal of the media representations of sexual violence fail to incorporate discussion about feasible strategies to eradicate this phenomenon, such as “fundamental challenges to gender and sexual norms and power inequalities” (Kitzinger, 2009: 85). Instead, these representations offer a sort of “token” resolution which comprises an ill-informed idea of what sexual violence against women entails, with (as was repeatedly shown in research discussed) a strong emphasis on “stranger danger” (Kitzinger, 2009: 38). This lays the groundwork for making laws look like the answer so that we can solve the problem by finding and controlling these individuals (Kitzinger, 2009: 38). Jane Doe, a feminist author and rape survivor, who penned the book *The Story of Jane Doe* based on her own experiences, criticizes the way our culture treats sexual assault victims and ideas about rape, and she argues that we need to implement new ways of thinking:

I have found most rape stories to be either chronicles of fear and horror, victim tales that make me want to run screaming from the page (although I do not), or dry academic, feminist or legal treatises on why rape is bad, written in language I must work to understand. All are valid. But all somehow limit me from reaching a broader understanding of the crime: why men do it; the myriad of ways women experience it; and how rape is used to maintain the status quo socially, politically, legally (2003: 118).

Doe provides a pedagogical opportunity for society to critically analyze the way we think about rape in her nuanced and realistic plea for all actors ---academic, legal, journalistic, and the public—to question the way we frame rape.

2.5.2 The Narrative of a Myth: Defining Rape Myths

A raped woman is framed socially and within the law as something broken. Neither Madonna nor whore but somewhere in between. The carrier of bad luck. There is a general but grudging acceptance that it isn't really her fault, but if she had done something else, gone in another direction, not had that drink or worn that dress or smiled that way, it might never have happened (Doe, 2003: 118).

A myth is a traditional narrative that has a historical underpinning; it is used to explain a practice or belief that can be used to describe some of the collective definitions that cultures apply to certain problems and their solutions (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 2; Ryan, 2011: 774). Even though myths are regarded as fiction, in common everyday usage of the word, they expose underlying paradigms and can tell us about social and cultural values of a society (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 2). Although it seems that myths explain things, they oftentimes tell us how to incorporate a particular belief system in our mental schemas. According to Kappeler and Porter, crime myths do not stem from the construction of events but rather from the alteration and distortion of these events into social and political problems (2005: 2). Whether such events represent some “kernel of truth” is not only hard to validate, but in many instances, it is actually irrelevant; these events or narratives, thus, expand their persuasiveness and influencing power from their “larger-than-life” quality (Bromley, Shupe, & Ventimiglia, 1979: 44).

As crime related issues are repeatedly examined and shaped in public forms, they intersect with social and cultural values, and once they are transformed into an “expression of deep-seated cultural anxiety,” the mythical social problems are embedded into public consciousness and discourse; thus, the power of crime myths come from their seemingly natural explanations of crime (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 2). Crime myths provide an outlet for emotions that can be directed to certain targets, but myths are not only an expression, they imperatively guide actions and create patterns of behaviour (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 4; Fitzpatrick, 1992: 20). Myths give the power to hold onto socially constructed beliefs, even when reality contradicts them; indeed, myth becomes social reality (Kappeler & Potter, 2005: 4). Ideas are powerful shapers of behaviour. None has had graver consequences than the idea that one group is superior to another *by nature*, but most societies have been built on the foundation of that idea (Buchwald, 2005: 215). It has been the basis for sexism (and racism), and both men and women

can internalize these ideas. Consequently, when it comes to rape and sexual assault, changes in laws can only do so much if the underlying social beliefs continue to support myths about sexual violence. It is quite likely that there is no other criminal offence that is as “intimately related to broader social attitudes and evaluations of the victim’s conduct as sexual assault” (Tempkin & Krahe, 2008: 33). When a rape is told or reported, individuals look to their own personal beliefs and understandings about gendered relationships in general, appropriate heteronormative scripts in which behaviours are judged, and the rules for understanding consensual sexual interactions (Tempkin & Krahe, 2008: 33). There is a direct connection between the way we as a culture think about rape and the way victims and perpetrators are treated.

Martha Burt coined the term “rape myth” with her research on rape myth acceptance and stereotypes (1980: 217). She was the first to define the term as “prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists—in creating a climate hostile to rape victims” (Burt, 1980: 217). Although this definition is widely used in the literature, Lonsway and Fitzgerald argued that Burt’s definition was not “sufficiently articulated” in that the terms that she used were not explained adequately to be able to serve as a definition (1994: 134). They claimed that a fundamental issue has to do with what is meant by the term “myth” and, consequently, proposed a definition that combined the cultural functions that myths usually serve; their updated definition of rape myths was “attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women” (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994: 134). Taking the definition a step further, Bohner et al (2009: 19) argue that ideas that rape myths are “false” or “widely held” should not be included in a formal definition as it is often difficult to conclude whether a myth is false, questions of prevalence are not static, and beliefs that were once widely held may not be anymore. As such, a more recent definition of rape myths is “*descriptive or prescriptive beliefs about rape (i.e. about its causes,*

context, consequences, perpetrators, victims and their interaction) that serve to deny, downplay, or justify sexual violence that men commit against women” (Bohner, 2009: 19). For example, if you were to ask someone to describe a typical rape situation, most people would most likely describe one that involves a stranger attacking an unsuspecting victim who is alone, outside, at night, with the perpetrator using threats or force, and the victim physically resisting and injured (Krahé, 1992; Rozee, 1999; Ryan, 1988 as cited in Tempkin & Krahé, 2008: 31; Deming et al., 2013: 466).

This neat contextual framework is known as the “real rape stereotype” or a cultural “rape script” as it denotes a generalization and it runs counter to what actual evidence shows is more common (Tempkin & Krahé, 2008: 31; Deming et al. 2013: 466). Therefore, this stereotype or myth is *descriptive* in that it identifies the characteristics of what a rape should include and be, and it is *prescriptive* in that it quite often determines the criteria a case must meet in order for it to be deemed a ‘real rape’ (Tempkin & Krahé, 2008: 32). If a rape were to deviate from this common expectation and narrative, people would have a more difficult time cognitively acknowledging that a true incident of rape took place (for victims of rape as well as other people in their lives). In other words, rape is only seen as legitimate when behaviours fit within the narrow parameters of the “traditional rape script” and is not accepted as “genuine rape” if it does not meet one or more of the features specified by the stereotype (making the prescriptive aspect particularly precarious (Tempkin & Krahé, 2008: 32; Deming et al., 2013: 466; Ryan, 2011: 775). For example, if a sexual assault victim were to be assaulted in her own home while under the influence of alcohol, she is more likely to be blamed and less likely to receive support from others (Best, Danksy, & Kilpatrick, 1992; Emmers-Sommer & Allen, 1999 as cited in Tempkin & Krahé, 2008: 32). The different types of rape myths to be looked at in this project will be outlined in the next chapter (methodology chapter).

2.6 The Problem at Hand

There is a problem with attitudes that blame the victim: these attitudes are widespread and show popular adherence to assumptions about rape that have been criticized and combatted by feminists. It is important to look at the role newspapers play in contemporary understandings of rape: to what extent do they reproduce rape myths? To what extent do they incorporate a feminist critique? The research questions that direct this thesis are the following:

RQ1. How do Canadian newspapers construct the issue of sexual assault in print news articles?

RQ2. To what extent do these articles reproduce ‘rape myths’ or, alternatively, articulate elements of a feminist discourse on sexual assault that reject rape myths?

These are the questions that will guide my analysis of newspaper articles.

III. CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter will present a feminist analysis of rape, including an explanation of what a rape-supportive culture looks like, argue for the importance of an intersectional analysis, examine the criminological literature on crime in the media, and conclude with a section on how newspapers construct the issue of sexual assault and how ideologies and myths are reproduced and maintained by the media, through the power of language.

3.1 A Feminist Analysis of Rape

Feminist theorizing about rape challenges the idea of rape as natural; it is understood as an artifact of our patriarchal society and of the way gender is constructed. This conception is opposed to biological or positivistic explanations which claim that men cannot help themselves or psychological explanations that pathologizes the perpetrator. Before the second wave of the feminist movement (or more exactly, prior to the 1970s), rape was often dismissed and not taken as a serious issue. A lot of weight was placed on identifying the “type” of woman who is raped (for example, in the media); for example, if she was ‘pure’ and ‘innocent’ and not a ‘whore,’ she might receive sympathy as a legitimate victim, and, in turn, if the man was identified as ‘crazed,’ then there could be some consequences, but even this would be rare (Plummer, 1994: 66; Benedict, 1992). Feminists challenged biological and psychological explanations and argued that rape is an act of violence and a consequence of male domination, power, and control over women. Therefore, gender inequality on a societal level is one reason for sexual violence against women. The argument is that gendered violence is made possible by the ideology of sexism and misogyny, which can be defined as a system of beliefs, social arrangements, policies, language, practices, and attitudes based on the alleged inferiority of women as being “inherently subordinate to men” (Jiwani, 2006: 15; Code, 2000: 149).

“The personal is political” is an important feminist insight that applies to violence against women and brings together the public and private spheres. Susan Griffin captured this blend of the personal and political in her early 1970s article “Rape: The All-American Crime:” “I have never been free of the fear of rape. From a very early age I, like most women, have thought of rape as part of my natural environment— something to be feared and prayed against like fire and lightning. I never asked why men raped; I simply thought it one of the many mysteries of human nature” (Plummer, 1995: 67). A focus of feminist work has been to label and de-mystify the myths surrounding rape and to develop alternative frameworks to understand sexual assault. Indeed, the role of critical theory is to question the dominant discourses and try to understand the complex, multi-layered power structures behind certain phenomena. Feminist theory plays a vital role by examining socio-cultural reasons for sexual violence against women in a critical manner.

According to Wood (2013), patriarchy means “rule by the fathers” and the ideology, structures, and practices in this culture are made by men (32). The patriarchal constructions of women being ‘less than’ creates conditions of possibility for sexual violence. The concept of patriarchy is defined by feminist scholar bell hooks as “a political-social system that insists that males are inherently dominating, superior to everything and everyone deemed weak, especially females, and endowed with the right to dominate and rule over the weak and to maintain that dominance through various forms of psychological terrorism and violence” (2004: 18).

Patriarchy is described by Dobash and Dobash (1979) as being made up of two elements: structure and ideology (43). Structures (for example, educational, religious, or media structures) play a crucial role in the re-production of social inequalities (Van Dijk, 2008: 5). Structures can serve to keep certain groups in positions of power while others are marginalized; they can maintain women at a status lower than men when it comes to education, politics, law, religion — thus maintaining a gendered order that keeps women in subordinate positions in society and

unable to gain access to institutions of power from which to challenge their subordination (as cited in Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 27). Ideology serves to legitimize the social order and make it seem natural (as cited in Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 27), as it does in Western cultures. Ideologies present a partiality as a totality; as it reveals and it also conceals. What it conceals are ‘subjugated knowledges’ (Foucault 1980) — knowledges that are disqualified, delegitimized or strategically pushed away. Ideology can be described as an inoculation against opposing views or in other words, views that do not fit in with the dominant discourse. Subjugated knowledges, which include women’s lived experiences and feminist theory¹⁰, are cast aside as they challenge dominant patriarchal discourses. Dominant ideology disqualifies alternative histories, marginalizes, and isolates. Productions of truth serve political and economic interests. Smart (1990), noting the theoretical influence of Foucault, argues that engaging with legal discourse may not promote feminist gains and, as a discourse that holds legitimate power and knowledge, the law’s power and claims to truth and knowledge “enable it to silence women (who encounter law) and feminists (who challenge law)” (195). This ability to silence women is possible because law is created through a discourse of power which “can make claims to scientificity and hence truth. This in turn positions law in a hierarchy of knowledges, which allows for the disqualification of ‘subjugated knowledges’” (Smart, 1990: 196). Therefore, the subjugated knowledge of women’s lived realities and of feminism are postulated as lower forms of truth that are incapable of standing up to the authoritative claims of law, which holds a universal claim to truth and power (Smart, 1990). Foucault’s work is relevant here as it shows how truth (and

¹⁰ Although Foucault (1980) never directly addresses issues of feminism, his work resonates with many feminist theorists. See Adrian Howe (2008) for an example. Feminist theorists locate and harness the relevance of this work, appropriating it as I do for sexual violence. Although Foucault’s theories do not fit well with a critical view that seeks to emancipate, some of his theories are useful to consider within the theoretical framework of my project.

sexuality) are socially constructed and shaped by culture, which can help us to think beyond individualistic ways of understanding human behaviour (Gavey, 2005: 7). It illustrates how culturally shared patterns of values and normative ways of thinking and doing can limit us in a variety of ways through the instigation of frameworks of meaning that help guide us through how we think about things (Gavey, 2005: 7). Additionally, it is helpful to refer to this shared way of thinking as 'discourse' because it enables us to identify that they are assumptions and not truths; they are "cultural patterns of meaning" (Gavey, 2005: 8). Indeed, for a long time, the public discourse surrounding rape was missing a woman's point of view (Gavey, 2005: 17). There are always important voices that are silenced, denied, or minimized, and this is important to consider when looking at the discourse of rape.

Returning now to the concept of patriarchy and its entrenchment in Western culture and resulting gender oppression. Sometimes patriarchy is overt and easy to recognize (in recent history, laws enabled a man to rape his wife as she was considered his property), but in contexts where formal equality has been largely achieved, more subtle and covert forms of oppression continue largely unquestioned (for example, gender roles prescribed from birth: boys are dominant and tough and the only permissible emotion is anger; girls taught to be submissive and delicate and passive). hooks (2004) speaks of a "rule of silence" that is sustained when there is no access for a culture to easily approach the word patriarchy, in that we do not know how to label what we call this "system of institutionalized gender roles" (25). How can we identify something if we are not given the words with which to do so? hooks argues that this "silence promotes denial...and how can we organize to challenge a system that cannot be named?" (2004: 25). Indeed, it must be pointed out that is not only women who suffer from patriarchy. Men also suffer from patriarchy in that they may live in a limiting emotional and physical system that

limits them from being health, self-actualized beings¹¹. Warren argues that patriarchal society is a dysfunctional system that is based on domination and violence: “Dysfunctional systems are often maintained through systematic denial, a failure or inability to see the reality of a situation. This denial need not be conscious, intentional, or malicious; it only needs to be pervasive to be effective” (Warren, 1992: 125). This could help explain the idea of our culture thinking about rape as just an unpleasant fact about society in that is normalized and cannot change. Findings from studies of sexual violence suggest that ‘rape behaviour’ is learned within a patriarchal culture, in which men identify with more traditional male roles and gender norms (Maria-Barbara & Watson-Franke, 2002: 599). Sexual assault is a form of terrorism, which is in part carried out through a patriarchal ideology, and this type of violence is termed by some as the product of living in a ‘rape culture’ or what I will describe to be a rape-supportive culture.

3.1.1 Rape-Supportive Culture: A Social Problem

Culture consists of structures and practices that sustain a particular social order by normalizing certain expectations, values, meanings, and patterns of behaviour (Wood, 2013: 31). It is communicated and sustained through discourse and institutions. The discursive features of rape culture have been communicated in the literature review of this thesis, with the examination of rape myths, language, and media, all of which help sustain the culture. The patriarchal constructions and discourses of women being ‘less than’ and masculine notions of power and dominance over women, such as male entitlement to women’s sexuality, creates conditions of

¹¹ For a resources on the way that gender norms constrict men, see the documentary “Tough Guise: Violence, Media, and the Crisis in Masculinity” (1999) featuring activist Jackson Katz and Michael Kaufman’s (1993) “*Cracking the armour: Power, pain and the lives of men.*”

possibility for sexual violence. Rape culture is also sustained through institutions. Carol Adams (2005) argues that sexual violence is institutional violence¹². She states that for something to be considered institutional violence, it must be “a widespread, unethical practice in society” as well as providing pitifully inadequate responses to it, and in order to rectify this, sexual violence must be recognized as institutional violence; it must not be “minimized, misnamed”, or “misunderstood” (Adams, 2005: 89). The way that the legal system, family institutions, and media outlets fail to recognize, understand, and provide meaningful assistance to victims and hold perpetrators accountable is a clear example of how structures and institutions are culturally sustained. One specific example of how a social structure or institution upholds sexual violence against women is the failure of the judicial system to provide safety for women and hold violent men accountable.

hooks (2005) argues that we live in a culture that “condones and celebrates rape” (295). Sexist oppression is maintained within a phallogocentric patriarchal state in which gendered violence, and specifically by the rape of women by men, is condoned; this culture cannot be transformed without a full commitment to resisting and eliminating patriarchy (hooks, 2005: 295). This system of attitudes supports male sexual aggression against women (Buchwald et al., 2005). In a rape supportive culture, women experience violence in a continuum, and this culture “condones physical and emotional terrorism against women and presents it as the norm” (Buchwald et al., 2005: xi; Kelly, 1988). This has very real consequences for the daily life of all women. Namely, the fear of sexual assault in our society takes up a “continent of psychic space ... a rape culture is a culture of intimidation that keeps women afraid of being attacked and so it

¹² Adams continues her discussion with a detailed discussion of six interrelated factors that institutional violence consists of. She gives the Church as a specific example of institutional sexual violence. For the full text, see pages 89-96 of Buchwald, Fletcher, and Roth’s 2005 book “Transforming a Rape Culture: Revised Edition.”

confines women in the range of their behaviour” (Buchwald, 2005: 219). This constraint in the way women move and think is a very real and destructive force that serves to limit the freedom experienced in daily life. This fear can be described as a normative form of terrorism: it keeps women afraid and on constant alert, and if she is sexually harassed or violated, it is perceived as the fault of the woman.

Goldberg (1990) uses the term ‘(socio)discursive formation,’ to explain ordered relations and relationships that consist of rules for what to and not to do, whereas Foucault (1980) talks about discursive formations as setting ‘regimes of truth.’ Foucault explained that these discourses are potent in their “organizing and regulating of relations of power,” and as such, the power becomes normalized (1980: 131). Just like the air that we breathe, these ‘truths’ about what is normal and right for women and men surround us to the point where we take them for granted and do not question them (Wood, 2013: 32). Therefore, the way that violence is “understood, experienced, and responded to is indicative of a discursive formation that defines and regulates its meaning such that this meaning is consonant and articulated with the needs and ideologies advanced within different social domains, but which can yet be harnessed by the dominant powers” (Jiwani, 2006: 9). This normalization of sexual violence renders it invisible or, as Jiwani (2006) describes it, visible only under a particular set of conditions and within prescribed designations (9). In a rape-supportive culture, both men and women assume that sexual violence is an inevitable fact of life (Buchwald et al., 2005).

Recall the definition of rape myths: they are both descriptive and prescriptive. If the crime does not fall under certain prescriptive characteristics, it is rendered invisible or at the very least highly contested. Even though men are more likely than women to endorse rape myths (Hammond et al., 2011; Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; Jimenez & Abreu, 2003; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, 1995; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010 as cited in Hayes et al., 2013: 207-8), both men

and women adhere to these ideas which helps sustain a rape-supportive culture and North America's societal insistence on blaming the woman for her victimization (Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980). A rape-supportive culture is created and sustained through society's definition and control of women's sexuality, which defines rape as a sexual act instead of one of power, upholds gender norms and roles, and creates an environment where myths surrounding rape are perpetuated and unquestioningly accepted (Edwards et al., 2011). These myths attempt to universalize meanings and 'naturalize' them to fit the dominant and hegemonic ideas (Hall, et al., 2005: 114). Regimes of truth can be challenged by "an insurrection of subjugated knowledges" from marginalized populations whose knowledge and experience is strenuously resisted by dominant expert knowledge. To identify feminism as a subjugated knowledge is not to equate it to a simplistic master narrative that purports to address women as all subordinated to the same degree. This is where the concept of intersectionality comes into play.

3.1.2 The Importance of Intersectional Analysis

Feminists stress the importance of intersectionality when trying to understand the complexity of oppressions when it comes to violence against women. Intersectionality—a core theoretical tenet of feminist criminology—suggests that "race, class, gender, sexuality, and other locations of inequality are dynamic, historically grounded, socially constructed power relationships that simultaneously operate at both the microstructural and macrostructural levels" (Burgess-Proctor, 2006: 37; Cho et al., 2013; Tomlinson, 2013). Bartky (1990) explains that all of these forms of oppression (sexism, racism, classism, ageism, and any other system of domination and exclusion) work with each other to "support and maintain" each other (32). Intersectionality emerged as a critique of the additive model of oppression in which, for example, multiple oppressions increase for minority members of society (black, lesbian etc). Within this

model, one political concern of feminism does not take precedence over another; rather, the point is to look at how they are all mutually embedded.

Intersectionality helps explore the structural problems of a capitalist patriarchal North American culture rooted not simply in racism but in white-supremacist ideals. bell hooks utilizes the term ‘white supremacist capitalist patriarchy,’ which she sees as giving a more complex explanation than the term ‘racism’ (bell hooks, 2002: DVD). This allows us to see that there is an institutional, historical, and structural problem with inequality, and this can be applied to how we study violence with the understanding that it is institutionally embedded through forms of patriarchy and racism.

Intersectionality can be applied to Andrea Smith’s discussion of Native women, colonialism, and rape. Smith (2005) argues that addressing gendered violence is a failure if it frames it simply as a tool of patriarchal control and not also as a tool of racism and colonialism in that colonial relationships are gendered and sexualized. Smith (2005) focuses on how sexual violence is a tool of patriarchy and colonization in Native communities, both historically and in the present day. She argues that sexual violence is a tool by which certain people marked as inherently “rapable,” so because Indians bodies are viewed as “dirty,” the rape of these “impure” bodies “does not count” (2005: 10). This can be compared to the common belief that sex workers cannot be raped because the dominant discourse of society is that sex workers bodies are “impure” and “constantly violable” (Smith, 2005: 10). This plays into the real life implications for certain women. For example, when a crime is committed against white and middle-class women, it is viewed as a tragedy (unless, of course, her behaviour made her a legitimate target for sexual violence), but when a similar crime is committed against a more marginalized population of women (for example, Aboriginal and racialized women with poor socio-economic status), it is not seen as terrible a violation. Indeed, the media tend to report on crimes that are

committed against a young, blond, white woman with greater concern, with other more marginalized populations being mentioned in less urgent stories or ignored all together (Smith, 2005).

When speaking of mass rapes, intersections of race and colonization are also present. Rape has long been used as a tool of war but only became identified as such in the genocide of Bosnians during the 1990s. MacKinnon (1993) argued that “the world has *never* seen sex used this consciously, this cynically, this elaborately, this openly, this systemically... as a means of destroying a whole people” (as cited and emphasized in Smith, 2005: 28). Smith questions MacKinnon’s historical overlooking of events that transpired on the land which she lives on where millions of Native women were raped, sexually mutilated, and murdered, prompting the question, “is mass rape against European women genocide, while mass rape against indigenous women is business as usual?” (2005: 28) This overlooking of certain women and Eurocentric understandings of violence against women are a limitation of some scholarly work. Smith states that rape, racism, and colonization are evident in present day as well, especially when considering that “American Indian women are twice as likely to be victimized by violent crime as women of any other ethnic group ... and 60 percent of perpetrators of violence against American Indian women are white” (Smith, 2005: 28). This is also reflected in Canadian Native populations; although Native populations make up a small minority of the overall population (about 2%), this demographic of women is more likely to be victimized. In Canada, over 1000 First Nations women have gone missing or have been murdered over the past two decades, with little police investigation (Chartrand 2014: 1). This is exemplified in the Pickton case, in which reports of missing women (many of whom were Native, street-based sex workers, and homeless) were neglected and ignored by the police (especially within the first few years). The idea of Native women’s bodies as “rapable” is evident in these massive numbers of missing indigenous

women in Canada (Smith, 2005: 30). It is important to take into account the subordinated positions of marginalized women, such as Native women in Canada, in exemplifying how gender as well as race and other forms of forms of oppression intersect in order to embody a more comprehensive (but never finished) project of feminism.

Intersectional analysis also considers disability as well as other factors in order to develop a strong feminist argument. Assaults on women with disabilities intersect gender-based violence with discrimination based on disability (this can be mental or physical); for example, the sexual assault of women with mental disabilities occurs at alarmingly high rates worldwide (Benedet & Grant, 2014). Sexual violence can also take specific forms for women with disabilities (for example, sexual assault by caregivers, and is subject to certain myths as well such as that women with intellectual disabilities cannot be credible witnesses to their own victimization). This is a marginalized group of women who are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence in Canada¹³. Due to the constraints of the length of this research, I choose to focus here on intersections of race, colonialism, and disability due to their relevance to a Canadian context (however, there are also intersections of sexual orientation, gender expression, religion, and age that are not discussed).

3.2 Criminology and the Analysis of Crime in the Media

It is important to note that the media is not static. Criminological research tells us that some of the key problems with previous research lie in simply assuming media effects or “in ascribing a reductionist unity to various aspects of the media and the ways they shape and are shaped by social relations and institutions” (Doyle, 2006: 867). A number of analyses of crime in

¹³ For more on the intersection of disability and sexual violence against women in a Canadian context, see Benedet & Grant (2014).

the media have simply assumed certain effects on the public based on an analysis of media content and which involves a very passive model of audience agency (Doyle, 2006: 870-1). This problem of “isolating causality in media consumption” (Doyle, 2006) is not the object of this thesis; indeed I will make clear in the next section that the media is not the only way people are influenced. It is not as simplistic or as linear as that. The “media effects” perspective, in this sense, approaches the problem “backwards,” in that it tries to start with and to isolate the media as a cause, and follows by trying to pull connections from there on social phenomena, rather than the other way around (Gauntlett, 1998: 1). Numerous studies cite the media as having built-in tendencies to “present a limited and reoccurring range of images and ideas which form rather special versions of reality” and what is lacking is much evidence of the impact of these select versions of the world (McQuail, 1979: 14). Even so, there is enough evidence and good theory for taking the argument of the effects of media seriously (McQuail, 1979: 14).

3.3 Newspapers as Constructing Sexual Assault

3.3.1 Newspaper Language: Discourse, Ideology and the Production of Truth

Language is not neutral and the linguistic structures in the construction of news stories are not a value-free representation of facts. It is not ‘found’ or even ‘gathered’ so much as it is made; it is a process of creation (Fowler, 1991: 13). The formation of news events and news values is a reciprocal, dialectical process in which stereotypes are the “currency of negotiation,” and if a stereotypical event occurred, the stronger the stereotype, the more likely this will become a news story (Fowler, 1991: 17). I do not wish to present the news media as “deliberately and cynically” working to disseminate ideology for their own gain (Fowler, 1991: 24). For example, ideologies around rape myths already exist; they are reproduced – that is,

actively maintained – in this discursive interaction between the newspaper text and the reader.

According to Van Dijk (2008), ideology in critical discourse studies is a

complex cognitive framework that controls the formation, transformation, and application of other social cognitions, such as knowledges, opinions and attitudes, and social representations, including social prejudices ... it consists of socially relevant norms, values, goals and principles, which are selected, combined and applied in such a way that they favour perception, interpretation and action in social practices that are in the overall interest of the group (34).

Ideology, therefore, creates a general understanding when it comes to social attitudes and, in turn, shapes social practices (Van Dijk, 2008: 34). Ideologies can help to instill and reproduce certain ways of thinking. The question is this: “how do journalists reproduce or challenge the ideologies they are confronted with?” (Van Dijk, 2008: 55). Critical theorists would argue that, due to socialization and their class membership, journalists are inclined to reproduce elite-supported dominant ideologies (Hall et al., 2005). Critical theorists would also maintain that ideologies remain within the flexible, but dominant, confines of thought; fundamental norms and values are rarely explicitly challenged in the dominant news media (Van Dijk, 2008: 56).

It is important to question the possibility of objective, value-free reporting (Fowler, 1991: 208). This does not claim that the press is exceptionally biased; indeed, bias does exist when reporting on rape, and exposing this is of particular concern (Fowler, 1991: 120). But it is more important to view newspapers, and media generally, as an example of “a process found in *all* discourse, the structured mediation of the world” (Fowler, 1991: 120). News is not a “natural phenomenon” that is derived from ‘reality;’ it is a socially constructed product, and in a broader sense, it mirrors and in return shapes the predominant attitudes of a society in a particular point in time, within a certain context (Fowler, 1991: 222)

Additionally, the power of discourse in “facilitating and maintaining discrimination against ‘members’ of ‘groups’ is tremendous and the over-lexicalization of women” is an

example (Fowler, 1991: 94, 96). There are many more terms for women than there are for men, and this reveals our culture's regard for women's status as many of these terms are sexually offensive and abusive ('slut,' 'whore,' 'skank'), dehumanizing ('piece,' 'skirt'), trivializing and patronizing ('chick,' 'pet'), or signify possession by a male ('wife,' 'mistress') (Benedict, 1992; Fowler, 1991: 96; Gill, 2008). The sexuality of young women is also an obsession with the media; young people (particularly girls) are treated to over-lexicalization: there is an abundance of alternative expressions designated which unnecessarily specify them as female and exaggerate their youth (one article, as an example, utilized the words "under 16s," "girls under 16," "children," "a minor," "under-age girls," "youngsters," "young girls," "under-age children") (Fowler, 1991: 109). Here, we can see that marginalized and vulnerable groups face particular discrimination and are lexically highlighted as inferior to men in some news stories. Critical discourse studies are interested in power and in the "*abuse of power*" and, therefore, the types of domination that result in social inequality, injustice, and discrimination (Fowler, 1991: 94, 96; Van Dijk, 2008: 1). Critical discourse studies (CDS) is defined by Van Dijk as "us[ing] any method that is relevant to the aims of the research projects and such methods are largely used in discourse studies generally...discourse analysis itself is not a method but rather a domain of scholarly practice, a cross-discipline distributed over all humanities and social sciences" (Van Dijk, 2008: 2). Its aim is emancipatory. CDS is specifically interested in the critical study of social inequality, social issues, domination, and the role of discourse in such phenomena (Van Dijk, 2008: 8; Fowler, 1996: 5).

It is impossible to be impartial in knowledge production in that power and knowledge are tied to systems of discourses, where what is considered truth is an effect of the "cultural order" (Weatherall, 2002: 79). According to this poststructuralist view, the language that is used in

newspapers may not produce objective, absolute truths about women, but rather, the language may be an effect of a society where men are valued more than women (Weatherall, 2002; Fowler, 1991). Thus, the term discourse can be defined as “the ways in which social and political relations are embedded in the ways of thinking and talking about the world” (Weatherall, 2002: 79). Discourse is situated in “social practice” and is a “type of communication in a social, cultural, historical, or political situation” (Van Dijk, 2008: 3). For example, both discursive and feminist theories have rejected the notion that there is an objective knowledge or absolute truth (Weatherall, 2002: 88). Sexism in language and the ways it is used to undermine victims of rape in the media has been highlighted in the literature. One of the most important points of this thesis has been to underline that the relationships between the language we use and the world we live in are not neutral but deeply ideological (Weatherall, 2002: 147).

3.3.2 The Power of Language

Critical feminist thinkers have often spoken about how the language we use is shaped by and shapes the world in which we live (Hill, 1986; Le Guin, 1989; Penelope, 1990; Rich, 1979; Spender, 1980; Thorne, Kramarae & Henley, 1983 as cited in Lamb & Keon, 1995: 209). Language can be studied in the way in which it supports hegemonic masculinity and female subordination, and researchers have demonstrated this through discourse analysis focusing on a range of rhetorical strategies including verb choice, word selection, and grammatical constructions (Beazley, Henley, & Miller, 1994; Henley, Miller, & Beazley, 1993, LaFrance & Hahn, 1993 as cited in Lamb & Keon, 1995: 209-10). Language is political; the choice of language not only reflects women’s social position but can also be used to challenge it (Weatherall, 2002: 2). Therefore, knowledge of the discursive power of language is important because it can help inform strategies for positive social change (Weatherall, 2002: 2).

Looking specifically at male battering of women, Penelope (1990) wrote on the significance of naming the agents of acts, in that not naming them can support a “diffusion of responsibility for violence that is perpetrated by men on women.” These passive forms can obscure agency by placing the actor in the background and the victim in the foreground of discourse (i.e. ‘the woman was raped’) (Lamb & Keon, 1995: 210; Bohner, 2001: 516). This use of the grammatical passive voice can perpetuate the belief that women are somehow responsible for becoming victims of rape (Bohner, 2001: 516-7). In English, the passive voice seems to be well situated to suggest direct responsibility of the victim; for example, the sentence ‘the woman got raped’ may evoke the completion ‘got *herself* raped’ and may signify the woman’s active participation (Bohner, 2001: 517). Therefore, description of rape using the passive voice may increase the inclination to think negatively about the victim in those individuals who subscribe to rape myths and render the violent man invisible; with other recipients who do not subscribe to rape myths, the passive (versus active) voice may evoke greater feelings of empathy for the victim instead (Bohner, 2001: 517).

Feminist linguists have brought attention to sexist bias in the English language. In fact, 220 words exist for a sexually promiscuous woman while only 20 exist for an equally promiscuous man (Spencer, 1985 as cited in Benedict, 2005: 125). Bias against women in language not only reflects a culture of rape but also encourages it because it constructs women as legitimate sexual prey for men (Benedict, 2005: 125). Benedict proposes that English is a ‘language of rape,’ and by this she means that the vocabulary portrays women as sexual, subhuman, or as ‘childlike temptresses,’ and this perpetuates the notion of women as legitimate sexual prey; additionally, the vocabulary used describes rape as an act of pleasure (or a joke) and not one of violence (2005: 125). In the study of the Canadian legal system, the language used by judges to portray the perpetrator and his violent actions were *better* predictors of sentence than

legal factors (such as the severity of the violence, durations of attack, or alcohol or other drug use), and this was especially true when the act was described as “non-violent” or “non-volitional” which led to the perpetrator receiving a more lenient sentence (Coates & Ridley, 2009: 115). This illustrates the power of language, and furthermore, it shows that there are real consequences that manifest from the language that is used.

The use of sexualized language is often used to describe female victims (Sootnill & Walby 1991 as cited in Gill, 2008: 139), and consequently, language plays a key role in newspaper stories regarding sexual assault:

Men are never described as hysterical, bubbly, pretty, pert, prudish, vivacious, or flirtatious, yet these are all words used to describe the female victims of cases I have examined ... male crime victims are rarely described in terms of their sexual attractiveness, while female crime victims almost always are ... even policewomen and female detectives were described as ‘attractive’ or ‘pretty’ (Benedict, 1992: 20-1).

This is one example of how language may exert hidden power in the way we talk and write about a man raping a woman, and judgments about the perpetrator and victim in cases of rape have been examined with a major focus on attribution of responsibility, which is dependent on a number of variables (Bohner, 2001: 515). Among these, important predictors of responsibility judgments are the perceiver’s sex and his or her acceptance of rape myths. It has been found that male perceivers’ judgments tend to disadvantage the victim more so than female perceivers’ judgments and that individuals who are more accepting of rape myths tend to attribute less responsibility to the perpetrator and larger responsibility to the victim (Bohner, 2001: 516).

IV. CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the chosen methodological approach of this thesis will be explained. First, this chapter will discuss positionality, epistemology, and the critical paradigm used in my research. Next, it will describe qualitative content analysis as a categorizing technique and a description of the data sample. This is a feminist research project that employs traditional, qualitative content analysis. Next, there will be an operationalization of seven types of rape myths that will be used in the analysis. Finally, the chapter concludes with an explanation of the analytic stages of my research.

4.1 Positionality, Epistemology, and the Critical Paradigm

Positionality can be defined as a position in any context as defined by gender, race, socioeconomic status, or other socially significant variables (hooks 1984). Positionality shapes subjectivity and it is thus important for evaluating how a researcher approaches research and interprets data. Specifically, epistemology, or how one acquires knowledge and what principles and procedures should guide inquiry, needs to be considered. According to feminist epistemology, knowledge on gender equality is socially constructed and socially situated and is grounded in historical events and political issues (Gray et al., 2007: 216). Feminist movements share the following common themes: distrust in institutions, struggles for inclusion, demands for the recognition of differences, and a refusal to accept the “truths” of dominant ideologies (Gray et al., 2007: 216). As illustrated in my theoretical framework, intersectionality exposes the range of oppressive structures and institutions that all play a role in (re)producing violence. Analyzing rape through this feminist framework helps to understand the problem beyond individual psychology or pathologies.

A critical paradigm assumes “varying degrees of social action, from the overturning of specific unjust practices to radical transformation of entire societies” (Guba & Lincoln, 2005: 268), and it seeks human emancipation, “to liberate human beings from circumstances that enslave them (Horkeimer, 1982: 244). Thus, critical studies aim to explain and transform circumstances. This is akin to Van Dijk’s (2011) discussion of ‘critical’ discourse analysis, which is interested in how discourse analysis can lead to social transformation (357, 362). While studying social issues is a common task for social sciences, mainstream studies are not inherently ‘critical,’ and this is a “special way of doing socially relevant research” (Van Dijk, 2008: 6). It is difficult to provide a clear and succinct encompassing definition of ‘critical,’ but Van Dijk proposes that discourse studies may be defined as ‘critical’ if they fulfill one or even several of the following criteria:

relations of domination are studied primarily from the perspective of, and in the interest of the dominated group; the experiences of (members of) dominated groups are also used as evidence to evaluate dominant discourse; it can be shown that the discursive actions of the dominant group are illegitimate; viable alternatives to the dominant discourses can be formulated that are consistent with the interests of the dominated groups (Van Dijk, 2008: 6).

All of these points tell us that the ‘critical’ researcher is not neutral; she takes an explicit position in favour of the dominated groups in society (Van Dijk, 2008: 6). My own research is particularly (and quite clearly) interested in, and takes the side of, the dominated gender, namely women.

The goal of critical research is to stimulate social transformation through critique and reflexivity and to give voice to the subjective pains, stigmas and deprivations that individuals experience from objectifying forces (Guba & Lincoln, 2005: 268). It is important to remain reflexive with sensitive topics of research, and thus, my analysis is guided by a feminist, reflexive voice that echoes subjective understandings of gendered violence. As a critical

researcher, my aim is, therefore, to generate knowledge about the way we think about rape as a culture in order to improve the lives of people and, in particular, those of women (Bacchi 1999:10). Taking the critical paradigm a step further, Charlotte Bunch says, “feminism is a transformational politics, a struggle against domination wherein the effort is to change ourselves as well as structures” (as cited in hooks, 1989: 24-5). This quote serves to demonstrate that in addition to challenging hegemonic structural and systemic forms of oppressions and domination, we as individuals also need to look inside ourselves, because often, we are equally bound by assumptions and ideas which are taken for granted and can be just as damaging as those imposed upon us by media and our patriarchal culture.

Should “socio-politically committed scholarly research” be considered ‘scientific’? (Van Dijk, 2008: 7). Claiming that critical research is ‘biased’ is commonplace, and it is important that critical scholars take these claims seriously, while still being critical of those making such claims, as “*not* committing oneself politically is also a political choice” (Van Dijk, 2008: 7). Van Dijk asserts that critical research is not less scientific; it should be theoretically and methodologically sound because it would not otherwise be able to contribute to its goals (2008: 7-8).

4.2 Method: Content Analysis

There are a number of research methods available for examining media representations. In this research, I adopt a qualitative content analysis to investigate newspaper articles and to explore how they discuss rape. Informed by my literature review and theoretical framework, this method enables me to identify general meanings communicated in newspaper discourses, and to explore and identify the different ways rape is discussed within the articles.

Content analysis identifies and analyzes specific types of data such as words or other observable semantic data in one or more texts in which the objective is to uncover themes and patterns (Huckin, 2008: 14). It can help uncover and explore dominant themes in newspaper articles by identifying, analyzing, and uncovering underlying themes or patterns within the data (Braun & Clark, 2006: 6; Huckin, 2008: 14). The emphasis on meaning is what differentiates it from other techniques, and it usually serves to give empirical grounding for other methods which are more sophisticated (Huckin, 2008: 14); for example, critical discourse analysis. For the purposes of this paper, the method of content analysis can be broken up in a six step process: (1) asking a research question, (2) defining appropriate constructs, (3) picking the right text(s) to study, (4) figuring out the right units of analysis, (5) getting the data, and (6) interpreting what is found (Huckin, 2008: 16-18).

My analysis uses a mix of both deductive and inductive approaches. In the first, the aims of the researcher are to confirm or refute a proposition, or validate the existence of pre-given categories – for instance, rape myths. In the second, the researcher immerses herself in the data and looks for meaningful inferences (Berg, 2007). This paper is also informed by feminist discourse and analysis of rape and uses inductive reasoning to identify elements of a feminist discourse in newspaper articles, as well as for developing sub-themes within the pre-given categories of rape myths. This research requires both approaches to illustrate how sexual assault and rape are represented in newspaper articles.

4.3 Operationalizing Rape Myths: Analytical grid

hooks (2005) argues that we live in a culture that “condones and celebrates rape” (295). Sexist oppression is maintained within a phallogocentric patriarchal state by gendered violence and specifically by the rape of women by men (hooks, 2005: 295). Systems of attitudes support male

sexual aggression and violence against women (Buchwald et al., 2005). In a rape supportive culture, women experience violence in a continuum, and this culture “condones physical and emotional terrorism against women and presents it as the norm” (Buchwald et al., 2005: xi; Kelly, 1988). The definition of rape myths to be used in this thesis is the following: “*descriptive or prescriptive beliefs about rape (i.e. about its causes, context, consequences, perpetrators, victims and their interaction) that serve to deny, downplay, or justify sexual violence that men commit against women*” (Bohner, 2009: 19). The existing feminist framework makes it possible to operationalize rape myths into seven distinct instantiations.

The following section will outline seven rape myths. When describing the different types of rape myths, I will use a blend of those outlined in Benedict’s (1992) text “Virgin or Vamp: How the Press Covers Sex Crimes,”¹⁴ in Bohner et al.’s (2009) article, “Rape Myth Acceptance: Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioural Effects of Beliefs that Blame the Victim and Exonerate the Perpetrator,”¹⁵ and in Sampert’s (2010) article “Let Me Tell You a Story: English Canadian Newspapers and Sexual Assault Myths.”¹⁶

(1) Sexual assault is about uncontrollable male lust, not about violence

The most powerful myth about rape ignores the fact that rape is a physical attack and maintains that rape does not hurt the victim any more than does sex (Benedict, 1992: 14). The

¹⁴ Benedict (1992) outlines the following rape myths: rape is sex, the assailant is motivated by lust, the assailant is perverted or crazy, the assailant is usually black or lower class, women provoke rape, women deserve rape, only “loose” women are victimized, a sexual attack sullies the victim, rape is a punishment for past deeds, and women cry rape for revenge.

¹⁵ Bohner et al. (2009) describes four general rape myths: blaming the victim for their rape, expressing a disbelief in claims of rape, exonerating the perpetrator, and alluding that only certain types of women are raped.

¹⁶ Sampert (2010) describes the following six rape myths: sexual assault is about uncontrollable male lust, not about violence, innocent men are regularly accused of sexual assault and women regularly lie about it, the perpetrator is the “other,” the new myth that the perpetrator is female and the victim is male, men of good standing do not sexually assault women, and the victim provoked the sexual assault.

notion that rape is sexual rather than a fusion of sex and violence encourages people not to take it seriously as a crime; Benedict states that akin to a torturer, “a rapist is motivated by an urge to dominate, humiliate, or destroy his victim ... like a torturer, he does so by using the most intimate acts available to humans — sexual ones” (1992: 14). The motivation to rape generally stems from anger, the need to control and terrify — not from pent-up sexual desire. A good illustration of this point is men raping other men, as men who rape other men are rarely gay and do not rape out of sexual desire: they rape to “dominate, punish, or degrade,” just as the rapists of women do (Benedict, 1992: 15). Rape is not about sex; it is the use of sex to inflict terror and express domination.

The sexual predator who uses alcohol to incapacitate his victim is looking to have a sexual encounter; MacKinnon argues that if we take sex out of the narrative, we render phallogocentric culture invisible (Howe, 2008). Theorization and debate regarding the extent to which rape is motivated by sex or violence raged through the 1980s especially, and continues today. To venture into the entire debate is beyond the scope of this paper. There is general consensus that rape is a tool used to terrorize and dominate through unwanted sexual acts.

(2) The victim provoked the sexual assault

Generally, this myth entails the belief that women provoke rape through their appearance or behaviour; because men cannot control their sexual urges, victims are thought to have provoked their assailants by their behaviour, appearance, and sexuality. This belief is rooted not only in the criminal justice system and media but within the beliefs of victims and perpetrators as well (Bohner, 2009: 19; Benedict, 1992: 15-6). Along these lines, it is also thought that women are somehow deserving of rape by their actions: “every time a woman has knowingly or

carelessly taken a risk before she was attacked, such as going home with a man, going to a party alone, or taking a walk at night, this myth is brought in to blame her” (Benedict, 1992: 16).

Ideas such as women should avoid ‘dark alleys’ and walk in pairs at night puts the onus on women to protect themselves; consequently, if a woman is raped, she has failed to ‘protect’ herself and she is then blamed for not taking the proper precautions. This type of thinking also stems from other myths such as that rape only occurs between strangers in dark alleys or by the perpetrator jumping out of bushes (this is part of rape myth #6, which will be addressed subsequently). The practice of warning women is criticized by both feminists and victims (Sampert, 2010: 323). Saying that women are not cautious enough or were walking in the wrong place at the wrong time of day shifts the blame onto the victim as if she is somehow responsible for the attack she suffered (McCormick, 1995: 26). Holding women accountable for male behaviour is a way of controlling women; it is a form of social control.

(3) Women regularly lie about rape

The myth that innocent men are often falsely accused of sexual assault is based on the fear that men will be unjustly accused of something that they are entitled to (Sampert, 2010: 307). A consequence of this myth is that police unfound a large percentage of cases reported to them (Bohner, 2009: 19; Sampert, 2010: 307). This use of discretion stems from traditional attitudes in which rape is defined only within those events that fit into a (typically male) police officer’s perception of what a rape case should be (Sampert, 2010: 307). Research not only reveals that officers are wary about sexual assault claims in general, but whether or not a victim is perceived as genuine and truthful has been found to affect whether or not a case is seen to be founded. In other words, officers are not only doubtful, but they may essentially dismiss cases that do not look to be legitimate, and those that are considered to have low chance of conviction

are not prosecuted (Alderden & Ullman, 2012: 527). If a case is determined to be unfounded, it is no longer investigated. Determination based on officer perceptions on whether an alleged sexual assault is false is influenced by an officer's skepticism of victim claims. Research shows that many officers subscribe to stereotypes about rape (Alderden & Ullman, 2012: 527; Tempkin & Krahe, 2008: 38).

Other examples of this myth include that 'women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them' or even that the woman cries 'rape for revenge.' This is expressed in the popular idea that women use accusations of rape as a tactic for revenge or simply to get attention; as Brownmiller points out that

The most bitter irony of rape, I think, has been the historic masculine fear of false accusation, a fear that has found expression in male folklore since the Biblical days of Joseph the Israelite and Potiphar's wife, that was given new life and meaning in the psychoanalytic doctrines of Sigmund Freud and his followers, and that has formed the crux of the legal defense against a rape charge, aided and abetted by the set of evidentiary standards (consent, resistance, chastity, corroboration) designed with one collective purpose in mind: to protect the male against a scheming, lying, vindictive woman (1975: 133,156).

Therefore, there is a deeply seated historical basis to the belief that women are liars who aim to discredit men, and that, for this, they should be punished. The same belief system rears its ugly head in modern society when it is thought that many women who claim that they have been raped are being dishonest and trying to punish or hurt men. The effect of this on women can be equally potent; it is a fear that is internalized by large proportions of them. It is easy to move from a state of thinking that women are liars to treating them as such.

(4) Exonerating the perpetrator / men of good standing do not sexually assault women

This myth incorporates beliefs that exonerate male perpetrators by blaming the victim or the circumstances, for example, by believing that 'alcohol is to blame when a man rapes a

woman' (Bohner et al., 2009: 22). Asking questions about the victim such as “why does she stay with him,” “why does she pick guys like that,” or “how could she let that happen” shift focus away from the perpetrator’s behaviour to an assumed, individualized problem with the victim (Coates & Ridley, 2009: 116). Additionally, perpetrators “actively discredit victims, present their actions as mutual, carefully project positive images and engage in a wide range of other concealing behaviours” (Coates & Ridley, 2009: 112). Exonerating the perpetrators or denying that they committed the crime at all is commonplace among young, white affluent men, illuminating an important intersection of race and class. Additionally, the perpetrators’ marital status or reputation is another aspect of exonerating them of sexual assault (Sampert, 2010: 318). When perpetrators are married or in a relationship, it casts doubt on the victimization that took place—working with the myth that rape is about sex and that if the perpetrator has access to sex, he has no reason to commit a sexual assault (Sampert, 2010: 318). Being seen as a ‘nice boy’ or as having a good reputation is also a way to deny that they are capable of such an act.

One way responsibility can be obscured is by portraying his acts as non-deliberate and out of character, and this is frequently done by saying that the perpetrator as being “acted upon by an overwhelming force that is outside his control” (Coates, 1997; Coates & Wade, 2004, 2007; Marolla and Scully, 1979; Morgan & O’Neill, 2001; O’Neill & Morgan, 2001; Sykes & Matza, 1957 as cited in Coates & Ridley, 2009: 114). This excuse for the behaviour of the perpetrator include blaming emotions (such as “he lost his temper”), sexual drive (“I could not help myself”), or other psychological phenomena (“I just lost it”) (Coates & Ridley, 2009: 114). What these examples illustrate is an attempt to externalize the cause of the violence, all in an effort to frame the violent actions as non-deliberate and out of one’s control. Along the same vein, when the perpetrator’s actions are explained as being a “mechanically triggered” actions initiated by the victim (for example, “she lead me on” or “she pushed my buttons”), then the

actions are also denied as being deliberately performed by the perpetrator (Coates & Ridley, 2009: 114). The proposition that men cannot control themselves and are provoked in committing violent acts places responsibility on women for male sexual behaviour.

(5) Only certain types of women are raped

Some examples of this myth include that if a woman dresses in provocative clothing, she should not be surprised if she is raped; or that nice girls do not get raped, whereas the ones that hang out in bars and sleep around do (Bohner, 2009: 19). These kinds of myths deny victims their innocence, ignore that fact that babies, children, and elderly women are assaulted, deny that most rapes that happen are committed by someone known to the victim, and forget that a small percentage of rape victims are boys and men who are raped by other men (Benedict, 1992: 16). This type of myth also subscribes to the idea that women in the sex industry cannot be raped. Also, the idea of ‘slutty’ women who ask for it is part of a bigger more widely held myth that bad things do not happen to good people, which is a belief that can lead victims to blame themselves (Benedict, 1992: 16). “Women should avoid dressing like sluts in order not to be victimized” (Pilkington, 2011: 1). This is what a Toronto police officer suggested for women to not do in order to remain safe. This type of thinking that suggests that women “ask for it” and are somehow to be held accountable for men’s violence perpetuates the victim-blaming and makes it less likely for a victim to report, especially when such a comment is coming from the police themselves. This comment resulted in the organizing of the “SlutWalk” which is a protest movement declared to make a “unified statement about sexual assault and victims’ rights and to demand respect¹⁷” and operates globally.

¹⁷ <http://www.slutwalktoronto.com>

(6) The perpetrator is the “other”

This myth comes in two forms: in a racialized form and in the form of “stranger rape,” in which madness is often implied. The racialized form is one of the myths Benedict identifies as prominent in which the assailant is black, fueling the belief that black men regularly commit sexual assault against white women (1992: 15). In Canada, the mythologized racialized perpetrator may be “Aboriginal, an immigrant, some other visible minority, or a religious minority” (Sampert, 2010: 311). In this common myth, “normal” white Canadian men do not victimize women, but, rather, the rapist is identified as being different from “us” (Sampert, 2010: 311). The intersection of race and class is also inferred in this myth, as those that are white and affluent would not commit sexual assault. It is, however, much easier to believe that a poor, racialized man would. White is constructed as the pristine and innocent ideal and whiteness is seen as normal (Jiwani, 2006: 6). In actuality, this type of thinking is not novel for sexual assault crimes; it is relevant for most crimes and is rooted in privilege and colonialism. Smith (2005) writes that in a search of major newspapers coverage of sexual assault in Native communities from 1998 to 2004, stories were almost completely limited to cases in which a Native man was the suspected perpetrator and the victim was a white female; additionally, there was almost no coverage of Native women as victims of sexual violence even though it is known that this demographic is more likely than other groups of women in the U.S. to be victims of sexual assault (Smith, 2005: 26).

Research also demonstrates that police perception of rape is affected by the idea that it is more common for a sexual assault case to be founded if the sexual assault was committed by a stranger (Maier, 2008: 788). This constitutes another instantiation of Myth #6 in which the perpetrator is the “other.” Additionally, these cases are more likely to be picked up by the media (McCormick, 1995: 28). As well, understanding the perpetrator as being the “other” can also

mean reinforcing the popular conception of the perpetrator as some sort of monster, “a sick, emotionally disturbed man” (Wells & Motley, 2001: 155). There is a persistent belief in the myth that a “real” rape involves extreme violence by a stranger (Mason & Monckton-Smith, 2008: 691).

This type of thinking adheres to the myth that most sexual assaults are committed by someone unknown to the victim, contrary to official statistical knowledge that tells us that women are most likely to be assaulted by someone with whom they are already acquainted (Carter & Weaver, 2003: 38). Gill (2008) identified the rape myth of the “deranged stranger” was commonly found in news reports (139-44). Additionally, her linguistic analysis of the British tabloid newspaper, the Sun, Clark (1992) looked at how the use of language in sexual assault stories can portray blame. Her examination illustrated the creation of a false dichotomy between male perpetrators who were dehumanized and exaggerated (described with words like ‘fiend,’ ‘monster,’ ‘ripper,’ and ‘crazed killer,’ for example) and those whom the paper deemed to be ‘normal’ (labels like ‘hubby,’ ‘man,’ and ‘daddy’ were used) (as cited in Carter & Weaver, 2003: 37-8). Additionally, Mason and Monckton-Smith (2008) found that perpetrators have been described as “beasts” or “perverts” and distanced from “ordinary” men, and Soothill et al. (1990) has found this imagery was more apparent over time (O’Hara, 2012: 248). By placing men in this type of over-simplified dichotomy, there is a lack of a representation of the “continuum of men’s violence against women (Carter & Weaver, 2003: 38). Clark (1992) also noted in her analysis that newspaper reports were inclined towards reporting a high number of attacks by strangers.

(7) The new myth of the female perpetrator and male victim

In her 2002 analysis of the portrayal of victims and perpetrators in Canadian newspapers, Sampert found a new emerging myth, the “over-representation of the female perpetrator and the

male victim” (2010: 313). Although most stories she analyzed had a female victim, male victims were strongly over-represented (Sampert, 2010: 313). Reporting news on sexual assault focus on a “unique victim or unique perpetrator” that it is unusual; this reflects the news media’s value of “novelty” (Meyers, 1997; Cox, 2004 as cited in Sampert, 2010: 313). Identifying this as a myth is not intended to minimize the victimization of males; it is, however, important to point out the skewed nature in which the media report crimes. The aggressive female perpetrator is a newly developing category of women criminal; the “sexually violent female predator” (Kilty & Frigon, 2006: 58) is a novelty feature for the media.

These seven rape myths help to frame common stereotypes about sexual assault and will help guide my content analysis. This study of how the media report on rape and sexual violence and their use of rape myths provides a framework for an analysis of media representation of sexual violence against women in Canadian print media.

4.4 Data

This thesis focuses on newspaper articles as a specific source/unit of inquiry. The sources I choose to look at include three major Canadian newspapers: *The National Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, and the *Toronto Star*. I chose these newspapers because of their political and social power in the Canadian press in terms of large circulations. In addition, the three newspapers are ideologically different, which should allow for a broader and more representative range of representations of rape / sexual assault.

The National Post is one of three major English language Canadian national newspapers and is owned by Postmedia Network Incorporated. It is a right-wing newspaper that is geared towards an audience that includes business and political elites. The Canadian Newspaper Association (2012) reports that *The National Post* has a weekly circulation of approximately

1,000,000 copies nationwide. *The National Post* was chosen due to its potential political and social influence on its audience. *The Globe and Mail* is the second major English language national Canadian newspaper. It is owned by The Globe and Mail Incorporated and is a center to center-left newspaper. It is Canada's largest circulation national newspaper and the second largest daily paper after *The Toronto Star* with a weekly circulation of 1,800,000 (Canadian Newspaper Association, 2012). *The Toronto Star* is owned by Torstar Corporation and is politically a center to center-left newspaper. *The Toronto Star* is the most read English-language newspaper in Canada with a weekly circulation of 2,500,000 (Canadian Newspaper Association, 2012). These newspapers were all chosen not only because they are among Canada's most circulated newspapers but also due to their differing readership and political ideologies which offer the potential of differing views on how sexual assault is reported.

The online archive of Factiva was used to gather the newspaper articles. Factiva is a single point-of-access online database that provides access to over 6,000 Canadian and foreign newspapers, magazines, and reports (Factiva, 2014). This research uses a purposive sampling strategy, which involves purposefully selecting certain articles for their relevance to the issue being studied (Gray, et al., 2007: 105). An advantage of this type of sampling is to ensure that the researcher is able to get information from sources crucial to the study, but one of its limitations is that there is no assurance that the articles selected are in any way representative of the general population, in this case of English Canadian print media (Gray, et al., 2007: 105).

I started by using the search term 'sexual assault' and then discovered that it is regularly shortened to 'sex assault' or 'sex attack' so I modified my search terms to 'sex* assault' or 'sex* attack.' The final query that I used to search through the texts was: 'sex* assault' OR 'sex* attack' OR rape within the time period January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012. I then looked

through the articles and eliminated editorials (as there were not enough to compare since the Toronto Star did not contain any editorials), opinion pieces, letters to the editor, movie reviews, or pieces where the search terms were just mentioned once or twice in passing and were not the main focus of the article. After meticulously searching through the data, I was left with twenty-four (24) articles from the *Toronto Star*, ten (10) articles from *The Globe and Mail*, and nine (9) articles from *The National Post* (see Appendix A for details).

4.5 Research Strategy: Analytic Stages

To begin my content analysis, I read through the articles several times. The research questions guiding the analysis were:

RQ1. How do Canadian newspapers construct the issue of sexual assault in print news articles?

RQ2. To what extent do these articles reproduce ‘rape myths’ or, alternatively, articulate elements of a feminist discourse on sexual assault that reject rape myths?

I then drew on step four of Huckin’s guide for content analysis, in which the units of analysis or codes emerge logically from the research questions (2008: 17). The features found need to have direct bearing on the question, in so much as the appearance of a feature will mean either “direct support” or “direct non-support” for it (Huckin, 2008: 17). In cases where the unit of analysis was a specific type of lexical item, the coding was straightforward (Huckin, 2008: 17). For example, when looking at rape myths and the incidence of certain lexical items, I could create a list of reference terms that were apparent from my initial search and previous research (i.e. Sampert’s 2006 analysis) such as “sex-assault”, “sex-attack”, or “sex-abuse”. In addition, making a list of key thematic ideas or potential codes prior to my analysis as a sort of framework

was helpful; for example, I used the rape myths that I had outlined in my literature review and theory sections as well as those found in other similar research, and additionally, I identified words or themes that could indicate an alternative discourse or feminist analysis present in the data. Coding these more abstract concepts was more challenging, and identifying these features was a multi-stage process that involved numerous readings through my corpus (Huckin, 2008: 18). In addition to having these established concepts help guide my coding process, I was also open to new concepts and themes emerging from the data during which I revisited and revised categories in order to best capture the data.

During this process, I highlighted and underlined words or ideas that I thought would be important in regards to my operationalization of key concepts and made brief notes on my thoughts on those specific sentences or words in the margins. I read a few times looking for various rape myths, which included victim blaming, and then following that, I read a few times looking for possible feminist discourse on rape present in the articles. Following this coding process, I constructed summary or memo sheets in an Excel document in which I included descriptive codes (sentences as they appear in the text, in the same order they appear in the text with bolding or underlining to highlight important portions) in a vertical analysis, where listed ideas went from concrete to more general and abstract categories. It was from this document that I pulled quotes and themes and wrote the next chapter, my analytic results.

V. CHAPTER FIVE: RESULTS

This chapter presents the findings from my content analysis of twenty-four (24) articles from the *Toronto Star*, ten (10) from *The Globe and Mail*, and nine (9) from *The National Post* published between the periods of January 1, 2012 to December 31, 2012. The content analysis on the *Toronto Star* is divided into eight (8) themes, *The Globe and Mail* into four (4) themes, and *The National Post* into three (3) themes (as not all themes were found present in all three papers).

5.1 *The Toronto Star*

5.1.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex

In the *Toronto Star*, I found an interesting lexical style that was being used to suggest that sex is an acceptable way to describe sexual assault or rape. When I was searching for newspaper articles, I started by using the word sexual assault and then noticed that it was regularly being shortened to ‘sex assault’ or ‘sex attack’. This lexical style was very salient in the headlines of the *Toronto Star* articles, in which sixteen (16) of the twenty-four (24) articles looked at contained the term “sex assault” or a variation of this term in the headlines. Similarly to Sampert’s (2010) research, the Criminal Code description of sexual assault was being referred to as ‘sex’ assault or attack. In the articles examined, I am in agreement with Sampert in that

calling it a ‘sex’ assault rather than a sexual assault is a deliberate lexical choice by editorial staff that trivializes and makes informal the assaultive nature of sexual assault to a “sex” attack. The term “sexual assault” uses an adjective to describe the noun, allowing the assault to have primacy. By comparison, the term “sex assault” or “sex attack” uses two nouns that places primary focus on the first word “sex” and shifts the emphasis away from the second word “assault.” The decision to use the word “sex” rather than the word “sexual” to modify assault is a deliberate act by the editors and reporters and does not reflect the word choice of police or lawyers. It is a function of the lexical style of the newspaper (Sampert, 2010: 305).

The notion that rape is sexual rather than a fusion of sex and violence encourages people not to take it seriously as a crime. To repeat from earlier in this paper, rape is not about sex; it is the use of sex to inflict terror and express domination. In addition to the term “sex-assault,” the terms “sex-trial,” “sex-attack,” “sex-case,” and “sex-abuse” were also used in other headlines. What is of particular interest is that, in almost all of these articles, it was only in the headlines in which this lexical style of using two nouns (“sex” followed by assault, for example) was used. Within the article themselves, the journalist regularly switched back to using the term “sexual assault.” Van Dijk states that the function of headlines is to capture the attention of the audience and invite them to read the story further, and this use of sex as a means to sell news is a common notion within the media (1993: 264). As discussed earlier, the linguistic structures in the construction of news stories is not a value-free representation of facts. It is not ‘found’ or even ‘gathered’ so much as it is made; rather, it is a process of creation (Fowler, 1991: 13). This lexical choice mitigates the fact that sexual assault is violent.

5.1.2 Rape Myth #2: The Victim Provoked the Sexual Assault

This rape myth was found in one (1) of the twenty-four (24) articles examined in the *Toronto Star*. The article (headline: “Defence lawyer cleared of sex assault; Judge finds accuser's tale not credible and contradictory”) also mentions a woman allegedly fabricating stories about rape (rape myth #3, to be discussed next) but also includes evidence of victim blaming. Generally, this myth entails the belief that women provoke rape through their appearance or behaviour and in this instance it is the behaviour of the woman in the article. The woman is said

by the defence council¹⁸ as having “**described cocaine and alcohol binges** with Da Silva [the accused]” (14). Research has shown that, when drugs and alcohol are involved, victims are targeted (Kilpatrick et al., 2007) and that victims who consume alcohol prior to being assaulted are perceived as more responsible for the attack than non-intoxicated victims. Research also shows that perpetrators are considered to be less blameworthy when the victim is intoxicated, regardless of whether the perpetrator has been drinking or not (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 449). Therefore, there is an underlying tone of victim blaming within the article (in addition to the suggestion of “fabrication” of the sexual assault, to be discussed next). What are also of interest are the quotes that were included by the journalist, in which the relatives of the women describe her as “**needy and self-centered**” as well as “**a bit of a drama queen**” (14). This type of demeaning portrait of her character suggests that she would be the type of person has no reason to be believed, taken seriously, and may be responsible in her victimization due to her dramatic behaviour.

5.1.3 Rape Myth #3: Women Often Lie about being Raped

A main theme that became apparent in the data from the Toronto Star was questioning the victim’s credibility: more specifically, suggesting that she may be lying, which is classified in this thesis as rape myth #3. Stories that were coded as containing this myth included those where a woman was alleged to be lying about a rape taking place; this myth was found in four (4) of the twenty-four (24) articles. For instance, the article headlined as “Pastor acquitted; Nearly 500 sex assault charges were laid at tiny Korean church without a conviction” stated that: “Song's [the victim’s] defence argued that the **complainant had a motive to lie** because her

¹⁸ Defence counsel can be expected to emphasize the good character of the accused and often times, this is who is quoted in the article. Sometimes the media cannot include much information about the victim because of a publication ban.

husband was one of the nine members charged after Song went to the police (1). Another article about the same case (headline: “Pastor sex trial ends with surprise nude video; Time on tape differs from earlier testimony”) presented a similar statement: “Defence lawyer Christophe Preobrazenski argued Song's **accuser had a "motivation to fabricate"** events after her husband and eight other church members were slapped with 485 charges, including gang rape, in March 2010” (5). In this case, the defence counsel for the accused was trying to discredit the women trying to press charges, and what is of particular interest is that the Crown had to explain why one of the women did not resist her attacker. “The Crown argued that **the complainant did not cry out or run away during the assault because her will was overruled by the influence and control of a man who was her pastor, elder and landlord**” (1). This also coincides with victim blaming and questioning the way that a “true” or “real” victim should be thought to behave during a sexual assault. It is a common myth that if a woman does not demonstrate active resistance, she is not being sexually assaulted (and, subsequently, is lying if she says she was assaulted).

In another article featuring the idea of a woman fabricating a story about being raped, the headline reads: “Radio contestant **lied about being raped; Makes up sex-assault story** in bid to win \$10,000” and continues: “the co-host of KISS 92.5's Roz & Mocha Show says he's not sure if the popular radio program will issue an apology for a segment aired Thursday morning, which featured a contestant **who lied about being raped** to win a \$10,000 prize” (2). The article continues by saying that the woman “appearing on the morning show Friday to face accusations **she was lying**, she revealed "the majority of the story" had been “exaggerated” (2). The host of the radio show states that this type of situation “**makes for an entertaining show**” (2) and that “money games (based on similar situations) are **nothing new**” (2), implying that lying for money

is nothing new. However, this may also be interpreted as the idea that lying about being raped is thought of as “nothing new” and that adding this type of controversy to a radio show makes for a more entertaining show which trivializes violence against women and makes it seem commonplace and not out of the ordinary. The coding in this theme was quite straightforward as the text of the articles explicitly points to women fabricating stories about rape (rape myth #3).

The last article (headline: “Defence lawyer cleared of sex assault; Judge finds accuser's tale not credible and contradictory”) also mentions women allegedly fabricating stories about rape: “**The 23-year-old woman**, who cannot be identified, **spun “a web of vicious lies,”** he [the accused] told reporters” (14); “Provincial court Justice Micheline Rawlins said she **found most of the woman's testimony contradictory and incredible**, implying **she was needy and self-centered**” (14); “One relative testified **she was manipulative** and a “**bit of a drama queen,**” the judge said” (14); The judge implied **the woman fabricated the accusations against Da Silva to spare herself being seen “in a negative light”**”(14). The woman said that she had dated the man for a few months during which she was physically abused (and the judge found her injuries consistent with the story) but the man (Da Silva) denied dating her, saying that “he met her “a handful of times” and she would show up drunk at his door (14).

5.1.4 Rape Myth #4: Men of Good Standing do not Rape

Even though many journalistic guidelines may prevent reporters from giving too many details, it is not likely that they will mention how the sexual assault negatively impacted the victim; rather, the press will usually focus on the rapists’ families (O’Hara, 2012: 252) and their own good standing within the community. Overall, six (6) articles out of the twenty-four (24) examined in the *Toronto Star* contained this myth. For example, in one article headline the perpetrator is presented as a “Ryerson student described as a ‘**bright, typical, quiet 20-year**

old”(headline, 6), which suggests that smart, quiet, typical men are not rapists. The article continues to shift accountability away from the perpetrator by adding the following: ““He has an **absolutely impeccable background,**” Weisz [the accused’s lawyer] said. “He’s a **very bright, typical, quiet 20-year-old. Both he and his entire family are in shock,**” Weisz added”” and also that ““He is a **complete stranger to the criminal justice system,**” Weisz said. He described his client as an **academically gifted young man who is a role model to two younger sisters.**”” (6). The emphasis of this article is on the accused and not the sexual assault itself. It discusses the perpetrator’s solid reputation, suggesting that he is an upstanding citizen, with sisters of his own, with the connotation that he would never sexually assault another woman. There is mention that the perpetrator’s family is “in shock,” but the article makes no mention of the victim, the state of her well-being, or how her family is dealing with the sexual assault.

Another article also perpetuated the myth that men of good standing do not commit sexual assault. The article headlined, “Teacher facing sex assault charges; Eastdale Collegiate student alleges attack” began with an emphasis on the accusation towards the teacher rather than the action: ““We obviously also know that charges don't constitute guilt. **You are innocent until proven guilty,**” Butcher said”” (11). Yet another article (headline: “Swansea shocked by sex assault case; Community leader faces charges dating to 1960s”) focused on the community being shocked about a man of good standing being accused of sexual assault: ““**A lot of people in the community haven't got a clue and they are absolutely in shock right now,** particularly the people connected to the historical society”” (12). The perpetrator being discussed is described as “**the long-time president of the Swansea Historical Society** who is also a **former area teacher and Boy Scout leader**” (12), and people who knew him were interviewed in the article: ““I worked very closely with Norm at the town hall,” Doucette said. “**It's very difficult for people**

in the community right now. It's opening old wounds for some. And others are saying **I don't believe this . . .** So you are getting a lot of mixed emotions right now in the community” (12). The focus here is that it is hard for the community to believe that a man in good standing could commit a sexual assault and it is being difficult for those in the community who knew him, and yet there is no mention in the article about the victim or how difficult life has been for her. The article continues with another interview with a member of the community who knew the perpetrator: “Over the past 20 years . . . **he has contributed positively in terms of gathering the history of Swansea and being a positive member of the board of management, and driving seniors around to doctors' appointments and shopping, and so on,**” he said. “**It's just very upsetting**” (12). This article suggests that thinking that a man who is so “positive” and respected within the community can be guilty of such a crime is upsetting. The article continues with more positive accolades attributed to the perpetrator (McLeod): “In May 2010, local MPP Cheri DeNovo presented McLeod with an **award of recognition** from the province for the 25th anniversary of the Swansea Historical Society” (12) and “In November that year **he was among a team of community members awarded \$6,000 from the Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon for organizing the best neighbourhood cheering section**” (12).

Another article (headline: “Durham cop faces charges of child porn, sex assault; Veteran police constable on 'sunshine' list”) also highlights the achievements of the perpetrator: “In 2006, **he was one of the highest paid police constables in the GTA, according to the provincial "sunshine list" of public servants** who earned more than \$100,000. In 2005, Terry made \$186,920, as **one of the members of the service's elite Nuclear Security Division**, which patrols the Pickering and Darlington stations” (16). In yet another article (headline: “Shootout suspect jailed for assault; Accused in Eaton Centre attack sentenced to a year for sex attack”), the

perpetrator is described, interestingly by a member of the criminal justice system who found him guilty of sexually assaulting a woman, as an “**articulate and thoughtful individual**” (18), and the defense for the perpetrator stated that “his client had a troubled past and is **the caring father of a 3-year-old girl**. He was **attending George Brown College** and had **no previous violent convictions at the time of the offence**” (18). The lawyer defending the perpetrator also stated the following: “he [the perpetrator] is intelligent enough to learn from this experience” (18). This type of description suggested that someone who is “articulate,” “thoughtful,” attending school, and also a father of a girl would not have the capacity to commit such a crime against another woman.

Finally, in one article (headline: “Retired teacher charged in '60s sex abuse case”), the perpetrator who is charged with sexual assault is described as being “in **good health and of sound mind**” (22) which can be analyzed as meaning that normal guys do not rape; rather, those men who do are somehow mentally impaired. The article also states that “Owen taught at eight Scarborough public schools between 1959 and 1981 before **he retired in good standing**. He was a trained guidance counsellor, according to his teaching certificate, and police believe he tutored a number of children” (22). This lists that he was explicitly “in good standing” and also a plethora of his good merits which helps indicate that he was a good teacher. Therefore, the myth of a man of good standing being accused of sexual assault reinforces the myth that men may be falsely accused of sexual assault. It also reinforces rape myth #6, to be discussed next.

5.1.5 Rape Myth #6: “Othering” and the Myth of Stranger Rape

Rape myth #6, which includes the idea of stranger rape was found in one (1) of the twenty-four (24) articles in the *Toronto Star*. In the article (headline: “Retired teacher charged in '60s sex abuse case”), the perpetrator who is charged with sexual assault is described as being “in

good health and of sound mind” (22) which, to repeat, can be analyzed as meaning that normal guys do not rape; rather, only “crazy” men who are also stranger to the victim are the type of men who rape although statistics do not indicate this has any truth to it. In this case, the perpetrator was very well known to the victim(s) and was described in the article to be a good teacher with a number of good merits, casting doubt that he could be what a stereotypical rapist would be.

5.1.6 Rape Myth #7: Over-Representations of Female Perpetrators

The seventh rape myth discussed in this thesis is the new myth of the female perpetrator and the male victim, which translates into an over-representation of female perpetrators/male victims in newspaper stories about sexual assault. Overall, only one (1) article out of the twenty-four (24) examined in the *Toronto Star* contained this theme. The article is headlined, “Ruling due Friday in sex case; Crown argues that teacher seduced student, but defence insists she was manipulated by teen” (20), and introduces a female teacher charged with sexual assault: “**Mary Gowans was either a trusting teacher ensnared by an obsessed ex-student, or a seductress grooming the youth for sex.** Two warring pictures emerged Tuesday during final submissions in the sex assault trial of the former Toronto public elementary school teacher” (20). The article continues with the prosecutors in the trial explaining how the teacher was trying to blame the victim: “Gowans crossed the line with her former student and when found out desperately tried to blame the victim, prosecutor Soula Olver argued. “According to her, this is his fault,” Olver told Justice John McMahon. “If the gender roles were reversed, one can imagine the outrage that would follow such an accusation”” (20). The article continues to explain the relationship between the two involved, citing hundreds of texts being exchanged with the mother ultimately reporting the female teacher to the police.

5.1.7 Reporting of Certain Types of Rape

Overall, the *Toronto Star* included four (4) of these articles, which include those that discuss stranger rape stories of gang rape and those involving young children. The first article (headline: “Man arrested in sex assault on girl, 4) states the following: “Police have arrested a man in connection with the kidnapping and **sexual assault of a 4-year-old girl** in North York last Boxing Day ...**the young girl was taken to hospital where it was confirmed that she had been sexually assaulted.** She was released the following day” (10). The next few articles examined were all involving gang rape. One article, headlined “Six sought in **gang sex assault**” (13), states the following: “Police say **a 27-year-old woman was forced into a vehicle in downtown Toronto on at about 9:30 p.m. Tuesday and taken to a home where she was sexually assaulted by six men**” (13). The next article (headline: “Gang rape case may take long time”) discusses the same case:

One week after allegations of **a shocking gang rape incident** that began on Yonge St., Toronto police have released no further details of the investigation and say it could take "a long time" to break the case... the woman was taken to a home in the Yonge St. and Eglinton Ave. area, where **she was sexually assaulted by all six men until, hours later, they fled the home, allowing her to escape. All six suspects remain at large** (23).

The final article examined headlined: “U.S. man charged in cruise ship gang rape; Teen boys also accused in attack on girl, 15” (24). The articles says:

Federal prosecutors said a Florida man participated in **the gang rape of a 15-year-old girl** while on board a Carnival cruise ship last weekend. Casey Dickerson, 31, was arrested on a federal sex charge Monday after an FBI investigation accused him and several teenage boys of having forcible sex with the girl in a cabin on the Carnival Sensation on Sunday (24).

5.1.8 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape

Not all news coverage presents a singular view on rape. In fact, there was also evidence of an alternative discourse, namely a feminist discourse on rape, present in the *Toronto Star*. In

this thesis, the elements that I am bringing in and categorizing as feminist discourse are those that disrupt patriarchal and sexist notions and a significant part of doing so is directly combatting rape myths and shattering stereotypes. For example, the following articles are against victim blaming (rape myth #2) and not only do the articles identify these myths but they also combat them by explaining why they are myths and question common beliefs that endorse these myths.

There were two (2) articles out of the twenty- four (24) that included this type of discourse. In one article, (headlined “Why sexual assault details aren't revealed” in regards to sexual assaults in Toronto area and how details are reported”) the journalist constructs this article with quotes of individuals who are critical of rape myths. An example of this is a quote from a Toronto police officer who is cited as saying the following: **“Every woman responds in a different way to the sexual assault and it's important for us to send the message that they are all serious, that they are all investigated seriously, and to get into the specifics of what happened doesn't contribute to that”** (7). Additionally, the article discusses the changes in the law:

In 1983, the offence of rape was repealed from the Criminal Code and replaced with the broader term of sexual assault. **The change was made in part because it was difficult to get a conviction. Lawyers could question women about past sexual history to discredit them, and many women chose not to report the crime.** Under the Criminal Code, sexual assault includes any unwanted contact of a sexual nature, from touching and kissing to violent sexual attacks and including verbal threats with sexual overtones. **It's another reason why police always use the term "sexual assault" in their alerts, said Gray, because it mirrors the legal language** (7).

The article also refers to the 1986 case of Jane Doe:

The language police use when communicating about sex assaults has evolved over time. Jane Doe, her identity protected, successfully sued Toronto Police after she was raped at knifepoint in 1986. Doe's assailant, known as the "Balcony Rapist," had a preferred victim type and area of operation that police had documented, yet didn't warn the public. **After Doe won her lawsuit in 1998, a city audit followed. Among its**

recommendations: police should revise their sex assault alerts (7).

One of the officers interviewed in the newspaper article is cited as criticizing how alerts were usually based on victim blaming ways in terms of what women should or should not do, assuming that they held responsibility for their assault:

“A lot of those alerts didn’t include any factual language about how the assault transpired, but rather they were seen as fear-based in nature and were a list of warnings and 'don't do this' and 'don't do that,’” said Gray, who has sat on an advisory committee made up of experts from the field. **Examples, she said, included telling women to avoid dimly lit streets, to not walk alone at night or talk on a cellphone (7).**

“When we do those types of warnings, all we're really doing is reinforcing the myth that sexual assault only happens to women who don't protect themselves.” In recent years, police have focused on providing as much information around an assault as possible - the location, time of day, how the victim was approached, what the perpetrator was wearing and the direction they took afterward. All this without going beyond the fact a sexual assault took place (7).

This last portion of the article acknowledges the existence of rape myths and gives examples of victim blaming language.

In another article that includes some evidence of a feminist discourse, the headline reads the following: “A sex assault victim's reaction: 'Hello @kristaford ... So, you've called me a whore. Here we are. This is awkward now, isn't it?' Alice Moran, victim of one of the sexual assaults that led to Ford's tweet” (8). Even though the title includes the term “sex assault” rather than “sexual assault”, which is problematic as discussed earlier, the article does include some good examples of why blaming the victim of sexual assault is wrong (for example, in the following paragraph where I look at the comments that Moran made about how blaming the victim for how they dress is wrong).

The controversy started with a tweet that was released online by a politician's niece which stated the following: "Stay alert, walk tall, carry mace, take self-defence classes & don't dress like a whore." #DontBeAVictim #StreetSmart Krista Ford, niece of mayor Rob Ford, in a tweet Wednesday" (8). Moran, one of the self-identified victims to whom the tweet was directed at, responded to the victim-blaming and disturbing quote given by Krista Ford. "Moran spoke out Thursday in an open letter to Krista Ford, who was widely criticized after a tweet warning women to protect themselves from attacks by not dressing like "whores" (8). Moran is cited as stating that "I just feel **like there's this pervasive attitude that we can talk about women in these kinds of terms, and it's unacceptable,**" as well as "**the entire point of (the letter) is we have security of person ... it doesn't matter how we dress**" (8). This article thus criticized the comments made against victims of sexual assault and directly challenged the myth that how a woman is dressed is connected to why she was assaulted.

5.2 The Globe and Mail

5.2.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex

Just as in the *Toronto Star*, a majority of the ten (10) articles in *The Globe and Mail* used the lexical style of shortening sexual assault to "sex" assault or "sex" attack. Overall, seven out of the ten articles looked at used this lexical style in their headlines; six used "sex-assault," and one used "sex attack." The headlines are "Can horror over rape change a culture? Brutal **sex attack** prompts anger at patriarchal attitudes in a society often citing women's independence as source of misfortune" (1); "Why **sex assault** victims are going public; As women go online to shame their attackers, experts caution that while catharsis may be achieved, they're taking a risk" (2); "**Sex assault** suspect makes court appearance" (3); "**Sex-assault** suspect turns himself in; Attack 'appears to be random,' police say" (4); "**Sex assault** charge linked to rave stayed"

(5);“Pickton lessons crucial in **sex-assault** arrest, RCMP say” (6); and “Tori Stafford's body too badly decomposed to determine if **sex assault** occurred” (7).

5.2.2 Rape Myth #4: Men of Good Standing do not Rape

Two (2) articles out of the ten (10) examined in *The Globe and Mail* perpetuated the myth that men of good standing do not commit rape. Just as in the *Toronto Star*, these articles did not address harms done to the victim(s), but rather, focused on how the perpetrator and his family were affected by the crime. The article with the headline “Sex assault suspect makes court appearance” (3) begins with a focus on the perpetrator: “A **20-year-old Ryerson University student** facing multiple charges in two knifepoint home-invasion sex attacks appeared briefly in court Thursday afternoon and was remanded in custody” (3). The article continued with a description of how the perpetrator is a stranger to the criminal justice system and how his family is in shock: “**He's holding up as well as can expected,**” his lawyer, Jordan Weisz, said outside court. “This came as a **complete shock to both my client and his family**... to my knowledge, **he has never been in trouble with the criminal justice system before** (3).” The article continues: “Mr. Hejazi [the perpetrator] **had excellent grades in school and could probably have got into any university he chose**” and the lawyer continued with stating that

I've had an opportunity to meet with him at length and I can tell you that **he presents as anything but a hardened criminal ... He plays computer games, he helps around the house, he has two younger sisters he is very helpful to, he has, quite frankly, been a role model to them which is quite frankly why the family finds this so shocking. He is a complete stranger to the criminal justice system** (3).

A majority of the article was intent on painting a positive picture of the perpetrator. It points out that he is nothing of what the public would picture a stereotypical criminal to be: he is a smart student, he does chores, he has two younger sisters that he is a role model to. It is interesting that the article made a point to mention the sex of his siblings, expressing doubt that someone who is

a role model to two younger girls could be capable of raping another woman. Everything mentioned in the article tries to assure the reader that this is a ‘normal’ guy and he would never be capable of rape. The article downplays the severity of the assault by including these positive descriptions of the perpetrator and his family. It concludes with description of how hurt his family is: “Along with three supporters, **his mother was also present in court** Thursday. **She wept as her handcuffed son was led into the courtroom**, clad in a black open-necked shirt and jeans and looking pale” (3). There is mention of how distraught the mother of the perpetrator is, although there is no mention of how his actions affected the two women he is accused of sexually assaulting. The article ends with yet another quote from the perpetrators lawyer on what a good student he is: “**He's a bright kid, he was doing quite well in university**” (3). Overall, the emphasis is on the accusation, not the assault or the victim. The article makes no attempt to hold the perpetrator accountable for his actions.

In another article about the same case, headlined “Sex-assault suspect turns himself in; Attack ‘appears to be random,’” police say,” (4) there is also mention of the perpetrator and how good he is, this time recalled by a neighbour: “**I feel so sad for this boy. I hope he didn't do this. I hope they prove him not guilty.** Because he's my neighbour. When you know somebody and something [like this] happens, it's no good. **I feel so sad for the mother**” (4).

5.2.3 Reporting of Certain Types of Rape

Just as in the *Toronto Star*, there were articles in *The Globe and Mail* that reported on a certain type of rape. Three (3) out of the ten (10) articles included discuss stranger rape stories of gang rape. The first article (headline: “Can horror over rape change a culture? **Brutal sex attack** prompts anger at patriarchal attitudes in a society” [1]) and begins with the following:

She was the 637th case of rape the police registered this year in the Indian capital. But the story of this young woman – **found naked and near death**

after being gang raped on a bus Sunday night – seems to have pierced the pained resignation of Indian women and the men in their lives as few similar crimes previously have (1).

The article's headline uses horrific language to tell the reader that the sexual assault was "brutal" and then continues with a description of the victim being "found naked" and both quotes sensationalize the violent attack and add details to disturb the reader. The victim was gang raped and had to be hospitalized. When an article includes the victim having to be hospitalized, it brings attention to how violent the act was. It includes gruesome details:

The woman fighting for her life in a Delhi hospital is a denizen of the new India. **The hospital said Thursday that after a second surgery, they were unable to save any of her intestinal system.** She was briefly conscious on Wednesday; **she wrote a note asking doctors to save her,** and one to tell her parents she wanted to live, the hospital said (1).

This was gang rape and that's probably one of the reasons why this is making the news (the other being the sheer brutality of the attack). The next article (headline: "Rape victim's death renews anger, sorrow and calls for change" [8]) has similar features (gang rape by six perpetrators unknown to the victim, hospitalization) but the victim also dies:

The 23-year-old student died Saturday morning of injuries sustained during a savage gang rape carried out by six young men on a moving bus on December 16. **She had been flown to Singapore for treatment two days before,** a controversial decision made by the central government, and on Saturday night a state aircraft was sent from Delhi to fly her body home (8).

The last article is about the same victim (headline: "Will death of rape victim be tipping point in changing pervasiveness of misogyny?" [9]) and reads the following:

In a country inured, often indifferent, to sexualized violence against women, her story pierced the callous skin: Indians have followed it obsessively since the night two weeks ago **when a young woman was found tossed on a roadside after being brutally raped by six men** on the bus she tried to take home after catching a movie with a friend. **She died in the early hours of Saturday morning, unable to recover from the injuries they inflicted on her body – including rape with metal rods kept on the bus for mechanical repairs** (9).

That last sentence also includes a brutal, gruesome detail that the journalist included (“rape with metal rods”). All three stories include gang rape by perpetrators unknown to the victim, inclusion of details about the rape, and hospitalization of the victim.

5.2.4 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape

Just as in the *Toronto Star*, there was evidence of a feminist discourse on rape present in the *Globe and Mail*. Overall, five (5) out of the ten (10) articles examined had feminist discourse. One article, (headlined, “Why sex assault victims are going public” [2]) began with an explanation of the Alice Moran victim-blaming story involving Krista Ford, Rob Ford’s niece. The article continues with a discussion about how some of the women victimized by sexual assault try to deal with their situations:

For years, victims of sexual assault have unburdened themselves on Facebook: Groups such as “Sexual Assault Survivors” have helped women bond. **But now, women like Ms. Moran are going even more broadly public, online, to gain control over their own narratives.** In some cases, they're using social media to out and shame the perpetrators (2).

Here, there is evidence of sexual assault victims going public with their stories. This breaks the common narrative of victims of sexual assault that typically do not speak of their victimization and suffer silently. The article continues with an explanation that breaking this silence is a good thing, but that good things may also have consequences as well (dealing with public scrutiny, for example):

That catharsis is common for sexual assault victims who've “come out” online. But there are risks, legal and emotional, say those who work with survivors. “The absolute lack of security is foolhardy, and it presupposes a shift in culture around these issues that we haven't seen yet,” says Amanda Dale, executive director of the Barbra Schlifer Commemorative Clinic, which serves women experiencing violence in Toronto. **“We don't want to reinforce the message of shame and keep these things so private that we never shift the conversation”** (2).

The journalist that wrote this article chose an individual that combats rape myths to quote and choosing to quote these individuals (in this case a director of a clinic who helps women that have been victimized by violence) is a way of contributing to a feminist discourse. The director says that they do not want to “reinforce the message of shame” and this directly challenges the myth that women who are sexually assaulted need to be ashamed because they may think they somehow provoked the attack (rape myth #2).

“It is a spotlight that burns you very, very badly,” said Jane Doe who **questions why so much of the responsibility continues falling to women, including identifying themselves online to help catch rapists and prevent future crimes. She says she's especially “disturbed” by this push because less than 1 per cent of perpetrators of sexual assault were held accountable** in 2004, according to recent research conducted by University of Ottawa criminology professor Holly Johnson (2).

The article also brings up why “so much responsibility continues to fall to women,” which questions the stereotype that sexual assault is a “women’s issue” and that women are responsible for their own victimization. Despite the pitfalls of going public with their stories, women who have been victimized by sexual assault are supported and their choice is understood as their right to have:

“Despite the legislation that was enacted to ‘protect’ them, now they have to come forward, use their real names, stand up, speak out, take one for the team, when the shame and stigma attached to women who experience rape and sexual assault is as great and problematic as it's ever been,” she said. **Still, she supports whatever women choose: “They do it because it's their right to do it, because the anonymity prevents us from understanding the nature of the crime or its effects”** (2).

This article is categorized as feminist discourse because it highlights a very feminist notion, which is having choices. Although these choices are made under certain constraints (for example, women may not have power to control how their story is interpreted by the media) they are choices that these women have made and this is a very important concept. Beyond this, “the

personal is political” is an important feminist insight that applies to the women coming out with their stories in this article. They are making the private public and political to counter the message of shame and silencing that is often experienced when being a victim of sexual assault. To refuse the responsibility of the rape and speaking out, the women are showing and telling other women that being victimized is not their fault and that it is ok to talk about it. Bringing awareness to the issue of sexual assault in a way that seeks to help women is an important message that is not often seen in the news. The article also highlights important research on sexual assault statistics and disseminates the fact that the majority of perpetrators are not held accountable for their crimes, which also combats commonly held assumptions about rape.

Four articles whose content was analyzed in the section 5.2.3 as “Reporting of certain types of rapes” are also the object of analysis in this section, as they also present clear examples of a feminist discourse on rape. In these articles, patriarchy is repeatedly named as the culprit for sexual violence. Patriarchy is an important concept in feminism and crucial to criticizing rape-supportive culture. The first article (headline: “Can horror over rape change a culture? Brutal sex attack prompts anger at patriarchal attitudes in a society often citing women's independence as source of misfortune” [1]) and begins with the following:

She was the 637th case of rape the police registered this year in the Indian capital. But the story of this young woman – found naked and near death after being gang raped on a bus Sunday night – seems to have pierced the pained resignation of Indian women and the men in their lives as few similar crimes previously have. **The attack has prompted feverish debate in parliament, with female members weeping in rage and vowing to bring change. There have been days of street demonstrations in the capital and beyond, with crowds demanding the death penalty for the rapists and fierce young women denouncing a “sick” patriarchal culture (1).**

The quote here demonstrates feminist discourse as it recognizes and denounces a patriarchal culture in which there is a lot of violence against women. More broadly, the newspaper article

reporting on these demonstrations shows a willingness to incorporate issues of violence against women in journalism in a way that questions notions of patriarchy. The newspaper is also reporting on a feminist discourse emerging in these demonstrations. This kind of reporting on the demonstrations evidences a feminist discourse being included in news stories. A call for change on the issue and the government's involvement in the conversation about sexual violence against women is also included in the article, as well as the suggestion that this is being done because of protests that defy the current way things stand in the country. Here, rape myth #2, blaming the victim, is directly addressed and challenged. Further, the article discusses the issue of women's "responsibility" when it comes to rape and denounces the common stereotype of women being blamed for their rape because of the clothes that they were wearing at the time:

There has been **fierce debate here this year, following other high-profile rapes, about women's "responsibility."** Women assaulted leaving bars or ate at night or while wearing Western clothes have been chastised by police, judges and politicians for bringing their misfortune on themselves. This time, however, **there is a current of defiance in the protests**, noted Subhashini Ali of the All India Democratic Women's Association. **A young woman in central Delhi on Tuesday carried a sign saying, "Stop telling me how to dress, start telling your sons not to rape (1)"**

But rape is still not seen as a men's issue, Ms. Ali said. **"I don't think many people are asking that question yet [of how men are being brought up and how it shapes their attitude toward rape]" (1).**

The article explains that rape is not seen as a men's issue when it should be. Another feminist dimension of this discourse is the shift in responsibility and blame to the perpetrators, and the notion that change involves changing men.

The next article (headline: "Rape victim's death renews anger, sorrow and calls for change" [8]) also focuses on anger about this particular rape in India and highlights the outrage, protest, and call for change as seen throughout the following quote: **"protests continued throughout the weekend against rape, abuse of women, poor policing, and an overstretched**

ineffective justice system” (8). The article names the various problems surrounding sexual violence against women and calls for action from the government and the people in naming sexual assault against women as not just a woman’s private issue but one that is being made public.

The next article (headline: “Will death of rape victim be tipping point in changing pervasiveness of misogyny?” [9]) uses feminist keywords such as misogyny which are not usually seen in news media. Misogyny is not a popular topic to report on, and using it in the headline of an article brings attention to the issue, highlighting it as important. The article states the following:

In a country inured, often indifferent, to sexualized violence against women, her story pierced the callous skin: Indians have followed it obsessively since the night two weeks ago when a young woman was found tossed on a roadside after being brutally raped by six men on the bus she tried to take home after catching a movie with a friend (9).

This quote shows that there is recognition of a problem in India, a problem with violence against women. There is also evidence of active language. There is clear identification that men raped a woman and the article uses active language to explain the attack. Many articles that report on sexual assault use passive language and do not identify the perpetrator clearly in the text, so this article is different in its clear use of language. The article continues by identifying the problem of how men are socialized in Indian culture and how men treat the issue of sexual assault, within the police force and the government. There is an argument that men are not being taught how to treat women in a “civilized society:”

“In your heart, you already know who should shoulder the blame. **We failed her, collectively as a civilized society, didn't we? Our police couldn't protect her while she was being tortured. The men whom we elected did not handle the aftermath well. Our protests were subdued with force,**” writer Rituparna Chatterjee said in a blog

post for the news channel IBN Live posted before dawn in Delhi. **We should have taught our men better**" (9).

Just as the prior article, this one affirms that violence against women is not just a women's issue, it is also a men's issue and one that needs more attention from men in positions of power in the country.

The final article examined that contained evidence of feminist discourse addresses rape in Congo (headline: "Rape rampant in chaotic Congo; Nearly 1,700 assaults perpetrated by armed men in two of Congo's eastern provinces in the first half of this year, UN report says" [10]). The article states the following:

Sexual violence has been endemic in eastern Congo for many years, and the rebellions and wars are merely the latest contributors to the crisis. There is no monopoly on the rapes. The perpetrators are government soldiers, rebels, militia members and ordinary civilians. It is more than just a weapon of war – it is routine behaviour for many men in an impoverished and chaotic region (10).

Here, there is clear identification of a problem (not only is sexual violence against women being used as a tool of war, it is happening all around the country constantly and especially in poorer regions), and many possible perpetrators are identified (men who are "soldiers, rebels, militia members, and ordinary citizens"). Rape is described as not only a weapon of war but also a behaviour that has become normalized in the country. The fact that "ordinary" men and respected men are being identified as possible perpetrators directly combats rape myth #4 (that men of good standing/ "normal" men do not commit rape). Additionally, describing rape as a routine behaviour for many men directly combats the stereotype that rape is an uncommon occurrence that happens when a woman is attacked by a stranger ("the real rape scenario"). Identifying and combatting these myths is why this is considered to be a part of a feminist discourse on rape.

5.3 *National Post*

5.3.1 Rape Myth #1: Rape is about Sex

Overall, two (2) out of the nine (9) articles contained this myth. Just as in the articles looked at in the other two newspapers, those in the *National Post* that included the myth that sexual assault is sex included those that changed the words sexual assault to “sex” assault. However, in the *National Post*, only one (1) out of the nine (9) articles looked at contained “sex” assault in the headline: “Nature of **sex assaults** still unclear; Suspect arrested” (8). The remainder of the articles either used the word rape(d) in the headline or did not use the words at all (rape or sexual assault).

The next article (headline: “British MP fired from magazine over comments about Assange rape charges”) also included rape myth #1. The article states the following:

London George Galloway, pictured, the controversial British MP, has been sacked as columnist for a Scottish political magazine after he refused to retract comments about the rape charges facing Julian Assange. Mandy Rhodes, editor of *Holyrood*, told *The Guardian* Wednesday his remarks the WikiLeaks leader **was guilty of just "bad manners" by failing to ask permission to have sex with a sleeping woman**, had left her "gobsmacked." She said she had respected his integrity, his role as an "effective thorn in the side of the establishment" and his stance on Iraq. But, it was impossible for him to continue his column after **he said having sex with a sleeping woman was "not rape as anyone with any sense can possibly recognize it" if she had already had sex with that man** (5).

The British MP who said that Assange was just “guilty of bad manners” by “failing to ask permission to have sex with a sleeping woman” was fired from his job at a Scottish magazine for this comment which suggests that not asking for consent for sex (when the woman is sleeping) is not a serious crime. A critic of the MP’s comments agreed that it was impossible for him to continue writing for the magazine after having made publicly such comments, which essentially support rape and the notion that asking for women’s consent is not a necessity. The MP also said

that if a woman has already had sex with a man, the latter does not have to ask for consent in the future (even if the woman is not awake). These are serious comments that shift blame away from the perpetrator and do not recognize sexual assault as sexual assault but see it as “just sex”.

5.3.2 Rape Myth #6: “Othering” and the Myth of Stranger Rape

The sixth rape myth discussed in this thesis is that of the perpetrator being the “other.” This can mean racially, but it can also mean reinforcing the popular conception of the perpetrator as some sort of monster, “a sick, emotionally disturbed man” (Wells & Motley, 2001: 155). This makes it easier for the public to believe that a crazed, sick stranger is out in the world raping women, rather than what statistics tell us, which is that you are much more likely to be raped by someone you know. There is a persistent belief in the myth that a “real” rape involves extreme violence by a stranger (Mason & Monckton-Smith, 2008: 691). One (1) article in the *National Post* that presented this theme, headlined “Man gets 32 years for raping, framing his ex; ‘You are evil’” (9). Even though, in this article, the man accused of rape is not a stranger to the victim, the victim still describes him as a sociopathic and sick individual:

Before Ramrattan [the perpetrator] was sentenced Wednesday, Ms. Sumasar delivered a stinging victim impact statement, noting **his lack of remorse as he stared ahead, stone-faced**, while she spoke. “I don't have words for you,” she said. “**You are evil. You are a sociopath.** The only thing that helps me sleep at night is that what happened to me was for a reason: **Someone needs to put a stop to your madness**” ... Justice Richard Buchter said Ramrattan deserved no mercy, calling him a “**diabolical conniver** who shamelessly exploited the criminal justice system” (9).

5.3.3 Evidence of a Feminist Discourse on Rape

There was also evidence of an alternative discourse, namely a feminist discourse on rape in the *National Post*, as there were in the other two newspapers. Three (3) articles out of nine (9) included elements of this type of discourse. The first article, headlined “Do we know what we're talking about when we talk about rape?,” questions the way rape was discussed over the summer

in the media: “some people have taken to calling this the Summer of Rape. More accurately, **it has been a summer full of controversies over the way we talk about rape**” (2). The article explains how certain comedians and politicians were making inflammatory and misguided comments about rape. The article states that:

men and women all over were outraged that anyone would find humor in rape, and that two elected male politicians could so gravely misunderstand the meaning of the word. U.S. President Barack Obama held a surprise press conference to berate Representative Todd Akin. **“Rape is rape,” he said. “And the idea that we should be parsing and qualifying and slicing what types of rape we are talking about doesn't make sense to the American people and certainly doesn't make sense to me”** (2)

and continues:

But the "Summer of Rape," and all the emotionally charged conversations it has sparked in the media, on the blogosphere and at dinner parties, reveals that this might not be the end of the story. **It reveals, rather, that there remains deep confusion, in the cultural and moral sense, over what, precisely, constitutes rape as we typically think of it - not so much in the legal world, where different jurisdictions define rape differently, but in the real world, where sexual interactions are nuanced, complex and not often approved with an explicit “yes”** (2).

The fact that the article is questioning how we think and talk about rape opens up a discussion about it, which is rare, as rape and the issues surrounding it are not topics that are discussed in a nuanced and thoughtful way very often, if at all. Feminist theorizing of rape challenges the idea of rape as natural; it is an artifact of our patriarchal society and of the way that gender is constructed. Here, the article is questioning the idea of rape as natural and challenging the way we think about it. The article continues with citing feminists who explain that outing these rape myths in a public way helps begin a discussion about a topic that is not widely and typically discussed:

The summer's events - Mr. Akin's comments especially - have blown the lid off of a subject that a lot of us might think was decided decades ago, but which has actually been hotly debated in online communities,

among feminists - male and female - and in government hallways. **Some feminists, including Jaclyn Friedman, co-author of Yes Means Yes: Visions of Female Sexual Power and a World Without Rape, say they are ironically grateful for the congressman's "legitimate rape" comment because it has outed suppressed but clearly lingering questions over the definition of rape (2).**

"There are many people who believe these things but don't say them," said Ms. Friedman, of the notion that some rapes are somehow more "legitimate" than others or that rapes are often falsely reported. **"Comments like these are in some ways clarifying - they're opportunities for us to have this conversation in public" (2).**

In New York magazine, self-proclaimed feminist Ann Friedman (called "I Love You, Todd Akin. You Make Me Want to Put on a Balaclava and Riot," referring to the Pussy Riot punk-feminists recently jailed in Russia for an anti-Putin prank), writes that the Akin **debacle had been "satisfying" in that it had sparked a "real conversation about real, opposing beliefs"** (2).

The article also identifies rape myth #6 (stranger attacking a woman from a dark alley) as a common stereotype that people hold:

The word "rape" can evoke stereotypical images of a ski-masked man leaping out in a back alley and forcing himself on a woman at knife-point, leaving the victim bloodied and bruised. Of course, reasonable people know there are many other situations in which a rape can occur: lacing someone's drink with roofies at the bar, for instance, or having sex with a mentally challenged person (a criminal form of exploitation in Canada) - and that the victim need not have a black eye to have been traumatized (2).

The article questions stereotypes and introduces questioning the way we talk about rape in the public and in the media. Feminist Ann Friedman is introduced in the article, where she states that the comments that are being made by American politicians are sparking a conversation about rape in Western media, and she is glad that a topic that is regularly being ignored is being spoken about publicly.

The next article in which elements of a feminist discourse are found tries to understand the struggle of the victim of sexual assault (headline: "Outrage over rape victim's plight; Conviction upheld; Case causes U.K. to re-examine retractions"). The article uses active

language (rather than passive language) to describe the violence experienced by the victim: “Sarah, a 29-year-old Welsh **woman, was raped and abused by her husband** and forced into prostitution, but ended up behind bars herself when she went to the police” (3). Furthermore, the article continues with addressing how the victim is often overlooked: “‘It would appear that **there is still little understanding in the criminal justice system of the mental anguish and distress caused to any victim who suffers rape,**’ wrote Jo Wood, a trustee with Rape Crisis (England & Wales), in an email to the National Post ... Ms. Wood added that Sarah's plight will ‘undoubtedly lead many more women to question the reasons why they should even consider reporting rape to the police’” (3). The article continues to use active language when describing the violence:

A mother of four, **Sarah was routinely raped and abused by her husband, Ray**, who **also forced her to take a job doing sex work** at a local massage parlour. "He drove her to the premises ... took the proceeds and then proceeded to attack her emotionally for doing what she had done at his insistence and for his gain," Niall Quinn, a member of Sarah's legal team, would later tell the court (3).

Overall, the focus of the article is on victim suffering, as opposed to some of the other articles analyzed in this thesis in which the focus is on the perpetrator and his family.

The third article that showed evidence of a feminist discourse is headlined, “U of T protesters decry U.S. author as ‘rape culture defender.’” It brings the term “rape culture” into the mainstream media while discussing a rally held against a men’s rights speaker. A rape supportive culture condones sexual violence against women by ignoring it or silencing it; in this article, this silence is broken when there is protest against someone who ignores the problem of rape in our culture. The article highlights that men’s rights groups (in this case) not only blame women, but that ignorance exists regarding issues of “poverty, racism, ableism, homophobia, and

transphobia,” all of which are important to discuss when also addressing violence against women. The article states the following:

A protest decrying a U.S. author as a "rape culture defender" broke out at the University of Toronto Friday evening, delaying the guest's scheduled talk and resulting in one arrest and release on scene for trespassing. Warren Farrell, pictured, author of best-seller *The Myth of Male Power*, was at the university to speak on issues facing North American boys, but couldn't take the stage until police broke up a gathering of approximately 50 protesters, who blocked the doors outside and chanted their opposition. The U of T Students Against Sexism, who organized the rally and advertised it at Ryerson University and beyond, said "There is a backlash against equality and the women's movement by "men's issues" groups that blame women, manipulate men, and ignore poverty, racism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia," in its rally notice (4).

To summarize, this chapter categorized the themes found in the data (newspaper articles from the *Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *The National Post*) and used quotes from the data in order to demonstrate the different themes involved in categorizing the articles' discourses. Both rape myths and feminist discourses on rape were found in all three papers. The following chapter will draw from the literature review and theoretical framework in order to discuss these findings.

VI. CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This research project is guided by the following research questions: **RQ1. How do Canadian newspapers construct the issue of sexual assault in print news articles? RQ2. To what extent do these articles reproduce ‘rape myths’ or, alternatively, articulate elements of a feminist discourse on sexual assault that reject rape myths?** In this chapter, I will address these research questions with reference to the data analysis.

6.1 Discussion

This research project set out to understand how three Canadian newspapers, the *Toronto Star*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *The National Post*, constructed the issue of sexual assault in their news articles during the 2012 year. I have operationalized Research Question #1 in two ways: first, through the presence or absence of seven rape myths and second, through the presence or absence of elements of a feminist discourse. There were numerous rape myths found throughout all three newspapers; however, there were elements of a feminist discourse articulated on the issue of sexual assault in all three newspapers and this will be discussed in the final portion of this discussion section.

I will begin with a discussion of the rape myths found in all the newspapers. The first rape myth is the notion that rape is not about sex. All three newspapers contained this myth: 16 of the 24 articles in the *Toronto Star*, 7 of the 10 in the *Globe and Mail*, and 2 out of the 9 in the *National Post*. A particular lexical style was used quite frequently in newspapers (especially in the headlines) and that was used to suggest that sex is an acceptable way to describe sexual assault or rape. Benedict (1992) calls this myth the “most powerful myth about rape” because it “ignores the fact that rape is a physical attack” and suggests that the outcome of this myth is that the act is not viewed as a serious crime. What is important, as a finding, is that the lexical style

of describing rape and sexual assault as sex was used frequently in the headlines of the newspapers examined. Having this rape myth present in the headline is also significant because of the effects of headlines on readers. In an experimental study that assessed whether newspaper headlines have an effect on readers, Franiuk et al. (2008b) exposed participants to an article with either a rape-endorsing myth or non rape-endorsing headline (this study used the Kobe Bryant rape case). Results demonstrated that participants who were exposed to the rape-endorsing headline were less likely to believe that Kobe Bryant was guilty of perpetrating rape and more likely to hold rape-supportive attitudes than participants who were exposed to the non-rape endorsing headline (Franiuk et al., 2008b: 797-8). This is consistent with sociological and psychological research, which generally shows that the media has a prominent impact on attitudes (Bryant & Oliver, 2009). Therefore, rape myths can have an impact on decisions associated with sexual assault cases as well as how information is reported to the general public (Edwards et al., 2011: 763).

Rape myth #2 includes suggesting that the victim provoked the rape and subsequently blaming her for it. This was found in one article in the *Toronto Star*. Generally, this myth entails the belief that women provoke rape through their appearance or behaviour; along these lines, it is also thought that women are somehow deserving of rape by their actions: “every time a woman has knowingly or carelessly taken a risk before she was attacked, such as going home with a man, going to a party alone, or taking a walk at night, this myth is brought in to blame her” (Benedict, 1992: 16). The article in the *Toronto Star* with this rape myth described the victim as having used drugs with the perpetrator. Research has shown that, when drugs and alcohol are involved, victims are targeted (Kilpatrick et al., 2007) and that victims who consume alcohol prior to being assaulted are perceived as more responsible for the attack than non-intoxicated victims and it has also that perpetrators are considered to be less blameworthy when the victim is

intoxicated, regardless of whether the perpetrator has been drinking or not (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 449). Including details about the victim's behaviour in the article such as that she used alcohol and drugs casts doubt on the victim's innocence and insinuates that she is responsible for her own victimization.

Research shows that victim blaming is a phenomenon that is consistently seen within rape scenarios (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444). Consequently, victims are often blamed for their role in the rape, even to the extent that they are held responsible (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 444). Research has found that prosecutors were less likely to take on rape cases when a victim admitted to having consented to some sexual acts; this is likely the result of adhering to rape myth ideologies linked to victim blaming (Grubb & Turner, 2012: 445). Even though many journalistic guidelines may prevent reporters from giving too many details on the victim of rape, it is not likely that they will mention how the sexual assault negatively impacted women who have been raped. The fact that only one article was categorized as expressing rape myth #2 is noteworthy. There were other articles that included instances of victim blaming because of text about the woman supposedly provoking the attack, but these articles were actually challenging the myth, not using quotes and descriptions to hold the victim responsible for the sexual assault (and this is why they were not included in this section).

A main theme that became apparent in the data was questioning the victim's credibility, more specifically, suggesting that she may be lying or affirming that she was, which I categorize as rape myth #3. There were a total number of four articles out of the forty-three analyzed that contained this theme and they were all found in the Toronto Star. Most research indicates that false rape claims are infrequent (Patton & Snyder-Yuly, 2007). Reporting in the Toronto Star thus can lead to a perpetuation of the myth that women lie about being raped. Past research indicates that how rape is framed in news stories directly affects the readers' attitudes about rape

-- after reading stories where there were rape myths, study participants were more likely to blame the victim (Franiuk et al., 2008a). Research also indicates that individuals guess the likelihood or frequency of something happening based on whether they can recall an example of it. Thus, in the same way people overestimate that they may “be attacked by a shark or die in an airplane crash, individuals likely overestimate the chances that a rape claim is false due to a few highly publicized trials where there is evidence a woman is lying” (Edwards et al., 2011: 768).

Rape Myth #4 is that men of good standing do not commit rape or even that “normal” guys do not rape. The perpetrator’s good reputation is an aspect of the “mythology of sexual assault crimes” and reporting on such good reputation casts doubt on the victim’s rape claim (Sampert, 2010: 318). Additionally, describing the perpetrator’s good reputation suggests that he is a good citizen, one that would never rape a woman (Sampert, 2010: 318). Overall, six (6) articles examined in the *Toronto Star* and two (2) articles in the *Globe and Mail* out of the forty-three (43) analyzed contained this myth. Within these articles, the emphasis is placed on the accusation and not the sexual assault itself, and there is always a portrayal of the perpetrators’ solid reputation, suggesting that they are upstanding citizens, (many times with mention of their mothers or that they have sisters of their own) with the connotation that they would never or could never sexually assault another woman. The perpetrators, and often their families, are the focus of the article in terms of their well-being and how they are coping with the rape accusation and the impact on their reputation and future. O’Hara’s (2012) research on rape myths in the media found that most articles do not address harm that is done to the victim, and that not many mention the negative impact of the crime on the victim (252). Instead, similarly to my project, O’Hara found that the media was concerned with “how the town or the rapists’ families were themselves affected by the rape” (2012: 252) and their own good standing within the community. Reporting the sexual assault in this manner, in which the perpetrator’s good standing is

highlighted, perpetuates a belief in the innocence of the perpetrator and, in turn, casts doubt on the rape victim's credibility.

I did not find evidence of rape myth #5 which states that only certain types of women are raped. This myth holds that if a woman dresses in provocative clothing, she should not be surprised if she is raped; or that nice girls do not get raped, whereas the ones that hang out in bars and sleep around do (Bohner, 2009: 19). My data did not include clear examples that I could categorize into this theme. Although some articles did mention this myth in some capacity (for example, one article in which the victim explained that what she was wearing did not and should not have bearing on her sexual assault), I found more appropriate to categorize them into other themes because (as in the example given) the comment was critical of the myth.

Rape myth #6 refers to forms of "othering" perpetrators. "Othering" can be used to describe race, but it can also be used to describe stranger rape in which the perpetrator is seen as a "monster" or "crazy." The description of the perpetrator's race was not cited in any of the newspaper reports examined and this is one of the important findings within my data, in that race was not mobilized for "othering." "Othering" can also take on another meaning as illustrated by one (1) article examined in the *National Post*: it can also mean reinforcing the popular conception of the perpetrator as some sort of monster, "a sick, emotionally disturbed man" (Wells & Motley, 2001: 155). As well, there is a persistent belief in the myth that a "real" rape involves extreme violence by a stranger (Mason & Monckton-Smith, 2008: 691). In this article, the perpetrator is described as "evil," "mad," and a "sociopath" (9). Therefore, when the press sensationalizes rape, the perpetrator is transformed into an "other" (O'Hara, 2012: 251). In O'Hara's media analysis, the perpetrator was described in different articles through the use of the following words: "predator," "sick," "evil," "a freak," "a sociopath," "monster," and the most popular term, "devil" (2012: 251). Referring to the perpetrator in these terms places the latter in

the category of the “other” and makes it seem as though only “crazy monsters” rape women, therefore, eliminating “normal” men as possible perpetrators of rape. In this context, the victim as well as others may have a hard time in identifying sexual assault if the stereotypical stranger is not the perpetrator.

The seventh rape myth is the new myth of the female perpetrator and male victim, in which there is an over-representation of female perpetrators and male victims in newspaper stories about sexual assault. Overall, only one (1) article examined contained this theme, taken from the *Toronto Star*. Other research identified this new rape myth emerging in media reports of rape (Sampert, 2010: 313). Sampert (2010) argues that the aggressive female perpetrator “falls into the news dynamic of novelty” (315).

Another theme that was apparent in news articles examined was the reporting of certain types of rape: namely, gang rapes and rapes with a young victim. The reporting of stranger rapes and even gang rapes may help perpetuate the myth according to which victims generally do not know their rapists. Overall, seven (7) articles examined included this type of stories, four (4) from the *Toronto Star* and three (3) from the *Globe and Mail*. Other research has indicated that gang rapes, where there are multiple perpetrators, are overrepresented in the news (Meyers, 1997; Soothill, 2004). Additionally, Heath et al. (1981) found that rapes that resulted in hospitalization were overrepresented by newspapers in the United States. In my data, six articles reported on gang rapes, with all of the perpetrators being strangers to the victims, and four on sexual assault that resulted in hospitalization. Within my own data set, there was not an over-representation of these types of rape being discussed in news articles within the three papers., The reporting of these types of rapes in my data is thus not consistent with other research that finds violent crimes resulting in hospitalization being reported *more frequently* than nonviolent

crimes and findings that show that newspapers cover many more cases of stranger rape than acquaintance rape (Benedict, 1992; Soothill, 2004)

As already noted, rape myth #5 (that only certain types of women are raped) was not present within the data. Overall, it is clear that even though my sample for this project was small, there were a large number of myths being reproduced by the newspaper articles in all three newspapers examined, with *The Toronto Star* containing the most.

The second research question also examined to what extent print media articles articulate elements of a feminist discourse on sexual assault that rejects rape myths. It was clear that in my data that news coverage does not present a singular view on rape. In fact, there was evidence of an alternative discourse, namely a feminist-informed discourse on rape, which emphasizes the structural causes of sexual violence, in all three of the newspapers examined in this research project. Feminist theorizing of rape challenges the idea of rape as natural; rather, it views rape as an artifact of a patriarchal society and of the way that gender is constructed. Therefore, within the news articles, the inclusion of counter-beliefs that challenge commonly prescribed rape myths and misogynistic reporting acknowledges the complex and multi-faceted problems that sexual assault and rape present. It also indicates an effort made by journalists and newspapers to offer alternative (namely feminist) discourses. While feminists have said that “the media is controlled by the dominant elite of powerful white males and is often accessible only to the dominant elite which plays a major role in perpetuating a patriarchal world-view,” this does not mean that all news coverage do present a singular view on rape (Sampert, 2000:17).

Overall, five (5) articles in the *Toronto Star*, one (1) article in the *Globe and Mail*, and three (3) articles in the *National Post* had elements of an alternative feminist discourse on rape. The articles in the *Toronto Star* highlighted and explained the sexual assault laws in Canada and quashed rape myths by explaining that victim blaming is wrong. This type of journalism, in

which rape myths are openly recognized and challenged, is certainly a welcomed change to how rape is usually written about in newspapers. By discussing rape with a feminist critical lens in mainstream newspapers with high readership, journalists may help the audience question rape myths in the common discourse surrounding sexual assault.

One article in the *Globe and Mail* discusses how those victimized deal with the impact of rape and opens up a discussion that is more focused on the victim rather than the perpetrator, in terms of those victims who want to go public with their stories. The articles in the *Globe and Mail* addressed feminist topics and themes such as naming patriarchy, questioning rape myths, noting that sexual assault is not just a women's issue but also a men's issue and underscoring that how boys are raised should be an important topic of conversation; more intervention from the government and media was also called for. The modern-day feminist movement believes that the discursive and institutional practices that maintain male dominance and the subordination of women create barriers to the goal of gender equality (Johnson & Dawson, 2011: 29). Here, there are strong critiques of patriarchy, clear opposition to all sexual violence against women, and the idea that these problems are barriers to goals of gender equality (in the articles examined, specifically in the cases of India and the DRC). The articles found in *The Globe and Mail* explicitly articulate this. What is important to note is that such feminist discourse, is willing to see patriarchy in other countries but not necessarily in our own. It seems that journalists have no trouble incorporating feminist discourse when it comes to critiquing cultures other than North America, and this is a definite racial bias. Regardless, these stories are still strong examples of feminist discourse critiquing sexual assault against women.

Finally, the *National Post* had three articles with a feminist discourse that question the way we think about rape and the way the media construct it. This article identified and questioned rape myths; it included feminists discussing how we talk about rape, and it used

active language to report on sexual assault. Through discussion of consent and common stereotypes surrounding sexual assault, the articles in this newspaper complicate the straightforward narratives of stereotypical ways rape is reported. hooks (2005) argues that we live in a culture that “condones and celebrates rape” (295) and some of the articles examined in the *National Post* questioned politicians who made comments that supported hook’s critique. However, these articles then questioned these comments and started a discussion on why they are problematic. This is clear evidence of a feminist discourse, which is a welcome change from usual stories about sexual assault that reproduce rape myths. It is also important to note that I did not find any intersectionality in my data set. The fact that it did not emerge is an important finding; there was simply nothing in the articles examined that noted the race, ethnicity, ability, etc., of the perpetrator or victim other than in the reporting of facts of the case (for example, that the sexual assault took place in India).

To summarize and answer part of the second research question, in which I was interested in the extent to which newspapers articles reproduced rape myths, it is clear that rape myths were salient in all three newspapers analyzed. Although this research is not quantitative, it is useful to include a breakdown of what was found in terms of prevalence. Overall, forty-three (43) articles were examined. There were a total of fifty-one (51) examples of rape myths in these articles and ten (10) articles showed elements of feminist discourse. Rape myths were found in every newspaper; however, not all seven rape myths as outlined in Chapter 3 were found in every newspaper. Additionally, elements of feminist discourse were found in every newspaper although the rape myths that were challenged in each example varied.

The Toronto Star had the most articles in the sample (twenty-four). *The Toronto Star* also had the most rape myths present within its articles, that is, thirty-three (33) rape myths. In addition, it had the least number of articles containing feminist discourse -- only two (2). *The*

Globe and Mail, with ten (10) articles, contained fifteen (15) examples of rape myths and five (5) examples of feminist discourse within its articles. Finally, *The National Post*, with nine (9) articles, had the smallest number of articles examined. *The National Post* contained three (3) examples of rape myths and three (3) examples of feminist discourse within its news articles.

6.2 Limitations

There are several limitations that can be attributed to the present study. The first is linked to its methodology. Specifically, content analysis relies completely and solely on what is present in the data (textual analysis) and is not able to allow for a more in-depth analysis taking into account the context of production of the text. For example, a different methodology, such as critical discourse analysis, would have reflected on language differently than content analysis with the former being more rich and the latter more superficial, relying heavily on description. The often subtle formulation or presupposition of language in the media discourse often requires much more sophisticated instruments of analysis which critical discourse analysis as a methodology may remedy. This is a direction that may be taken in future research on the subject of how the media portray sexual violence against women. The second limitation is my sample size; this was not an exhaustive search of Canadian newspapers, and future research would benefit from including newspapers from more geographic locations across Canada. This research was also limited to available published materials from the selected papers. Perhaps more critically, this research was restricted to newspapers published in English, thereby, overlooking the discourses present within French-language newspapers in Canada. Third, the data collected in this study covered just one calendar year. Future research would benefit from using a larger sample over longer periods of time and assessing change over time. Fourth, and as part of being a reflexive researcher, it important to recognize that this media content was interpreted by an

educated, white, middle-class woman and may be interpreted differently by someone in a different social location.¹⁹

6.3 Implications of this Research

This research is an extension of existing research on how newspapers in Canada report sexual assault. It is using a feminist critical lens and contends that the way we discuss sexual assault can lead to how we think about it and, more importantly, how we treat those who have been victimized. This research offers a clear definition of what rape myths are and what they include. It has major implications in terms of unveiling that rape myths are still quite salient in the dominant, mainstream newspaper media and identifying exactly what those myths are through a content analysis. It is also relatively novel in its findings of feminist discourse on rape present in Canadian newspapers. Among the main implications of this research for prevention is education on identifying rape myths because once they are identified they can be combatted. Despite its limitations, including the small size and scope of its sample data, there are still important findings from this project that add to critical feminist criminological research.

6.4 Directions for Change and Future Research

There have been efforts to create and validate the effectiveness of sexual assault prevention programming (for women and men), and part of these types of programs includes discrediting and demystifying rape myths (Edwards et al., 2011: 770). This is generally done through education, whereby a myth is presented and then facts and research evidence are offered to counter-balance or criticize the myth (Edwards et al., 2011: 770). Beyond bringing about such

¹⁹ I acknowledge that I cannot put myself in the shoes of "the reader," as saying so would imply there is only one reader. Rather, there is a diversity of readers and of possible readings.

changes at the individual level, the institutional level can be addressed. With this research, the focus is on the media and news institutions. Among journalists,

it is the social responsibility of those reporting on rape to do so in a way that is factual and devoid of rape myths. Although salacious reports and storylines (e.g., stranger rapes, the lying “victim”) may be more likely to attract viewers or sell papers, it behooves those within the field of media to promote the message to the public that these are more uncommon and that rapes most commonly occur under different circumstances (e.g., acquaintance, rarity of lying about rape). Further, journalists should be educated with regard to the fallaciousness of rape myths and the inappropriateness of attributing equal blame to the perpetrator and victim in a rape trial story in order to achieve “fair and balanced” news reporting (Edwards et al., 2011: 770).

Future research should look more broadly on how violence against women is reported and the general discourse of sexual assault in different media platforms. How education can positively change the way we think about rape and dispel rape myths should be a priority. The enduring challenge is to understand the social practices that create and perpetuate rape myths so that, as a society, we can work towards a post-patriarchal society (Weatherall, 2002: 156)

6.5 Conclusion

In this research, I conducted a critical, feminist examination of newspaper article discourses of sexual assault in Canada. Overall, in the articles examined in this research project, the majority contributed to the perpetuation of rape myths; furthermore, in most of the articles, the impact of the sexual assault on the victims was not recognized. The use of rape myths or stereotypes about sexual assault hinders discussions about the possible causes of sexual violence against women (O’Hara, 2012: 256).

To summarize, newspapers are an important medium through which the public learns about crimes and victims, and are a primary source of information for many people. The news media plays an important role in influencing public opinion (Levenson & D’Amora, 2007: 192).

Walby, Hay, and Soothill (1983) suggested that “newspaper reports of rape are an important medium in which the dominant discourse on rape is articulated” (86). This can be applied more generally to all news media today, including Internet news media. News is often simply assumed to be objective, and articles are written in a way that suggests the impression of being impartial. However, as my research analysis has shown, newspaper articles often reflect broader cultural ideas about rape, which are riddled with stereotypes and myths. In order to try and rectify this problem, journalists and the news media should strive to provide more accurate reports of sexual assault that do not conform to rape myths. One way this can be done is through education about sexual assault and actually being aware that rape myths exist.

As a society, we follow a reactive model that does not address root issues. There needs to be a realization that we need to look at the larger societal structures that help encourage and condone rape. The root causes are to be found in the structural issues and attitudes towards women expressed in our culture, and these attitudes may be altered once they are acknowledged and understood (Buchwald, Fletcher, and Roth, 2005: XXIII, XV).

This thesis showed that newspapers do in fact systemically reflect cultural preconceptions about sexual assault, and it is through providing more accurate and unbiased coverage of sexual assault that we can address the wider societal issues that contribute to it. However, this thesis also showed that, in addition to the numerous rape myths being perpetuated by the news media, some feminist-informed discourse on sexual assault is also present. Hopefully, this can continue to be a trend in journalism and in the media more generally. Broadening the narrow definitions of rape and challenging myths and misconceptions will lead to a better understanding and treatment of those who are victimized.

VII. APPENDIX A: LIST OF NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Toronto Star n=24

- (1) Dempsey, A. (2012, Feb 10). Pastor acquitted; Nearly 500 sex assault charges were laid at tiny Korean church without a conviction. Toronto Star.
- (2) Gillis, W. (2012, Oct 6). Radio contestant lied about being raped; Makes up sex-assault story in bid to win \$10,000. Toronto Star.
- (3) Small, P. (2012, Jan 24). Man jailed 4 months for sex assault on wife. Toronto Star.
- (4) Dempsey, A. (2012, Jan 19). Pastor denies sex assault allegations: “It did not happen in the past,” leader says of witness testimony. Toronto Star.
- (5) Dempsey, A. (2012, Jan 20). Pastor sex trial ends with surprise nude video; Time on tape differs from earlier testimony. Toronto Star.
- (6) Edwards, P., & Touria, I. (2012, Nov 16). Home invasion suspect impassive; Accused in double sex assault, Ryerson student described as ‘bright, typical, quiet 20-year old.’ Toronto Star.
- (7) Poisson, J. (2012, Sept 29). Why sexual assault details aren’t revealed. Toronto Star.
- (8) Dempsey, A. (2012, Aug 31). A sex assault victim’s reaction: ‘Hello @kristaford ... so, you’ve called me a whore. Here we are. This is awkward now, isn’t it? Alice Moran, victim of one of the sexual assaults that led to Ford tweet. Toronto Star.
- (9) The Canadian Press. (2012, Jan 7). RCMP faces new sex assault claim. Toronto Star.
- (10) Scallan, N. (2012, Feb 20). Man arrested in sex assault on girl, 4. Toronto Star.
- (11) Boyle, T., & Kauri, V. (2012, Feb 16). Teacher facing sex assault charges; Eastdale Collegiate student alleges attack. Toronto Star.
- (12) Monsebraaten, L. (2012, March 11). Swansea shocked by sex assault case; Community leader faces charges dating to 1960s. Toronto Star.
- (13) Rush, C. (2012, Jan 5). Six sought in gang sex assault. Toronto Star.
- (14) Small, P. (2012, Oct 27). Defence lawyer cleared of sex assault; Judge finds accuser's tale not credible and contradictory. Toronto Star.
- (15) Aulakh, R. (2012, Jan 6). Lost in translation; Judge rules mistrial in sex assault case due to interpreter's poor work. Toronto Star.

- (16) Javed, N. (2012, Jan 12). Durham cop faces charges of child porn, sex assault; Veteran police constable on 'sunshine' list. Toronto Star.
- (17) The Canadian Press. (2012, Oct 17). Nursing-home worker jailed 12 months for sex assault. Toronto Star.
- (18) Pagliaro, J. (2012, Oct 24). Shootout suspect jailed for assault; Accused in Eaton Centre attack sentenced to a year for sex attack. Toronto Star.
- (19) Mendleson, R. (2012, Nov 30). York University students allege racial profiling; String of assaults, security concerns divide campus. Toronto Star.
- (20) Small, P. (2012, Sept 19). Ruling due Friday in sex case; Crown argues that teacher seduced student, but defence insists she was manipulated by teen. Toronto Star.
- (21) Poisson, J. (2012, Sept 27). Ryerson students meet after sex assaults. Toronto Star.
- (22) Jackson, E. (2012, Feb 29). Retired teacher charged in '60s sex abuse case. Toronto Star.
- (23) Gillis, W. (2012, Jan 10). Gang rape case may take a long time. Toronto Star.
- (24) Pavuk, A. (2012, Aug 24). U.S. man charged in cruise ship gang rape; Teen boys also accused in attack on girl, 15. Toronto Star.

The Globe and Mail n=10

- (1) Nolen, S. (2012, Dec 21). Can horror over rape change a culture? Brutal sex attack prompts anger at patriarchal attitudes in a society often citing women's independence as source of misfortune. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (2) Bielski, Z. (2012, Sept 7). Why sex assault victims are going public; As women go online to shame their attackers, experts caution that while catharsis may be achieved, they're taking a risk. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (3) Appleby, T. (2012, Nov 16). Sex assault suspect makes court appearance. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (4) Appleby, T & Mehler Paperny, A. (2012, Nov 15). Sex-assault suspect turns himself in; Attack 'appears to be random,' police say. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (5) Mills, C. (2012, Feb 22). Sex assault charge linked to rave stayed. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (6) Bailey, I. (2012, Feb 28). Pickton lessons crucial in sex-assault arrest, RCMP say. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (7) Appleby, T. (2012, April 4). Tori Stafford's body too badly decomposed to determine if sex assault occurred. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (8) Nolen, S. (2012, Dec 31). Rape victim's death renews anger, sorrow and calls for change. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (9) Nolen, S. (2012, Dec 29). Will death of rape victim be tipping point in changing pervasiveness of misogyny? Brutal attack on student, 23, brought people to the streets, but police attacked protesters, and government slow to reach. *The Globe and Mail*.
- (10) York, G. (2012, Dec 11). Rape rampant in chaotic Congo; Nearly 1,700 assaults perpetrated by armed men in two of Congo's eastern provinces in the first half of this year, UN report says. *The Globe and Mail*.

National Post n=9

- (1) National Post, with files from The Canadian Press. (2012, Nov 15). Suspect, 20, surrenders in avenue road sexual assault case. National Post.
- (2) Blaze Carlson, K. (2012, Aug 25). Do we know what we're talking about when we talk about rape? National Post.
- (3) Hopper, T. (2012, March 14). Outrage over rape victim's plight; Conviction upheld; Case causes U.K. to re-examine retractions. National Post.
- (4) Boesveld, S. (2012, Nov 17). U of T protesters decry U.S. author as 'rape culture defender'. National Post.
- (5) National Post News Services. (2012, Aug 23). British mp fired from magazine over comments about Assange rape charges. National Post.
- (6) Goodspeed, P. (2012, March 15). CC's legal landmark; Thomas Lubanga found guilty of using child soldiers to rape, murder. National Post.
- (7) O'Toole, M. (2012, Oct 23). Nature of sex assaults still unclear; Suspect arrested. National Post.
- (8) O'Connor, J. (2012, Dec 8). 'A Dirty Trick'; Neighbour's false accusation has haunted Nova Scotia man for 42 years. National Post.
- (9) Bilefsky, D. (2012, Jan 5). Man gets 32 years for raping, framing his ex; 'You are evil'. National Post.

VIII. APPENDIX B: SUMMARY SHEET

Sample Summary Sheet – Toronto Star

Summary Sheet: Toronto Star		
→Vertical analysis (listed ideas go from concrete to more abstract/general)→		
Descriptive Details (article no.)	Broader Categories	Main Categories
<p>Use of 'sex-assault' or 'sex attack' (in headlines):</p> <p>"sex-assault" (1), (2), (3), (4), (6), (8), (9), (10), (11), (12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (21),</p> <p>"sex-trial" (5); "sex-attack" (18); "sex-case" (20); "sex-abuse" (22)</p>	<p>Rape is not about sex; it is the use of sex to inflict terror and express domination.</p> <p>Lexical choice is important (see Sampert's analysis) "sex-assault" vs "sexual assault"</p> <p>Sensationalism of media</p>	<p>Myth #1 Rape is sex</p>
<p>"Song's defence argued that the <u>complainant had a motive to lie</u> because her husband was one of the nine members charged after Song went to the police." (1)</p> <p>"Radio contestant <u>lied about being raped.</u>"(headline,2)</p> <p>"The co-host of KiSS 92.5's Roz & Mocha Show says he's not sure if the popular radio program will issue an apology for a segment aired Thursday morning, which featured a contestant <u>who lied about being raped</u> to win a \$10,000 prize."(2)</p> <p>"Having someone come in and <u>lie about being raped</u> was not what I had envisioned for the game," he said (2)</p> <p>"Appearing on the morning show Friday to face accusations <u>she was lying</u>, she revealed "the majority of the story" had been "exaggerated."" (2)</p> <p>"Defence lawyer Christophe Preobrazenski argued Song's accuser had a "<u>motivation to fabricate</u>" events after her husband and eight other church members were slapped with 485 charges, including gang rape, in March 2010." (5)</p> <p>"The 23-year-old woman, who cannot be identified, <u>spun a web of vicious lies</u>," he told reporters." (14)</p>	<p>Fabricating stories about rape</p> <p>Main story, lying woman</p> <p>Lied to get something</p> <p>Had motivation to lie</p> <p>Intent to hurt through lies</p>	<p>Rape Myth #3 Women lie about rape</p>
<p>"Provincial court Justice Micheline Rawlins said she <u>found most of the woman's testimony contradictory and incredible</u>, implying she was <u>needy and self-centred</u>."(14)</p> <p>"One relative testified <u>she was manipulative</u> and a "<u>bit of a drama queen</u>," the judge said." (14)</p> <p>"The judge implied <u>the woman fabricated the accusations against Da Silva to spare herself being seen "in a negative light</u>."" (14)</p>	<p>Woman is dramatic, not to be trusted</p>	
<p>"Song, 57, a <u>grocer and spiritual leader</u> with the Toronto-based Jesus First Church, <u>fervently denied that he is guilty of any kind of sexual assault</u>. The pastor said he did not tell his 30-year-old accuser she was being pursued by "evil spirits" that would turn her into a hunchback, as she had testified." (4)</p> <p>"Ryerson student described as 'bright, typical, quiet 20-year old.'" (6)</p> <p>""He has an <u>absolutely impeccable background</u>," Weisz said. "He's a <u>very bright, typical, quiet 20-year-old</u>. Both he and his entire family are in shock," Weisz added." (6)</p>	<p>Man with reputable profession/man of good standing – did not rape</p> <p>Smart, quiet men, typical = not a rapist not a criminal, role model to sisters = how could he rape another woman?</p>	<p>Rape Myth #4 Men of good standing do not rape</p>

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