Sexual Harassment: Moving from Institutional Betrayal to Institutional Courage

For the National Academies Workshop on Impact of Sexual Harassment in Academia Arnold and Mabel Beckman Center, Irvine, CA 20 June 2017

Jennifer J. Freyd
Department of Psychology, University of Oregon
http://dynamic.uoregon.edu

Sexual Harassment: Moving from Institutional Betrayal to Institutional Courage

- A. Interpersonal Betrayal Trauma
- B. Institutional Betrayal
- C. Sexual Harassment of Graduate Students
- D. Responding to Disclosures of Betrayal
- E. Institutional Courage

The Research is Highly Collaborative



Dynamics Lab (http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/)



Freyd Dynamics Lab



The Freyd Dynamics Lab is located in the Department of Psychology at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, USA.

People



<u>Jennifer J. Freyd</u> (principal investigator)



Melissa Barnes (graduate student)



Pam Birrell (clinical consultant)



Brianna Delker (graduate student on clinical intership)



<u>Jennifer Gomez</u> (graduate student on clinical internship)



Alex Henry (lab manager)



Christina Gamache Martin (graduate student on clinical internship)



Laura Noll (graduate student)



Kristen Reinhardt
(graduate student and lab Human Subject Pool coordinator)



Marina Rosenthal (graduate student, lab RA coordinator and JTD Editorial Assistant)



(graduate student and media guru)



undergraduate RAs



PhDs and lab emeriti

A. Interpersonal Betrayal Trauma

Memory & Trauma – Consider Frank Fitzpatrick

Frank Fitzpatrick... began remembering having been sexually molested by a parish priest at age 12. ... Mr. Fitzpatrick's retrieval of the repressed memories began, he said, when "I was feeling a great mental pain..."

Mr. Fitzpatrick... slowly realized that the mental pain was due to a "betrayal of some kind," and remembered the sound of heavy breathing. "Then I realized I had been sexually abused by someone I loved," said Mr. Fitzpatrick.

But it was not until two weeks later that he suddenly remembered the priest, the Rev. James R. Porter.

The New York Times, 21 July 1992

In 1991 we started with a question about human memory:

- My initial research questions
 - Why and how would individuals remain unaware of (or forget) traumas they had experienced?
 - Why are some traumas forgotten (and not others)?
- Proposed answer: Betrayal Trauma theory
 - How: mechanisms
 - Why: motivations

(BTT) Why? Consider our Sensitivity to Betrayal

- An ability to evaluate trustworthiness is highly important to any social species – it is a necessary survival mechanism because we are harmed by betrayal
- When empowered, we have exquisite sensitivity to cheating and betrayal
- Response is adaptive: confrontation or withdrawal

Betrayal Trauma Theory: Consider Human Dependence

- •Humans, particularly children, are profoundly dependent on others
- Attachment system protects dependent person/child
- •Baby has "job" to engage (love and be lovable)
 - Approach and positive engagement



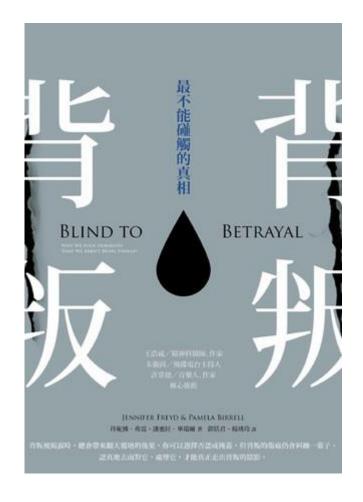
Betrayal Trauma Theory: Betrayal Blindness as a Survival Mechanism

- What does a child do when caregiver betrays?
 - a child abused by a caregiver would risk further mistreatment if awareness caused withdrawal or confrontation
 - conflict between sensitivity to betrayal and needs of attachment (approach & engage)
- Betrayal blindness occurs when awareness would threaten necessary (or apparently necessary) relationships
- Thus unawareness and forgetting are sometimes an adaptive response to betrayal

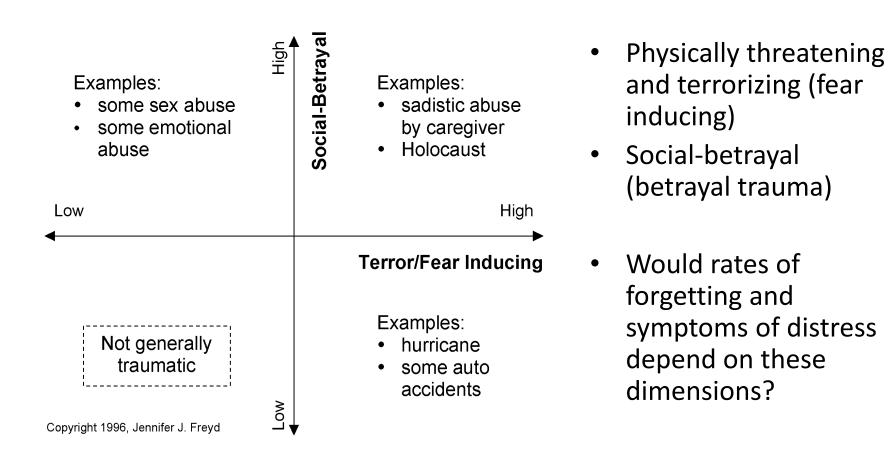


Defining Betrayal Blindness

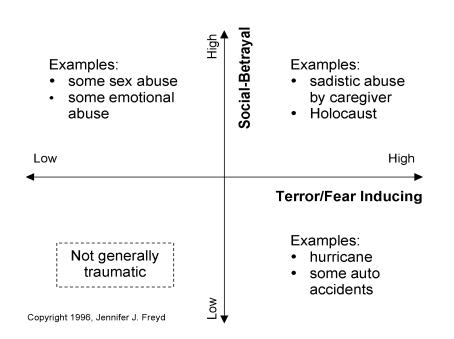
- Betrayal blindness is the unawareness, notknowing, and forgetting exhibited by people towards betrayal.
- Victims, perpetrators, and witnesses may display betrayal blindness in order to preserve relationships upon which they depend.



Betrayal Trauma Theory Suggests Two Primary Dimensions of Traumatic Events



Memory Prediction

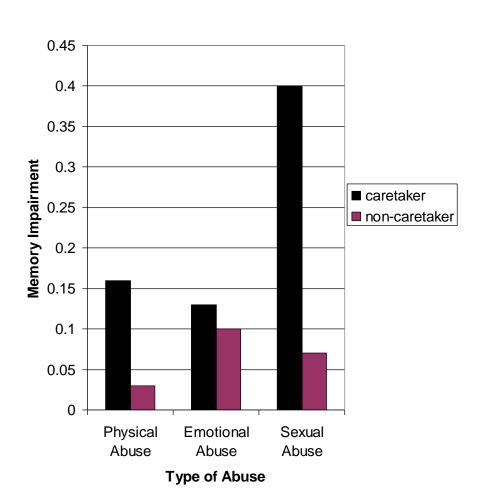


 Betrayal trauma theory predicts that forgetting and unawareness will be greater for betrayal traumas than non-betrayal traumas

Motivation to Not Remember: A Specific Prediction

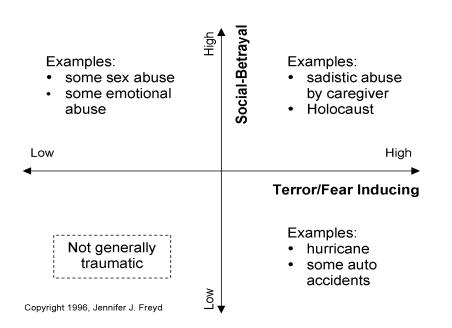
 Childhood abuse perpetrated by a caregiver will lead to more forgetting than will abuse perpetrated by a non-caregiver

BTI: Memory and Victim-Perpetrator Relationship (Freyd, DePrince, & Zurbriggen, 2001)



- College student population of 202 participants.
- "Memory impairment" = forgetting
- Abuse perpetrated by a caregiver is related to less persistent memories of abuse.
- Follow-up regression analyses:
 Age and duration of abuse did not account for findings.

Are Physical and Mental Health Symptoms Also Related to Betrayal Traumas?



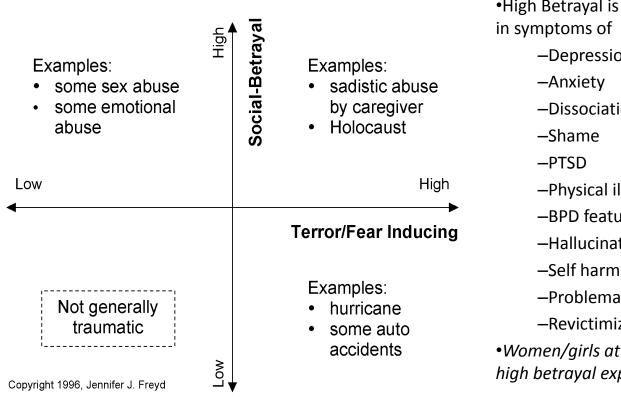
- •Memory/forgetting is related to betrayal.
- •Is exposure to BT related to other trauma symptoms?

Goldsmith, Freyd, & DePrince (2009), 185 college students, BBTS

	Exposure to Trauma with Low Betrayal	Exposure to Trauma with High Betrayal
Days Sick	02	.24**
Number of physician visits	02	.26**
Anxiety	07	.38**
Depression	.16*	.35**
Dissociation	.18*	.39**

- •Trauma with high betrayal is a significant predictor of both anxiety and depression.
- •When we add trauma with low betrayal into the model (using multiple regression), R-square statistics change very little, and these changes are not significant.

Summary of 20+ Years of Research: Betrayal is Toxic & Gender Effect

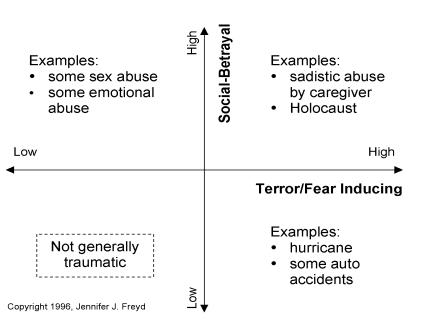


- High Betrayal is associated with forgetting and unawareness and not telling: betraval blindness
- •High Betrayal is also associated with increases
 - -Depression
 - -Dissociation
 - –Physical illness
 - -BPD features
 - -Hallucinations

 - -Problematic substance use
 - -Revictimization
- •Women/girls at higher risk than men/boys of high betrayal exposure

B. Institutional Betrayal

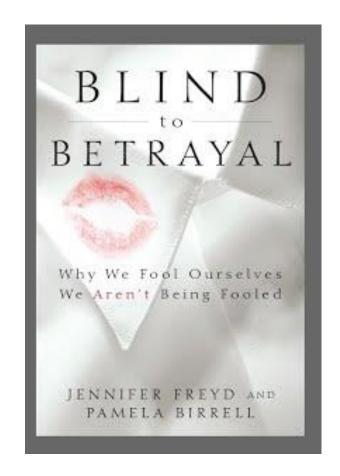
Institutions as Betrayers? Blindness for Institutional Betrayal?



- Like individuals, institutions may be trusted and depended-upon
 - "University community" or "Military family"
- Do institutions betray?
- If so, is such betrayal harmful?
- Will people sometimes be blind to institutional betrayal

Defining Institutional Betrayal

- Institutions harming those dependent on the institution
- Includes the failure to prevent or respond supportively to wrongdoings within the institution when there is a reasonable expectation of protection.



Varieties of Institutional **Betrayal** Commission

Examples:

- •A government cover-up of administrator wrong doing
- •A punishing response to report of sexual assault

Type of Institutional Action

Examples:

- Requiring extra hours without compensation
- Posting sexually violent imagery in dorms

Apparently Isolated

Initial Apparent Problem

Examples:

- •A failure to notify pregnant worker of FMLA protection
- •A failure to respond to report of sexual assault

Omission

Examples:

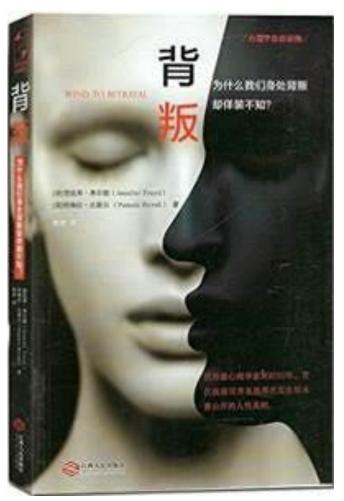
Not providing sick leave to workers

Apparently Systemic

 Lack of civil rights for oppressed groups

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Institutional & Societal Betrayal Trauma?



- Can betrayal trauma (and blindness) occur on institutional & societal levels?
 - Oppression and genocide
 - Betrayals by government,
 schools, churches,
 hospitals, police, etc.

Institutional Betrayal Trauma Research Question

- First empirical focus: educational institutions
- Context: campus sexual violence



Could we measure institutional betrayal? (Smith & Freyd, JTS, 2013)

- College student sample
- Measured
 - Sexual Assault: Sexual Experiences Scale (Koss & Oros, 1982)
 - Trauma Symptoms:
 Trauma Symptom
 Checklist (Briere & Runtz, 1989)
 - Institutional BetrayalQuestionaire (IBQ –Smith & Freyd)



Carly Smith

Institutional Betrayal Questionnaire (IBQ, Smith & Freyd)

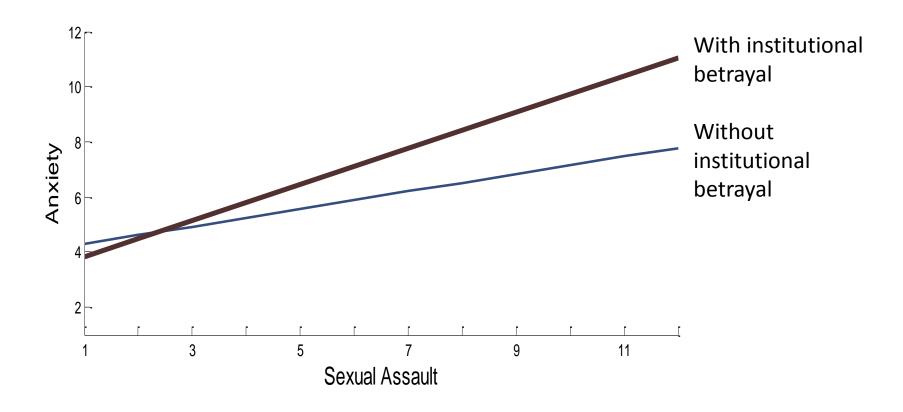
- 1. Not taking proactive steps to prevent this type of experience?
- 2. Creating an environment in which this type of experience/s seemed common or like no big deal?
- 3. Creating an environment in which this experience seemed more likely to occur?
- 4. Making it difficult to report the experience/s?
- 5. Responding inadequately to the experience/s, if reported?
- 6. Covering up the experience/s?
- 7. Punishing you in some way for this experience (e.g., loss of privileges or status)?

What did we find? (Smith & Freyd, 2013)

- High rates of lifetime sexual assault in college sample
 - Trauma symptoms related to sexual assault
- 40% of those reporting sexual assault did also indicate institutional betrayal.
 - Trauma symptoms were related to institutional betrayal
- And....

Institutional Betrayal Exacerbates Trauma Symptoms

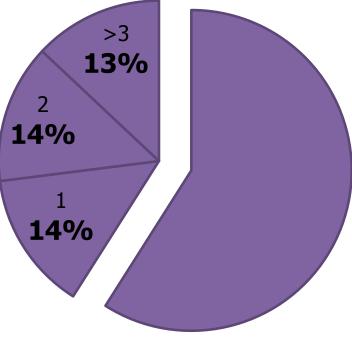
Exacerbates Anxiety, Dissociation, Sexual
 Problems, and Sexual-abuse related symptoms



Similar Rates from Two Campus Victimization Surveys

2014 UO Campus Survey: 41% of students experienced **at least one** type of institutional betrayal related to a non-consensual sexual

experience while at UO



Some additional findings with university students

- LGBT students report more institutional betrayal (Smith, Cunningham, & Freyd, 2016)
- Rates of trauma exposure and institutional betrayal particularly high in study abroad programs (Wright, Smith, & Freyd, 2017)
- Institutional betrayal is associated with physical health problems, even when controlling for interpersonal betrayal trauma (Smith & Freyd, in press)

Perceptions of Institutional Betrayal Predict Suicidal Self-Directed Violence Among Veterans Exposed to Military Sexual Trauma

Lindsey L. Monteith, 1,2 Nazanin H. Bahraini, 1,2 Bridget B. Matarazzo, 1,2 Kelly A. Soberay, 1 and Carly Parnitzke Smith 3

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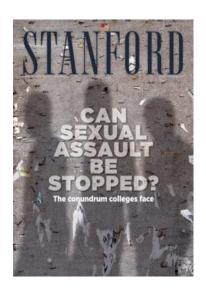
Findings with US Veterans (Monteith et al 2016)

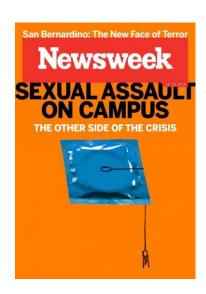
- MST survivors experiences of institutional betrayal associated with:
 - PTSD symptoms
 - Depression
 - Higher odds of attempting suicide

C. Sexual Harassment of Graduate Students

Learning from Campus Surveys

- From 2010 research to 2013 publication substantial change in awareness of campus sexual violence
 - By early 2013 much press attention to the topic of campus sexual violence largely due to student grassroots effort
 - January 2014 US White House Task Force formed
 - April 2014 White House Task Force recommended "climate surveys"





Meanwhile, at the University of Oregon (UO)



In May 2014 a gang rape allegation (involving athletes) and questions about how the university administration had responded -- threw the campus into crisis

A Campus in Crisis: UO in May 2014



Grist for the mill

 Being a researcher studying institutional betrayal at my own university has been a learning experience.



In Summer 2014 at the UO

- Making institutional changes became a priority
- We needed to gather local data on campus victimization and institutional behavior
- This quickly led to our first campus sexual violence survey at the UO in August 2014

A second campus survey in 2015

- Our first campus survey was end of summer 2014
- Our second campus survey was end of spring term 2015
 - The second survey included graduate students

Our Framework for Researching Sexual Violence

- Sexual violence (as I use the term) includes contact sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and sexual harassment
 - impacts people of all ages
 - associated with gender and social inequality
 - almost always a betrayal trauma
- Sexual violence is simultaneously a public health, educational, criminal/justice, human rights, and civil rights issue.

Methodology notes

- Registrar provided us randomly selected representative sample
- On-line data collection
- We provided compensation as incentive
- We excluded those who did not pass "attention check"
- All victimization questions were behavioral rather than using terms like "assault" or "harassment"
- We assessed institutional betrayal
- We piloted for the 2015 survey the ARC3

UO Survey Instruments & Results Open Source http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/campus/

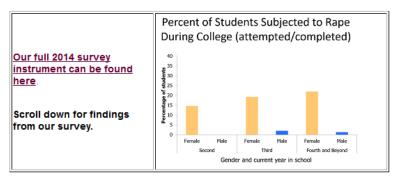
The UO Sexual Violence and Institutional Betrayal Surveys: 2014 and 2015

Assessing Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Perpetration, Institutional Betrayal, Student Attitudes, Student Health, Educational Engagement, and Participant Experience with the Survey

Jennifer J. Freyd, Professor of Psychology, University of Oregon

The Survey Project 2014

In late summer 2014 two of my doctoral students, Marina N. Rosenthal and Carly Parnitzke Smith, and I administered an on-line survey to a sample of undergraduate University of Oregon (UO) students. This survey, approved by the <u>UO's Institutional Review Board</u>, was designed to assess student experiences of sexual victimization, perpetration, and institutional behaviors, as well as student attitudes and well-being. Data collection occurred during August and September of 2014, prior to the start of Fall term classes. This project is similar to other studies we have completed <u>in our laboratory</u> and it overlaps with the <u>survey recently recommended by the White House</u>.



The Survey Project 2015

We administered a second survey in late spring 2015. This second survey included -- but was not limited to -- a full pilot of the ARC3 Survey.

A Few Things We learned from the 2014 and 2015 Surveys

- 1. We found the usual high sexual assault victimization rates for female undergraduates
 - Still, it was powerful to see the local data
 - We found some groups at particularly high risk
- 2. Institutional betrayal happens
- 3. Graduate students show a very different pattern of victimization

2015 Rates of Victimization for Undergraduate Students While at UO

Victimization Type	Male Undergraduates	Female Undergraduates
Completed penetration without consent	1%	13%***
Any attempted or completed sexual contact without consent	6%	27%***
Stalking	19%	26%*
Dating violence (battering)	6%	14%**
Sexual or gender-based harassment-related event- by other student	46%	68%***
Sexual or gender-based Harassment-related event – by faculty/staff	21%	28%*

^{*}p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, higher rate for females compared to males

2015 Rates of Victimization for Graduate Students While At UO

Victimization Type	Male Graduate Students	Female Graduate Students
Completed penetration without consent	<1%	4%*
Any attempted or completed sexual contact without consent	4%	10%*
Stalking	12%	25%***
Dating violence (battering)	6%	11%
Sexual or gender-based harassment-related event- by other student	39%	58%***
Sexual or gender-based Harassment-related event – by faculty/staff	23%	38%***

^{*}p<.05, ***p<.001, higher rate for females compared to males

2015 Rates of Victimization for Female Students -- Undergrad vs Grad

Victimization Type	Undergraduates	Graduate Students
Completed penetration without consent	13%***	4%
Attempted and completed vaginal, oral, or anal contact without consent	20%***	8%
Any attempted or completed sexual contact without consent	27%***	10%
Stalking	26%	25%
Dating violence (battering)	14%	11%
Sexual or gender-based harassment-related event- by other student	68%**	58%**
Sexual or gender-based Harassment-related event – by faculty/staff	28%	38%**

^{**}p<.01, ***p<.001, higher rate for undergrads compared to grads

^{**} p<.01, higher rate for grads compared to undergrads

Sexual harassment of graduate students (Rosenthal, Smidt, & Freyd 2016)

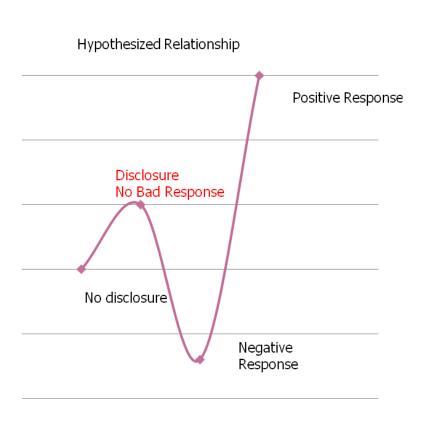
- Women harassed at significantly higher rates then men
- Only 6% reported the harassment to university sources

Sexual harassment of graduate students by faculty/staff (Rosenthal, Smidt, & Freyd 2016)

- Controlling for other forms of victimization, harassment by faculty and staff is associated with
 - decreased perceptions of safety
 - increased trauma symptoms
 - increased experiences of institutional betrayal
- Perhaps sexual harassment by faculty and staff is itself a kind of institutional betrayal?

D. Responding to Disclosures of Harassment and Betrayal

Response to disclosure has powerful impact



- Without disclosure prevention is hampered
- Nonetheless, non-disclosure of betrayal trauma is common
- Disclosure can lead to positive or negative outcomes relative to non-disclosure, depending on social response
- A negative response can itself be a betrayal trauma
- And if perpetrated by an institution, institutional betrayal

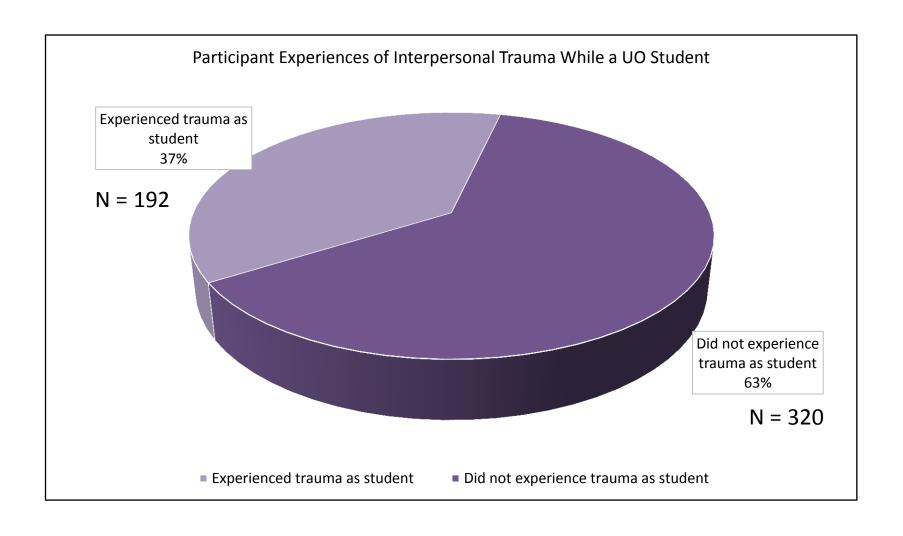
We Know Something about What Responses are Harmful

 Blaming, invalidating, punishing, taking away control from survivor, turning the discussion to the self, distraction, not acknowledging (See especially research by Sarah Ullman)

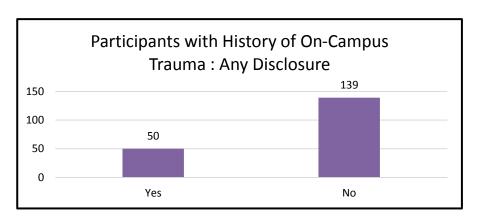
The particular problem of compelled disclosure

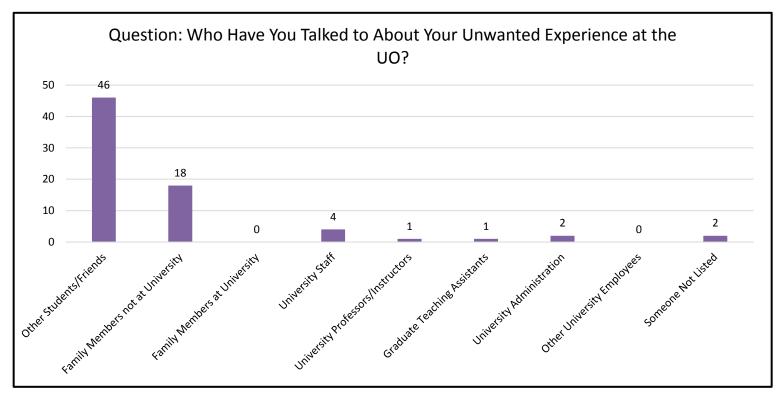
 "Required reporting" of campus sexual assault and harassment – is it safe and effective?

Barnes & Freyd (2017) – 512 undergrads surveyed

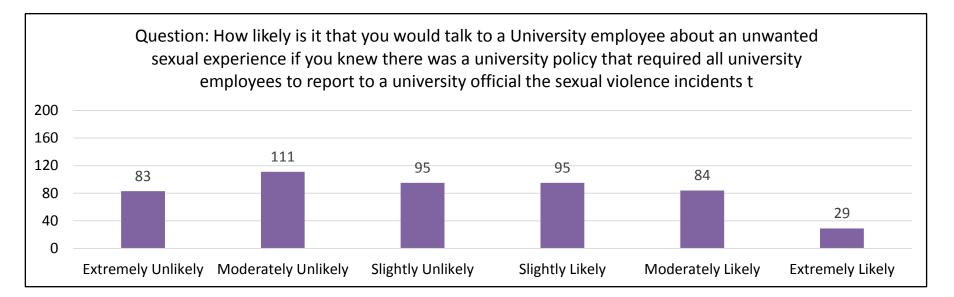


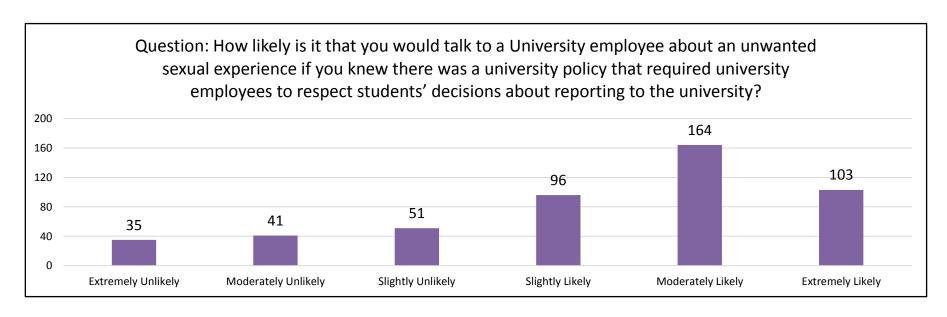
Barnes & Freyd (2017)





Barnes & Freyd (2017)





The particular problem of compelled disclosure

- Is it safe and effective?
- Drawing from "Compelled Disclosure" by Holland, Cortina, & Freyd (accepted for publication, American Psychologist)

Is required reporting effective?

- Research indicates that voluntary reporting can lead to good outcomes if response to the victim's report is good.
- Research on required reporting for adults is generally indicative of *lack* of effectiveness of required policies to achieve goals due to
 - (a) chilling voluntary disclosures and
 - (b) causing victims to disengage from the system once the report is made against their wishes.

Research – is required reporting safe?

- Research suggest there are likely substantial risks to required reporting.
 - The research on recovery from sexual violence strongly indicates that survivors must regain their sense of control to recover and heal after sexual trauma.
 - When support providers take control away, survivors report increased posttraumatic stress, depression, and anxiety.

Research – the particular issue of control

- There is evidence that taking away control of the disclosure information is particularly harmful to survivors of sexual violence.
- Perhaps this harm is related to the fundamental injury of sexual violence

Suggestion for Better Reporting Policy

- Survivor-directed
- Required supporting instead of required reporting
 - Survivors get to decide whether to push a report forward and when to do that
 - Listeners must provide information about options and resources and listen compassionately and with skill
 - Listeners must do what survivor requests make report or keep private
 - Consider third-party reporting software like Callisto

Reporting Policy Resources

- UO's new student-directed reporting policy
- Additional options and more detail provided in Holland, Cortina, & Freyd, (accepted for publication) Compelled Disclosure of College Sexual Assault. American Psychologist.
- Links to above & more resources: http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/disclosure/requiredreporting.html

Also Particularly Pernicious: DARVO (Freyd, 1997)

- Possible response to accusation of wrong-doing:
 - Deny
 - Attack
 - Reverse Victim and Offender
- The perpetrator (or others on his or her behalf) may Deny the behavior, Attack the individual doing the confronting, and Reverse the roles of Victim and Offender.

http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/defineDARVO.html

DARVO

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"None of this ever took place" (Deny)
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"You are a disgusting human being" (Attack)

"I am a victim" (Reverse Victim and Offender)

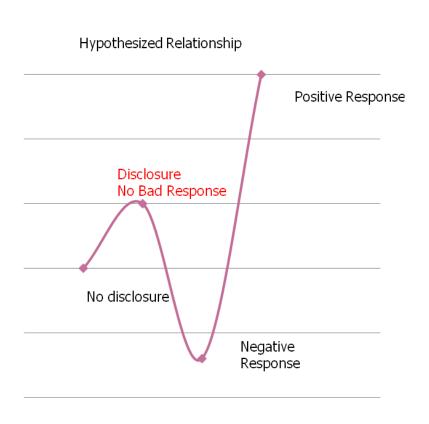
DARVO Studies

- Harsey, Zurbriggen, & Freyd, in press
 - DARVO hangs together empirically
 - DARVO is associated with victim self-blame
- Harsey & Freyd, in preparation
 - Vignette study: DARVO results in more doubt about the victim's credibility

Harmful Responses Related to DARVO?

- Gas lighting
- Retaliation
- Ostracism
- Institutional Responses
 - Institutionalized DARVO
 - Institutionalized Gas lighting
 - Institutionalized Retaliation & Ostracism?

The Good News: We can become better responders



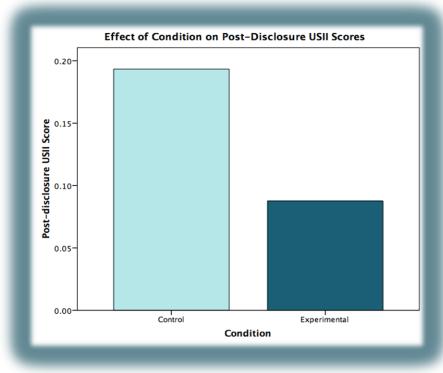
 Reminder: Disclosure can lead to positive or negative outcomes relative to nondisclosure, depending on social response

Foynes & Freyd (2011): Disclosure Education Experiment

- Can we teach people how to be better listeners?
- Each participant arrived with a friend and were randomized into conditions
- Disclosures before and after brief education:
 - Empathic listening training versus control (healthy living habits)
 - One page tip sheet with quiz

Foynes & Freyd (2011): Education Experiment Results

- The psycho educational materials were effective in enhancing supportive responses
 - Listeners in the experimental condition demonstrated significantly fewer unsupportive behaviors than listeners in the control condition
 - Listeners who started with high levels of unsupportive behaviors benefitted the most



Listening Skills Tip Sheet

One page of tips with three sections:

- 1. Attentive body language
- 2. Verbal skills to encourage disclosure
- 3. Words that convey support

Tip Sheet at:

http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/disclosure/

E. Institutional Courage

We Prevent Institutional Betrayal by Encouraging Institutional Courage

- 1. Comply with laws *and* go beyond mere compliance
- 2. Respond well to victim disclosures
- 3. Bear witness, be accountable, apologize
- 4. Cherish the whistle blower
- 5. Engage in self-study
- 6. Conduct anonymous surveys
- 7. Make sure policy is trauma-informed
- 8. Be transparent about data and policy
- 9. Research and educate
- 10. Commit resources to 1-9

1. Comply with laws *and* go beyond mere compliance

- At a minimum comply with all laws intended to prevent sexual violence and intended to promote educational equity and safety from violence and harassment
- Compliance is good first step; but not a good last step
 - Aspire to meet the *spirit* (rather than merely the letter) of the laws and regulations
 - Do not turn institutional response into a mere checkbox
 - Aspire to keep improving and innovating

2. Respond Well to Disclosures

- Respect the survivor's autonomy
 - Create student-directed reporting policies
- Use skills that encourage positive disclosure experiences:

http://dynamic.uoregon.edu/jjf/disclosure/goodlistener.html

3. Bear witness, be accountable, apologize

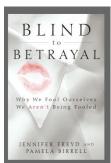
- Bear witness and be accountable
- Apologize as appropriate
 - Sincere apologies go far in repairing and preventing institutional betrayal

4. Cherish the whistle blower

- Whistle blower can protect the institution if heeded early on
- Avoid institutional DARVO

5. Engage in Self-Study

- Create a self-study group responsible for asking on a regular basis
 - Are you making it easy or difficult for people to report the experience?
 - Are you rewarding or punishing victims for reporting this experience (e.g., with loss of privileges or status)?
 - Are you creating an environment in which this experience seems likely or unlikely to occur?
 - Are you responding adequately or inadequately to the experience, if reported?
 - Are you covering up the experience?
 - Are you respecting individual's autonomy?
- Include representation from all the stake holders



From
Freyd & Birrell
(2013),
Pages 171-173
based on Smith &
Freyd (2013)

6. Conduct anonymous surveys

- Survey all stake holders
 - Include students, employees, alumni, those who dropped out, community members
 - Essential to analyze by gender and other types of inequality – these are civil rights issues
- Share results and establish policy based on data

7. Ensure policy is trauma-informed

- Substantial research base to draw on
 - For instance: respect the need for victim autonomy
- Also use local survey data to adjust policy and practice

8. Be Transparent

- Sexual violence, betrayal, and corruption thrive in secrecy
- While privacy for individuals must be respected, policy decisions and processes should be open to public input and scrutiny

Knowledge Production & Dissemination

- Use the power of knowledge production and education to investigate the roots of sexual violence (and how to end it)
- Disseminate: raise awareness of the issue with individuals, institution, and the public
- Knowledge & awareness are the antidotes to betrayal blindness

10. Commit resources to 1-9

 Good intentions are a good starting place, but staff, money, and time need to be dedicated to making these things happen.

What Institutional Courage Looks Like: Brenda Tracy and Oregon State U*

- 1998: Tracy reported to police that she had been gang raped at a party. Two of the accused assailants were OSU football players.
- Prosecutors led her to believe the case was weaker than it was; rape kits destroyed; the 2 football players had one game suspension and community service; no one from OSU talked to Tracy

*http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/oregon-state-university-sexual-assault_us_56f426c3e4b02c402f66c3b9

Flash forward to 2014

- In 2014 Tracy became curious what OSU had done and called OSU. At first OSU was evasive and Tracy called the press: John Canzano, a sports columnist at the Oregonian.
- Canzano wrote a column about the case in Portland city newspaper.
- President of OSU Ed Ray read the column and ordered an investigation
- Three weeks later he met with Tracy and shared the results of the investigation

The University President Apologized for Past Institutional Betrayal

Dear Brenda, Oregon State officials are very grateful that you took time to meet with us. We are so sorry for what you experienced in 1998 and have lived with since. What we have learned recently of your suffering is heart breaking, and your bravery inspires us.



Office of the President

Oregon State University, 600 Kerr Administration Building, Convallis, Oregon 97331-2128 Phone 541-737-4133 | Fax 541-737-3033

December 10, 2014

Dear Brenda,

Oregon State officials are very grateful that you took time to meet with us. We are so sorry for what you experienced in 1998 and have lived with since. What we have learned recently of your suffering is heart-breaking, and your bravery inspires us.

We are also grateful to you for raising the public dialogue about the consequences of sexual violence in our society and for raising a discussion of how society can better assist survivors of such violence. While we cannot undo this nightmare, we apologize to you for any failure on Oregon State University's part to better assist you in 1998.

From the apology letter

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As promised a few weeks ago, we conducted an exhaustive review of the facts of how OSU handled this matter 16 years ago. This review was completed this past Friday, and we want to share the results of that review with you.

Follow-up Courage

- After Ed Ray apologized to Brenda Tracy, he hired her to be a consultant to address improving institutional response.
- Many important innovations and changes since then.

What Institutional Courage Looks Like

- Investigation & Transparency
- Apology
- Partnership with Brenda Tracy
- Support legislation
- Create Sexual Assault Resource Center
- Expand Title IX administrators and resources
- Increasing awareness on campus
- Continuing efforts



OSU President Ed Ray and Brenda Tracy

We All Can Encourage Institutional Courage

- Ending sexual violence and harassment is a challenge and will take time and effort
- But we can end institutional betrayal
 - And that is a crucial step in the right direction

Thank you! Questions?



Full text of articles and additional resources http://dynamic.uoregon.edu