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SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTS TO THE POLICE: A PILOT INVESTIGATION OF THE  
FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE VICTIMIZATION REPORTING AND VICTIM  
PERCEPTIONS OF POLICE RESPONSES

By

HAILEY ANN POWERS

Undergraduate Thesis  
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the University Scholar distinction and degree of

*Bachelor of Arts*  
in *Sociology with an emphasis in Criminology*

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Approved by:

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Powers, Hailey, Bachelor of Arts, May 2015

Sociology

*Sexual Assault Reports to the Police: A Pilot Investigation of the Factors that Influence  
Victimization Reporting and Victim Perceptions of Police Responses*

Faculty Mentor: *Dusten Hollist, PhD.*

Second Faculty Reader: *Jackson Bunch, PhD.*

The purpose of this study is to examine issues associated with the reporting of sexual assault victimization to the police and police responses to these reports. The information gathered will be used to inform best practices regarding future responses by the Missoula Police Department (MPD) and other stakeholders. The information will also be used to inform a larger investigation that will take place after the current pilot phase of the project ends. Evidence gathered from the data collected shows that many officers are conducting successful interviews with survivors of sexual assault. A majority of respondents state that detectives made them feel safe and comfortable. Additional data also suggests that detectives are informing survivors of the next-step proceedings throughout the entire process, contributing to a more positive reported experience by respondents. Survivors are also being encouraged to use additional services outside of the police department, which leads to greater satisfaction with the reporting process.

## **Introduction**

The current project involves cooperation with the Missoula Police Department (MPD), Missoula Crime Victim Advocates (CVA) office, Student Advocacy Resource Center (SARC), and the Young Women Committed to Action (YWCA) office, to uncover the best methods of responding to victims of sexual assault. A survey was built using open-ended questions, seeking information about whether the victim reported their assault to the police, the factors considered in making this decision, and how victims perceived they were treated by their responding officers. The survey was administered through the YWCA and SARC and completed by advocates at the Missoula CVA office. The information gathered in these surveys was used to inform this project and the community stakeholders about the best practices for responding to future sexual assault cases.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this thesis is to examine factors that influence victims' reporting sexual assaults to the police and how they view police responses to their reports. The reported data will be used to inform MPD and various responding agencies as to the best methods of response in sexual assault cases. Testimonials gathered will be made available to MPD for inclusion in their report to the Department of Justice (DoJ) regarding their responses to sexual assault and proposed methods of improvement in the Missoula community. In addition, this report will inform the future of this project moving forward.

## **Background**

Missoula is a small and quiet town nestled in the Hellgate Canyon valley, while the scenery would show a simple college town, beneath its calm surface, Missoula is experiencing a dark reality. The issue of sexual assault rose to the top of people's awareness in 2012, when both MPD and Campus Public Safety (now University of Montana Police), underwent a federal investigation. The purpose of this investigation was to uncover the truth surrounding all of the sexual assault rumors and myths. In particular, the DoJ wanted to know how the police and

subsequent investigators were treating victims of sexual assault who came forward to report their assaults. The mere presence of federal agencies put the city on high alert, resulting in citizen outrage, and creating a vested interest by MPD and city officials to make a change in how sexual assault cases are handled.

The DoJ investigation uncovered a number of issues occurring within MPD. In their findings report, the DoJ outlined four major points MPD needed to address and change to stay in compliance with the investigation.

The first finding was that MPD's sexual assault investigations had material deficiencies that compromise search for the truth. In short, MPD was not taking proper measures to safeguard evidence nor gathering needed information about victims, suspects, and witnesses. One of the biggest concerns in this section was detectives failing to discover whether the victim was under the influence of drugs or alcohol, including knowing whether the suspect knew this about the victim. Additionally, based on these circumstances, it was found that detectives often held gender-based stereotypes and prominent rape myth ideologies, which affected how they conducted their interviews. Conducting interviews following these ideologies prevents detectives from gathering useful information because they deem it unimportant or a hindrance to the victim, as it places blame directly on the victim. Even when the information is gathered, detectives were using it in their reports to indirectly blame the victim for their assault. Overall, the findings report called for a speedier response by detectives to interview victims and suspects, which would allow for more accurate corroborations between all accounts of the assault.

Second, the report claims MPD investigations discourages participation by victims. This is problematic because decreased involvement by the victim decreases the likelihood a suspect will be apprehended and lowers detectives' abilities to reach reliable and accurate conclusions. This makes meritorious prosecutions more difficult to process. One of the biggest issues uncovered was detectives asking victims if they would like to prosecute. Which created a false understanding for the victims that they controlled prosecution. Prosecution is completely up to the prosecuting attorney. Another problem found was MPD operated without any guidelines nor policies for responding to sexual assault. This left the investigation and techniques up to individual detectives, who then had the freedom and greater likelihood of operating according to their dominantly held stereotypes regarding women and sexual assault. MPD was shown to need

a policy for how sexual assaults should be responded to, which will protect victims and in parallel encourage their participation in the investigation.

The third issue found MPD did not effectively coordinate with community partners. By not having proper and effective communication between the MPD and community agencies like prosecutors, the Missoula County Attorney's Office (MCAO), and advocates, aforementioned issues are only compounded. The report calls for a more aggressive strategy for maintaining communication between MPD and in particular, the MCAO, which often declines prosecution for cases without giving MPD any information as to why they have made that decision. In addition, MPD must outline the type of information and action they are expecting from the MCAO. Some cases look very minimal, yet are submitted as referrals for prosecution, the MCAO feels this means they are only meant to confirm MPD's decision to not move forward. The MPD must decide whether they want to use the MCAO as a means of second review or conduct more thorough investigations and only submit cases that have a good chance of being officially prosecuted. Additionally, MPD should work in cooperation with UM and UMPD to make sure sexual assaults reported on campus are also being handled properly. Finally, MPD should engage more with advocate agencies, to support and assist interactions with victims reporting assault and to create a stronger sexual assault case. The importance of communication between MPD and community stakeholders cannot be overstated and will improve a lot of the deficiencies MPD was found to have.

Fourth, the DoJ reported these insufficiencies in MPD's response to sexual assault reflect reliance on gender-based stereotypes. It was determined from its record that MPD violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Furthermore, these attitudes severely affected how an investigation was conducted and whether proper evidence and information was gathered. It is well documented in literature<sup>1</sup> that victims who feel intimidated or not believed by investigating officers will hold back information or misrepresent their story. Ultimately, it is unreliable to use gender-based stereotypes to gain accurate information.

Once this report was released to the members of MPD, the captains immediately began to implement change and demonstrate to the DoJ they were following all guidelines and suggestions, in order to put their department on track. The Captain of Detectives, Mike Colyer, enlisted the help of the Criminology Research Group (CRG) to conduct a survey of victim

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<sup>1</sup> See Literature Review section

perceptions of police responses, to provide evidence to the DoJ about the kinds of changes that were being made and how those changes affected victims coming forward to report sexual assault. As a member of the CRG, I took the opportunity to head a pilot investigation, informing an important and very public issue in Missoula today.

### **Literature Review**

At the forefront of today's social movements, there is a poignant movement being made to aid victims of sexual assault who choose to report their victimization to law enforcement. The goal not only includes working to ensure victims do not experience what is coined "revictimization" or the "second rape" (Campbell and Raja 1999; Campbell, Wasco, Ahrens, Sefl and Barnes 2001; Campbell 2006), but in doing so also creates a safe and positive reporting environment. The hope being that if the system becomes a more helpful experience, victims will be more encouraged and more likely to report their victimization (Du Mont, Miller, and Myhr 2003). In order to understand how victims view their experiences in the criminal justice system, two popular methods have been employed. The first method uses the victim's viewpoint as the lens through which the reporting process is recorded, asking them to communicate how they perceived investigators treated them throughout the entire process. The second method of reporting victim's perceptions of investigators' attitudes is by asking victim advocates. Advocates are people who spend one-on-one time with victims and are often with them throughout the entire reporting and legal processes (Campbell 2006; Maier 2008). Studies using one of these two viewpoints help provide a more comprehensive understanding of how victims are treated by law personnel, and the ways in which first responses, interviews, and subsequent contacts with victims can be catered to fit their specialized needs.

The most cited source of distress by victims is how officers initially respond to them on scene and in preliminary interviews (Campbell, Adams, Wasco, Ahrens, and Sefl 2009; Maier 2008; Patterson 2011). Evidence provided in these studies suggests the manner with which investigators question victims directly affects their ability to remember and share important details of their attack, willingness to continue in the legal processes that follow reporting, and their overall experience within the system. When officers focus first on building a rapport with a victim and make them feel safe, they are more likely to gather credible, accurate information

from the victim. Gathering accurate evidence is important because law enforcements' main goal should be to catch the perpetrator of the assault and bring them to justice. This relies heavily on a victim's testimony. According to Patterson (2011), victims report being able to remember more when they feel at ease with their responding officers. Further explanation shows this was made possible when officers asked their questions at a slow pace and encouraged victims to "tell them more" (Campbell et.al. 2009; Patterson 2011). One of the key mistakes departments make during the reporting process, is to place officers on sexual assault cases based on rank or gender, neither of which guarantees the officers have the necessary skills to effectively relate to victims (Rick and Seffrin 2012). The use of unskilled officers can thus increase the likelihood victims will be revictimized or experience a "second rape". Secondary victimization is defined by Campbell et.al. 2001 as, "victim-blaming attitudes, behavior, and practices engaged in by community service providers, which further the rape event, resulting in additional trauma for rape survivors". The point of victim reporting is to help a victim overcome their fear and feel as though justice is being done. When an untrained, unskilled officer is assigned to a rape victim, they are more likely to hold rape myths, make the victim feel uncomfortable or judged, and contribute to further traumatization of the victim. The same goes for gender, simply because an officer is a female, does not mean she will treat the victim with more empathy and respect. According to the Intra-Female Gender Hostility Thesis, female officers are actually more likely to subscribe to rape myths and victim-blaming tendencies than their male counterparts (Batchelder, Koski, and Byxbe 2004; Chesler 2001). While this is not true across all studies, Wentz and Archbold (2012) found no difference between males' and females' likelihood of prescribing to rape myths, it continues to stand that officers trained and experienced with sexual assault victims are more likely to have a successful experience with them.

Another aspect of reporting that victims are concerned with is how officers convey believability in their explanation of the assault. Victims described that when they felt believed by officers, or that they did not have to "prove themselves", their experiences were more positive. A positive experience resulted in part because they perceived the officers as taking care of and respecting them (Campbell et.al. 2009; Patterson 2011; Sleath and Bull 2012). Feeling cared about by the officers was also a significant predictor of a victim's feelings toward the system. Officers' best conveyed their concern when they made comments about "being on the victim's side", and sharing information about prior convictions of alleged attackers (Patterson

2011). Believability has a direct relationship with rape myths, victim affect at time of reporting, and officers' prior experiences.

Prevailing rape myths play a huge role in how officers communicate with victims and gain their trust. Rape myths are defined as “prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists” (Burt 1980). A majority of the rape myths today include: rape is rare, women secretly want to be raped, some women are asking to be raped, rape is harmless, rape is a result of uncontrollable passion, all rapists are mentally ill/retarded, only certain kinds of women are raped, and a heterosexual male cannot be raped (Rich and Seffrin 2012). These myths change the way victims view themselves, perpetrators view victims, and important to this study, the way community responders view victims. One of the most pervasive and relied upon views about victims of sexual assault is that in the aftermath they should be hysterical and noticeably upset, hurt, bruised, and battered (Du Mont et.al. 2003; Sleath and Bull 2012). It is also proven that women who experience assault by a stranger, with a weapon, under extreme duress, and show clear defensive wounds, are more likely to have their cases prosecuted (Campbell et.al. 2001; Du Mont et.al. 2003; Frazier 1996; Sleath and Bull 2012). As this continues to be the model against which the likelihood of prosecution is measured, it further perpetuates a very specific victim archetype, the “real victim” (Du Mont et.al. 2003). When officers come into contact with victims who do not fit their perceived model of a “real victim”, they are more likely to treat the person with disrespect, disbelief, and carry victim-blaming tendencies (Sleath and Bull 2012). Along with being insensitive, subscriptions to myths also affect how an officer conducts the investigation, often times resulting in fewer details, less time committed, and an overall more passive approach to the case (Page 2010; Venema 2014). Many officers in Venema's 2010 study describe their view being changed after they had been lied to once, causing them to be more skeptical of stories and quick to judge victims as lying about their assault in order to cover up a secret. The secrets range from prostitution, getting caught, and not wanting to be labeled a “slut” or “whore”. Officers continue to adhere to these judgements, despite information detailing how a lot less victims lie about victimization than is popularly believed (Rumney 2006). Keeping this information in mind, it is imperative officers receive both sensitivity training and develop an understanding of the different conditions in which victims can report and respond to their assault. The proper training of officers helps ensure victims receive fair and compassionate responses during the reporting process.

A way to ease the pressure on both victims and investigators during interviews is the use of advocates. Having an advocate present, whose sole purpose is to look out for the victim's well-being, can also make victims feel safe. Not only do victim advocates help inform victims about the legal processes, but they often stay with the victim throughout the entire process; from medical examinations, interviews, to court hearings (Campbell 1998, 2006; Maier 2008). Victim advocates provide a support system for victims and strive to help victims receive the type of care and information they want. Keeping the importance of advocates in mind, it is essential for there to be a working relationship between the police department and community stakeholders, like advocates. Often times, the only way victims find out about advocates is when officers give the information for community resources to victims after they have reported (Campbell 1998, 2006; Carmody 2006; Monroe, Kinney, Weist, Dafeamekpor, Dantzler, and Reynolds 2005). If there is any lack in communication between the police department and community resource centers, it can adversely affect the victim, who may feel they have to pick one option or the other, as the agencies do not appear to be working in cooperation with one another (Campbell 2006; Carmody 2006). The best way for victims to receive the most well-rounded and extensive care is to have all agencies, medical, forensic, law, prosecution, and advocates working together. This guarantees the victim does not have to repeat the same information to different people and feel lost within such a large system.

When advocates were asked about their relationships with respective law enforcement, they cited poor communication and an apparent lack of respect for their work by police individuals (Carmody 2006; Campbell 2006; and Maier 2008). Advocates also reported struggling with the medical and legal systems during their attempts to represent victims in the best ways possible (Campbell 1998; Maier 2008).

The problems are not just uncooperative police officers, but officers who seem to disrespect victims. Similar to how victims reported about their perceptions of officers, advocates are concerned with investigators who further into the process will tell victims they can "back out if they are lying", implying they do not believe the victim (Campbell 1998). These types of behaviors by officers may cause the victim to want to back out because they think they will get in trouble for reporting, whether it is false or not. Since the officer does not seem to believe them anyhow, survivors question why they should proceed. While advocates are willing and ready to go to bat for the rights and wishes of the victim they support, many describe holding

back and not pushing officers too hard, for fear it will affect their next case (Campbell 1998). Advocates are concerned that if they are pushy, officers will hold a grudge against them, which could adversely and unfairly affect their next victim. It is essential to remind police officers to treat each case individually, despite what may have occurred in a previous case with the same advocate. Each case must be approached as its own entity and not be affected by any previous or current cases.

Using this knowledge, there are several agencies that have put officers through specialized sensitivity and interviewing technique training. Studies that have compared officer samples between those individuals who had undergone special training versus those who have not, showed an improvement in victim perceptions and overall experiences. Sleath and Bull (2012) found that officers who went through training were more likely to try and build rapport with a victim before immediately jumping into questioning and were also more sympathetic. These officers were able to get more detailed information from victims, which helped inform their cases more accurately and aid prosecutions decisions about prosecuting a case or not (Frazier and Harey 1996; Sleath and Bull 2012). In addition, trained officers were less likely to conduct their behavior and investigation according to rape myths and gender stereotypes (Du Mont et.al. 2003; Patterson 2011; Sleath and Bull 2012; Venema 2014). These studies suggest that more officers should undergo specialized training, especially if they have the possibility of coming into contact and working with sexual assault victims. A suggestion may also be that large enough police departments create a Special Victims Unit (SVU), where all the officers encompassed within it have taken special training and are competent and comfortable working with specialized victims like those of sexual assault.

### **Current Pilot Study**

The purpose of this pilot investigation is to examine sexual assault victims' perceptions of police responses to their reports of sexual assault. This study aims to inform the MPD on how they can improve responses to sexual assault victims reports of violence, creating a more positive and safe environment for victims to report to. The goal of improving police responses is to make reporting by victims more likely, thereby increasing the likelihood for criminal justice, and more accurate accounts of sexual assault prevalence in the city.

During September, a group of community stakeholders gathered, including Dr. Dusten Hollist, Dr. Jackson Bunch, Patrick McKay, Captain of Detectives Mike Colyer, YWCA advocates Katharina Werner and Jan Scher, CVA Erin Catterton, and myself, to build the victim questionnaire. After several meetings, and many drafts later, an approved survey was completed.

The pilot study included a pre-test period, where the survey was live from October 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014, and the data was examined to determine if any immediate changes were needed before the actual data collection period began. There were no immediate issues or glaring issues that needed to be addressed. The data collection for the pilot investigation ran from January 1, 2015 to April 1, 2015. Using the data collected thus far, and information gathered from YWCA advocates, this investigation intends to inform the future data collection of this project, including advice for increasing victim response rates and improving the qualitative nature of the information being asked. Suggestions made for improvement to the survey will be evident in the larger investigation, for which data collection began May 1, 2015, and is planned to continue through the end of the 2015 calendar year.

## Results

The results of the CVA survey are limited by the small number of respondents. In total nine completed surveys were gathered at the end of the pilot period. In all six questions regarding victims' experiences with the police display trends that can provide insight to the current investigation. All respondents reported their victimization to MPD. When asked if the investigating detective made the victim feel safe and comfortable 67% ( $n=6$ ) affirmed this statement, while 33% ( $n=3$ ) were unsure (Table 1). Respondents reported that detectives clearly explained each step in the process 67% ( $n=6$ ) of the time, while 11% ( $n=1$ ) felt detectives did not explain their process, and 22% ( $n=2$ ) were unsure (Table 2). Additionally, survivors reported 78% ( $n=7$ ) of the time that the detective addressed the questions and concerns they had, leaving 11% ( $n=1$ ) who did not think their concerns were addressed, and 11% ( $n=1$ ) were unsure (Table 3). Survivors also stated that the detective listened to their report without judgment or blame in 67% ( $n=6$ ) of cases, 22% ( $n=2$ ) felt this was not true, and 11% ( $n=1$ ) were unsure (Table 4). In comparison, the CVA reported she felt detectives believed survivors 44% ( $n=4$ ) of the time and was unsure of the detective's level of belief in 56% ( $n=5$ ) of the cases (Table 5). Finally, 89%

( $n=8$ ) of survivors indicated the detective encouraged them to seek additional services and 11% ( $n=1$ ) received no such encouragement from detectives (Table 6).

The Missoula CVA who collected the data made note that there was one detective who provided sub-standard victim interactions and is no longer in the SVU division of MPD.

## **Discussion**

As the previous research clearly states, officers who respond to victims with kindness and respect are most likely to elicit a positive response from the survivors. The data supports this notion as well, illustrating that more survivors had positive experiences when they reported that the responding detective made them feel safe and comfortable. This is an important point to note because it is one of the more simple changes departments and officers can make, but one that makes a big difference in victim reporting and frequencies of satisfaction. Responses in this study also indicate that there are actually more survivors reporting positive experiences with detectives than initially thought. Even though there was one case that indicated mistreatment of the survivor by the detective, it was realized by the department and that individual was removed. Removal of the officer speaks to the dedication MPD has to implementing positive changes within their detectives' and SVU units.

Additionally, the current study shows detectives were working hard and attending to the informational aspect of the reporting and interviewing process. Previous studies indicate that survivors often enter the criminal justice system and are immediately overwhelmed and ultimately unaware or unsure of what is going on at each specific point in the process. The present study indicates that officers are communicating with survivors about what is happening at the current step they are in and how the process is going to continue. It is particularly important in traumatic cases like this to put people at ease, and that can be partially accomplished through proper education and information being communicated to the people involved. As indicated in previous research and through comments by the CVA, survivors feel calmer when they are aware of where they are at in the reporting process, what the detective thinks and feels about the case, and how they view the case will be moving forward. Informing survivors, step-by-step as it is happening, is just another way studies have shown the reporting process can create a better experience for survivors.

There is also a large amount of evidence, as indicated by previous studies, pointing to the usefulness of victim advocates, aside from the CVA. Sexual assault advocates who work at places such as the YWCA and other community centers have data supporting the role they play in not just the reporting process, but the survivor's healing process as well. Unfortunately, because of the information block some survivors receive from their detectives, they do not know about these community stakeholders, and may be hesitant to seek them out. Therefore, it is reassuring to see the majority of victims who responded to the current study indicated they were encouraged to use additional services beyond MPD. Using additional services has been shown to increase healing time and lessen the likelihood of PTSD in survivors (Campbell and Raja 1999). If more victims are encouraged to use additional resources available to them, there is a greater chance they will have a positive reporting experience and have better recovery outcomes.

### **Suggestions**

Considering all of the information and data gathered, from the current study and previous research, there are several recommendations that can be made for improving the reporting process. In addition to broad ideas for improving the reporting process, there are also specific suggestions for changes in the survey and method of data collection, which could yield more respondents.

First and foremost, officers who are chosen to respond to sexual assault cases should be assigned based on training and experience. Officers picked based on merit pose the most advanced methods moving forward because they know how victims can be after an assault and the variations victims can have in their reactions to being assaulted. Experienced detectives know the best tactics for gathering information during interviews, which leads to more evidence gathered and a greater possibility for prosecution. Therefore, some of the best results can be achieved by simply selecting the proper officers to respond to reports of sexual assault.

Building off of the basis that officers who respond are the most qualified, there are a couple of ways they can start the reporting experience positively. Initially, responding officers' goals should be to build rapport with the victim, making her or him, feel comfortable and safe. These measures can be achieved through first asking the survivor if they are okay, if there is anything the officer can do to make them more at ease, and relate to the survivor at a human

level, before jumping into questioning. Once the officer has established rapport and moves in to the interview phase, there are a couple of aspects to consider. First, survivors should be interviewed where they feel the most safe and relaxed. This could range from a police department, preferably not in an interrogation room, to somewhere in the community such as an advocate's office. If the survivor prefers, officers should use a slow pace for questioning, allowing plenty of time for the survivor to think and respond. Questions should be open-ended, allowing the survivor fill in the blanks and recount more detailed information. If there is a need for clarification or further detail, officers should address that by encouraging the survivor to tell more with leading statements: "Is there anything else you would like to tell me?"; "Is there anything else you can remember?"; or "Can you tell me more about...?". Posing questions in this way encourages survivors to divulge more information and gives them the space and time often needed to remember specific details in the aftermath of a traumatic event. Using these tactics, officers can gather the most accurate information and keep survivors feeling satisfied throughout the process.

In regard to the present study moving out of the pilot phase and in to the larger investigation, there are a few specific recommendations for increasing the response rate and collecting more qualitative information. Primarily, I would suggest the roles of the YWCA and SARC advocates be switched with the role of the CVA. After an in depth discussion with the advocates at the YWCA, it was apparent they were very restricted by the guidelines for administering the survey, especially since many of the survivors they worked with lived outside of Missoula County, were homeless, or reported their assault to an entity that was not the MPD. This means that although the YWCA has more contact with survivors, they actually have a decreased likelihood of being able to have qualified respondents for the survey. In addition, the survey is being administered at the third contact. The third contact is an ideal time to ask survivors to fill out the survey, but asking at this contact results in a much lower response rate. The response rate is decreased because it is very unlikely advocates will have contact with survivors a second time, let alone a third. Unfortunately, asking survivors to take a survey at initial intake is too invasive and all of the advocates expressed concern with trying that because their purpose is to be a support system for survivors, not the extended hand of a research project. With this in mind, the advocates at the YWCA suggested there might be a more successful response rate if the CVA administered the survey to survivors because she maintains contact

with them throughout the entire process. If the CVA administered the victim survey, then the YWCA and SARC advocates could complete the advocate survey, which makes more sense because they have more initial interactions with survivors and could report on the impressions they gathered during their first, and most likely only, contact. If this change was made, it would be feasible to expect a greater response rate and more informative data collection.

### **Future Implications**

The current pilot investigation served as an important insight in to the reporting experiences had by victims of sexual assault. The information gathered will inform MPD and other community stakeholders about the best practices for responding to survivors of sexual assault. In response to the investigation, the city of Missoula and the University of Missoula will implement new practices and guidelines to follow during responses to sexual assault. Community stakeholders will also use the suggestions made to improve their own implementation practices. Additionally, this project will inform future, larger projects about the best methods of data collection and use. Finally, conducting this investigation and working in cooperation with the federal government, as well as related smaller agencies, provides a strong example for cities across the nation to improve their communities' own sexual assault response practices.

### **Notes**

The information and data gathered during this pilot investigation was presented publicly at the University of Montana's Conference on Undergraduate Research on April 18, 2015. The contents of this paper will also be directly distributed to the YWCA, SARC, and CVA office, and the Detectives' unit at MPD. Email correspondence and meetings have been maintained between all of these stakeholders and the researcher as well. Although the researcher will be leaving Missoula this summer, there is confidence the project will continue through the remainder of the calendar year. Results gathered during this period will be analyzed by members of the CRG and disseminated appropriately.

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**Appendix:****Table 1: Question 6, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>The detective made the victim feel safe and comfortable.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	6	67%
No	0	0%
Unsure	3	33%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%

**Table 2: Question 8, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>The officer took time to clearly explain what was happening at each step of his or her response.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	6	67%
No	1	11%
Unsure	2	22%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%

**Table 3: Question 10, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>The detective addressed any questions and concerns the victim had.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	7	78%
No	1	11%
Unsure	1	11%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%

**Table 4: Question 12, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>The detective listened and understood the victim's perspective without judgment or blame.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	6	67%
No	2	22%
Unsure	1	11%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%

**Table 5: Question 14, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>I felt the detective believed the victim.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	4	44%
No	0	0%
Unsure	5	56%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%

**Table 6: Question 16, Crime Victim Advocate Survey 2015**

	<b>The detective encouraged the victim to use additional services.</b>	
<i>Response</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	8	89%
No	1	11%
Unsure	0	0%
<i>Total</i>	9	100%