

FROM CATCALLING TO RAPE

EVERYDAY SEXISM & RAPE CULTURE



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2 ROASTBUSTERS – AN INTRODUCTION

On the 3rd of November 2013, TV3 News (Rutherford, 2013) broke a story about the ‘Roastbusters’, a group of Auckland men who had filmed themselves boasting about sexual acts they had executed on young girls and had then posted these videos on a Facebook group. The social media group was used for the recruitment of other men, and to publicly humiliate and name the victims. The name for the group is a play on the title of the 1984 American film ‘Ghostbusters’ and derived from the term ‘spit roast’, which is a euphemism for sexual activity involving two active males and a passive third person (Carruthers, 2015, p 5). This story became one that galvanised the New Zealand public.

The videos posted on the Facebook page did not depict the sexual acts but the alleged perpetrators describing them after the fact. In the media storm that followed, it came to light that the police were first made aware of the story as early as 2011, and despite the videos being what seems like an obvious admission of guilt, to date, there have been no charges laid.

Following public uproar, the then Minister of Police, Anne Tolley, and the then Labour Spokesperson for Police, Jacinda Ardern asked the Independent Police Conduct Authority (IPCA) to conduct an inquiry into the Police investigation of the case (Carruthers, 2015, p 4). The IPCA published the report on the enquiry in March of 2015.

In this introduction, I will use aspects of the Roastbusters’ story to illustrate key concepts and themes which will then be expanded on in the following literature review.

2.1 PATRIARCHY – DOMINATION AND SOCIETAL FRAMING

While the IPCA Report on Police’s handling of the alleged offending by ‘Roastbusters’ (Carruthers, 2015) does not specifically mention the ages of the Roastbusters’ group, it does contain a footnote (Carruthers, 2015, p5) which states that within the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989* a ‘young person’ is defined as someone over the age of 14 but under the age of 17. The report continually uses the phrase “young people/men/women”.

There was also an interview with “Amy” on Radio Live¹. Amy stated that she went to school with some of the alleged perpetrators. During the interview, she says that one of the group is 23, if we take into account that the interview happened about 3 years after the events, then the man in question would have been approximately 20 (Tamihere & Jackson, 2013). In contradiction to this, the article by Amy Maas in the Sunday Star Times (2013) reported that the boys were 17 or 18 at the time.

As the case involves minors, some details have not and will not ever be made public. While we cannot confirm the actual ages of the alleged perpetrators, the story is still clearly about older males using their perceived social status to target younger, vulnerable girls. Indeed, in the interview on Radio Live, “Amy”

¹ The transcript of the interview has been included as Appendix A

mentions specifically how the girls involved were enamoured with the alleged perpetrators, and considered them “handsome” (Tamihere & Jackson, 2013).

For almost fifty years, authors and academics have been reframing rape as a “political act of violence and domination, squarely in the patriarchal traditions and sexist socialisation patterns of society” (Palmer, 1988, p 513). In fact, within a study of sexual aggression in captive rhesus macaques, Fred Bercovitch and colleagues came to a comparative conclusion that “human rape seems to be an outcome of status assertion by males which acts as a form of power domination used to copulate with a female who could not be attained with conventional methods” (1987, p 355). While it can be argued that the Roastbusters’ alleged perpetrators could have “attained” their alleged victims by “conventional methods” – especially given “Amy’s” statement that they were “considered handsome” – the posting of the videos on the Facebook page, and the nature of the videos themselves is a clear example of ‘power domination’ and ‘status assertion’. The men themselves state “we take what we do seriously – you try and get with the amount of girls we do. This is hard, it’s a job, we don’t do this shit for pleasure” (Rutherford, 2013). During the following literature review, I will outline societal framing within a patriarchal framework, especially within a New Zealand context.

2.2 GENDER, SEXISM AND SEXIST ATTITUDES

The day after the Roastbusters’ story broke, John Key, the then Prime Minister of New Zealand, said that “As a parent I find the issue very disturbing and abhorrent. You are talking about youngsters who are at a very delicate age. But it is actually a bigger issue and it is just extremely disturbing and disgusting behaviour and these young guys should grow up”. He then used the story as a way to advertise the then upcoming Harmful Digital Communications Bill (Quilliam, 2013).

John Key has been the Prime Minister of New Zealand since November 2008. His biography on his official website describes a typical middle to upper class pakeha man. Before he entered politics, he was an investment banker, and is married in a heterosexual relationship with two children (Administrative Staff, n.d.).

In a slightly strange sequence of events, early in 2015, an anonymous blog published on a popular left wing website, The Daily Blog, outlined how John Key would frequent a café, and over the course of many months, pulled a female café worker’s hair, even after being asked to stop (Anonymous, 2015). The café worker was later revealed to be Amanda Bailey by the New Zealand Herald (Glucina & Nichols, 2015). Regardless of the motivations of Ms Bailey or The Daily Blog, the facts of the story remain undisputed. John Key admits to pulling the woman’s hair, and after clarifying the situation with the café’s manager, where he was told she “did not like it”, continued to do it for months. It was only when Bailey threatened to “actually hit [him] soon” that he realised the gravity of the situation, and apologised (Kirk, Rutherford, & Gulliver, 2015). In an open letter, Sue McCabe, the chief executive of the National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) makes it clear that “we [should not see that] touching someone without their consent is our right”. NCWNZ called the events an example of someone being “outed for sexism” and indicative of “how much sexism is a part of our culture”. McCabe then continues by

explaining that while “unwanted touching” is at one end of a ‘scale of sexism’, much more serious violence against women lies at the other end (McCabe, 2015).

Key has tried hard to cultivate an image of “everyday kiwi man”. Indeed, when asked about his motivation behind the hair pulling, he was quoted as saying “I’m a friendly guy that likes to interact with the public...I’m probably the most casual Prime Minister New Zealand has had” (Dastgheib, 2015).

By referring to the Roastbusters’ alleged perpetrators as “young guys that [should] grow up”, he minimises the seriousness of the events and uses his overtly casual image to downplay the allegations. This ‘boys will be boys’ mentality can lead to a society where an “escalating continuum of violence against girls [is] disguised [as] normalised masculinity” (Klein, 2006, p 149). Jessie Klein further explains this continuum as one where the “boys are taught to express and defend their masculinity through domination”. Klein then continues to say that “boys typically acquire this attitude from parents, teachers, peers and other important figures in their lives who perpetuate the widely accepted belief that boys should dominate and control girls” (Klein, 2006, p 150). One could argue that the Prime Minister perpetuating this belief will have a significant impact on the boys of New Zealand. Especially in combination of his own casual attitude to sexual harassment, in relation to the case with the Ms Bailey.

2.3 RAPE MYTHS & VICTIM BLAMING – RAPE CULTURE

Please refer to Appendix A for the transcription of the radio show. The recording has been removed from the archives of Radio Live.

John Tamihere and Willie Jackson are both ex-Members of Parliament who hosted a talk-back radio show called “Noon to 3pm” on a MediaWorks channel, RadioLive. It was a fairly popular show² during the coveted “drive time”. On the 5th of November 2013 the producers chose to discuss the Roastbusters case on the show. A friend of one of the victims (she called herself “Amy”) rang in. They started the interview by drawing attention to the victims’ ages, inferring that as young girls, they were to blame, simply by being at a party in the middle of the night. They then emphasised the underage drinking, again, blaming the girls for accepting drinks and for being drunk. They insisted that the girls consented to the sexual activity, because they had chosen to be at the parties and they had found the men to be physically attractive. This is despite New Zealand law clearly stating that the age of consent is 16 (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 1961), which means that by legal definition, anyone under the age of 16 cannot consent to sexual activity.

During the interview, Tamihere & Jackson highlighted the fact that these were “handsome young men”, they muddled the idea of consent and extensively discussed the girls’ alcohol consumption and age. They inferred that the sexual assaults were “mischief”, and that the girls’ “could’ve got together and just said, na, this is just not on”. Experimental studies have shown that observers are quick to attribute blame to the victim of sexual assault, especially in cases that don’t fit the stereotype of a ‘violent attack of a stranger on an unsuspecting victim’. Research has also shown that if the perpetrator exploits the

² It won “Best Talk Back Host or Hosts – All Markets” in the 2011 Radio Awards and has been finalists in 2010, 2012 and 2013 in various categories (<http://radioawards.co.nz>)

fact that the victim is too drunk to resist, rather than the rapist using physical force, the incident is less likely to be considered a genuine rape complaint (Bieneck & Krahe, 2011, p 1786). However, the New Zealand Crimes Act 1961 is crystal clear on consent in reference to alcohol. It states that if a person is affected by alcohol, then he or she simply has no ability to consent (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 1961, section 128A). In practice, the culpability has been shifted to the act of 'choosing to drink' equating the acceptance of an alcoholic drink to consent of sexual activity. This is compounded by the fact that the girls in question were under the age of consent. An underage child, regardless of their alcohol level cannot consent to sexual activity at all.

A rape myth is defined as "a prejudicial stereotyped, or false belief about rape [that creates] a climate hostile to rape victims" (Burt, 1980, p 217). In this case, the 'myth' that a rapist should fit certain characteristics or demographics, and that these characteristics are not middle to upper class 'handsome' young men. This is a widely accepted myth, as it 'others' the rapists and the act of rape. It makes the concept of rape something that is non-normative and shameful (Masters, 2010, p 43). The 'othering' also plays to the public narrative that rapists are a certain type of 'person' and that these 'good boys' could not possibly be criminals, because they do not fit this narrative. Gina Robertiello and Karen Terry outline in their paper: "offenders constitute a heterogeneous group of individuals who begin abusing for myriad reasons. Many offenders do not fit into discreet categories" (2007, p 509). In any crime, it can be counter-productive to assume a certain demographic for the offender, it is especially dangerous in cases of sexual assault.

3 LITERATURE & THEORY REVIEW

3.1 GENDER

Sex, we told students, was what was ascribed by biology: anatomy, hormones, and physiology. Gender, we said, was an achieved status: that which is constructed through psychological, cultural, and social means.

- Candace West & Don Zimmerman (1987, p 125)

Candace West and Don Zimmerman propose a biological versus social divide between sex, sex category, and gender. They state that the distinctions between these three concepts are often overlooked and disregarded. They define these concepts as firstly, sex being the biological criteria that an individual possesses. The combination of the criteria and what it means (penis or vagina for example) has been agreed upon collectively in society. This criteria, when applied, becomes the sex category of the individual, and finally, how the individual manages their conduct along normative expectations for what is 'appropriate' for their sex category, constitutes their gender (1987, p 127). This means that the determination of an individual's gender is a completely sociological process, something that has to be 'achieved' or 'done', and not something that is inherent within you. If you act 'correctly' that is, within socially accepted conventions, whether your perceived gender matches your sex category or not, this means you have achieved your 'gender' or 'done' your gender successfully.

Kristen Schilt & Laurel Westbrook (2009) expanded upon this concept of 'doing gender' by analysing case studies that involved transgender³ people. They found that the processes of 'doing gender' are difficult to separate from the maintenance of heteronormativity⁴, and that people who 'do gender' in a way that does not reflect their sex category can be perceived as a threat of heterosexuality. They define this interplay between gender and sexuality as a connection between heterosexuality and patriarchy, or that heterosexual expectations are embedded into social institutions which guarantee that certain people have more 'class, power and privilege' than others (2009, p 443). They found that if there is an expectation that heterosexuality and gender identity follows from genitalia, that this in fact produces heteronormativity.

An interesting conclusion that Schilt & Westbrook drew was a gender gap in the use of violence when a perceived 'breach' in gender and heterosexuality has occurred. When cismen discover that the person they are with is a transwoman, violence may and does often occur, but they did not find any cases in reverse. They conclude that this is because violence is an acceptable way to claim masculinity but not

³ Schilt and Westbrook define cis and trans as "Cis is the Latin prefix for "on the same side." It compliments trans, the prefix for "across" or "over." "Cisgender" replaces the terms "non-transgender" or "bio man/bio woman" to refer to individuals who have a match between the gender they were assigned at birth, their bodies, and their personal identity" As this is a fairly encompassing definition, this paper also uses this definition (2009, p. 461).

⁴ Schilt and Westbrook define heteronormativity as "the suite of cultural, legal, and institutional practices that maintain normative assumptions that there are two and only two genders, that gender reflects biological sex, and that only sexual attraction between these "opposite" genders is natural or acceptable" (2009, p. 441)

femininity. Furthermore, they find that this is a real-life outcome of gender socialisation. If men are required to demonstrate masculinity and heterosexuality through the devaluation and ridicule of femininity, any perceived breaches of the gender binary can be responded to by using violence (2009, p 460).

I find both of these studies problematic, as they assume a gender binary. Even in Schilt and Westbrook's work with transgender people, they were interested in the reactions that cisgender people had to the individual's post-transition gender or the fact that they had transitioned. The gender is always framed as either male or female. In fact, as George Dvorsky & Dr James Hughes note, transgender individuals "often have to adopt extreme versions of gender stereotypes in order to legitimate their transition" (2008, p 6). Merely including transgender stories does not mean you are using a post-gender theoretical framework.

R W Connell suggests that like the Western concept of body versus mind, the sex versus gender dichotomy is problematic. You cannot separate the two, and when you try to, the biological dichotomy will take precedence (2002, p 33). Connell suggests, instead, that the key is to move away from considering sex differences and to focus on relations. If gender is considered a matter of social relations within which individuals and groups act you can consider large scale social processes as well as processes that lie within each individual (2002, pp 8-10).

As one of the aims of this paper is to study the effects of sexism on society, restricting or coding to a gender binary will lead to pre-assumptions that may alter the analysis. However, being aware of a gender continuum, similar in concept to the Bem Sex Role Inventory (Malloy, 2010), will add a depth to the data. Assumptions can be made based on the language used (for example, what pronouns the submitter used), however, if at all unclear, that particular data item will not be coded in terms of gender.

3.2 PATRIARCHY

Adrienne Rich defines patriarchy as a "familial-social, ideological, political system in which men – by force, direct pressure, or through ritual, tradition, law and language, customs, etiquette, education, and the division of labor [sic], determine what part women shall or shall not play and in which the female is everywhere subsumed under the male" (1976, p 57). Allan Johnson describes a patriarchal society as one that "promotes male privilege by being male dominated, male identified and male centred. It is also organised around an obsession with control and involves as one of its key aspects the oppression of women" (2005, p 5-6). Johnson then defines privilege in a footnote as "an unearned advantage that is available to members of a social category while being systematically denied to others."

While both these definitions point out the significance of male privilege in the societal structure, patriarchy, as a general concept, is not an attack on men. It is a system, which, whether through formal structures, or informal practices can and does benefit men. However, not all men benefit from the system equally, as not all women are equally disadvantaged.

Sylvia Walby's distinction between forms (or types) of patriarchy and its degree (or intensity), gives us a helpful framework with which to consider the organisation of society in general. In particular, Walby

articulates six patriarchal structures: mode of production, paid work, the state, male violence, sexuality, culture (1990)⁵.

Judith Bennett notes that in most feminist historical narratives, the authors are overly concerned with finding a transformative change for women, rather than focussing on the continuity of the experience. Bennett uses the example of the journey of the ale brewsters between 1300 to 1600 in Europe to explain how patriarchal structure is rarely as transformative as it appears to be. Bennett explains that the brewsters made ale and that it was predominantly a female led industry in the 1300s. By the 1600s, with the advent of guilds and large scale beer production, it had become a male led industry. Other authors have claimed that the brewsters of the 1300s lived in a prosperous 'golden-age' which was all but decimated by patriarchy in 300 years, but Bennett uses Walby's structures to explain how even though the forms of patriarchy might have changed, the effect had not. The practice of making ale, in the 1300s was a "low-skilled, low-profit, low-status work", when the nature of brewing changed, it was no longer considered suitable for women. Bennett points out that in the 1600s, much like in the 1300s, the nature of women's work had not changed. There was no transformation in women's status. Using a metaphor of a ballroom dance she says: "a dance where women and men – many different sorts of women and men – move across the room, alter their steps, movements and rhythms, even change partners or groups, but *always the men are leading*" (2007, pp 72-79) [emphasis added].

In my analysis of the data, I will be looking for examples of Walby's structures and note how and if they relate to sexism on a structural level.

3.3 SEXISM

"Sexism as a system of domination is institutionalized, but it has never determined in an absolute way the fate of all women in this society"

– bell hooks (1952, p 5)

Caroline Bird's "*Born Female*", written in 1968, is billed as "the book that launched Women's Lib"⁶. In a speech Bird delivered to the Episcopal Church Executive Council in Greenwich, Connecticut, she references the book and then coins the phrase sexism. She states that "sexism is judging people by their sex where sex doesn't matter" (1968, p 90). Ironically, while discussing this new concept of 'sexism', drawing a narrative with the well-established concept of racism, and even while comparing the beleaguered woman to the negro [sic], Bird claims that the typical woman is a "41-year old mother who is like as not working to put her children through college [sic]" (1968, p 89). This 'typical woman' was a 'person who is also a mother' and not a 'mother who is also a person', and modern advances in science meant that the time she has to fill between motherhood and death is too long to fill with "embroidery, bridge parties or cake sales" (1968, p 89). These middle and upper class examples of college educated

⁵ Walby introduces the concept of the six patriarchal structures in the introduction, and then each chapter is dedicated to each structure. This is why this reference does not include page numbers.

⁶ This is the phrase that appears on the cover of the revised edition (published in 1975)

working women points to a white woman, and thus even as she acknowledges race when it comes to the 'negro man' [sic], the entire breadth of her feminist theory is based on women who look just like her.

Another seminal book on feminism is Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*. In it, Friedan uses the phrase "the problem that has no name" (1997, pp 15-32) to suggest that the sole reason for dissatisfaction amongst all American women was that they were effectively 'bored' in their roles as housewives. She frames this as the number one issue that joins all women together in solidarity.

bell hooks, while admitting that *The Feminine Mystique* "paved the way for [the] contemporary feminist movement" (1992, p 1), added this scathing commentary: "it appears that Friedan never wondered whether or not the plight of college-educated white housewives was an adequate reference point by which to gauge the impact of sexism or sexist oppression on the lives of women in American society."

Therein lies the issue with focussing too closely on one aspect of sexism, or even with attempting to come up with an all-encompassing definition. The impact that intersectionality has, is unique to its characteristic. For example, you cannot compare the sexism that women of colour experience, to the sexism that is experienced by transgender women without accounting for these groups' experiential differences.

While looking at the characteristics of sexism, Susan Fiske & Peter Glick's definition of a "special case of prejudice marked by a deep ambivalence, rather than a uniform antipathy, toward women" (1996, p 491), is one that is widely cited and used. As it starts with a baseline of 'prejudice', it does have a negative bias which might pre-empt a conclusion.

George Albee, on the other hand, states that "sexism means ascribing superiority or inferiority, unsupported by any evidence, in traits, abilities, social value, personal worth, and other characteristics to males or females as a group." (1981, p 20). This is a much more evenly based definition, and is then further qualified by admitting that the 'standard of excellence' often used is a "white heterosexual male".

3.3.1 Everyday Sexism

The term 'everyday sexism' is used extensively by Laura Bates in her book, entitled the same. In it, she defines sexism as "treating people differently or discriminating against them purely because of their sex" and then further defines that 'everyday' sexism was when "women were experiencing it on a near-daily basis" (2014, location 132). The book was written as a result of an online social experiment, where Bates called for stories of 'everyday sexism' from the general internet population, and was inundated with thousands of stories from hundreds of countries, ranging from street harassment to cases of unreported sexual assault. A striking theme amongst the many entries to the project, is the normalisation of the behaviour, from both the perpetrators as well as any observers, and a tendency from the victims to also normalise or excuse the behaviour.

As a concept, everyday sexism has much in common with Philomena Essed's concept of everyday racism. As Essed notes, even though the phrase "everyday" has an "informal ring", rendering it to seem "relatively harmless and unproblematic", it is in fact the opposite. "The psychological distress due to the

day-to-day basis can have chronic adverse effects on mental and physical health. Felt persistently, everyday injustices... are often difficult to pinpoint, and can be therefore hard to counter" (Essed, 2001).

It is this day-to-day basis which Bates sought to highlight. She calls it her 'tipping point'. In her introductory chapter, she describes a "week of little pinpricks", small events which were not "dramatic or extreme, or even particularly out of the ordinary" (2014, location 117) but which eventually led her to create the website that was to become the Everyday Sexism project.

The term 'everyday sexism' was also used by Swim and colleagues in their research paper (2001) examining the incidence, nature and impact of everyday sexism using daily diary studies. Due to its similarity with this study, the categories which Swim and colleagues used were considered when I coded my data.

The majority of literature on sexism seeks to investigate institutionalised examples. For example, legislative changes that may be possible, or the ratio of men to women in certain industries. The Everyday Sexism project exists to highlight the scale of the invisible problem, pointing out that while legislation may counter sexism legally, the sexism still exists widely at the interpersonal level, as an unconscious bias.

Note that the project originated in the United Kingdom, and as I am using data recorded on the New Zealand sub-site, this entire project has a western first-world perspective. I acknowledge that in other countries, laws are not the same, and indeed, as we fight for more female Parliamentarians here in New Zealand, women in Saudi Arabia are fighting for the right to drive.

In the following methodology section, I elaborate about the data scraped from the project, which will be analysed in the research portion of this paper.

3.4 RAPE & RAPE CULTURE

In the preamble of the book "Transforming a Rape Culture", the editors Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher and Martha Roth define 'rape culture' as "a complex of beliefs that encourages male sexual aggression and supports violence against women." They describe it as a "society where violence is seen as sexy and sexuality as violent" (2005, p XI). In the introduction to the first section, they then quote a range of statistics and conclude that "in light of those statistics, the answer to the question 'are we living in a rape culture?' is yes" (2005, pp 5-8).

The term 'rape culture' seems to have originated from a film of the same name, first produced in 1975. The documentary was created by Cambridge Documentary Films, "a non-profit organisation established in Massachusetts in 1974" (Cambridge Documentary Films, 2015). The synopsis for the film describes it as the "first documentary to establish the relationship between rape and our culture's sexual fantasies" (Lazarus & Wunderlich, 1975). In creating the film, the authors Mary Daly & Emily Culpepper, through the producer/directors Margaret Lazarus & Renner Wunderlich, wanted to expand society's narrow concept of rape, from an isolated sexual perversion to a more generalised link with sexism and violence in society in general.

The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) is the United States of America's largest anti-sexual-violence organisation. As such, when they penned an open letter to a White House task force seemingly against the term 'rape culture' (Bercowitz & O'Connor, 2014), many media outlets interpreted this as a victory for those who repudiate the concept of 'rape culture', or alternatively, argued angrily that RAINN had lost touch with its constituency. Caroline Kitchens, writing for the prestigious *Time Magazine*, said this was "the nation's largest and most influential anti-sexual violence organisation [...] rejecting the idea that culture is responsible for rape" (2014). Slate.com loudly announced that RAINN 'doesn't understand the concept of Rape Culture' (Marcotte, 2014) accompanying the story with a large hand drawn banner proclaiming that "Rape is Rape" with the caption "Feminists are not confused about the cause of rape: rapists".

However, upon reading the letter, it is clear that RAINN are not denouncing the entire concept of 'rape culture', rather they want to bring the focus back to the individual at fault – the rapist. Their only complaint is that the language around 'rape culture' is in fact, enforcing it. By fixating on the cultural or societal 'reasons' behind rape, it takes the focus off the rapist, seemingly blaming society instead. Their own research finds that 3% of college men are responsible for 90% of the rapes. Their point is that emphasising 'rape culture' actually aims the messaging at the other 97% of men who are presumably innocent and not likely to rape at all (Bercowitz & O'Connor, 2014).

They suggest a three-tiered approach to preventing sexual violence:

1. Bystander intervention education: empowering community members to act in response to acts of sexual violence.
2. Risk-reduction messaging: empowering members of the community to take steps to increase their personal safety.
3. General education to promote understanding of the law, particularly as it relates to the ability to consent.

If you consider the earlier definition of 'rape culture' as a "society where violence is seen as sexy", these intervention techniques would fit well in a 'rape culture' framework that acknowledges structural gender discrimination. Later on in the letter, RAINN points out that if you do not change this it sends a message of impunity, where rape is seen as something 'that just happens'.

So, while they want to reduce the emphasis on the language of 'rape culture', in reality, the recommendations form a positive framework that would reduce the impact of such a 'culture' or 'society'.

Frederick Attenborough's article, on the other hand, shows how subtle changes to language can significantly re-contextualise and minimise violence, especially in stories about sexual violence. In a study looking at the case of Julian Assange and media representation of his rape allegations from Sweden, Attenborough shows how one report replaces "awoke and felt him penetrating her" with "woke to find him having sex with her", and points out how the change to having sex with her immediately de-emphasises the violence and rape to something that is seemingly consensual, without explicitly doing so (2014, p 195).

The other major component of a 'rape culture' is the tendency to accept sexual violence as 'inevitable' because of something the victim did or did not do. This concept of 'victim blaming' is quite unique to sexual violence, and "analyses of police files, trial observations, and interviews with legal professionals have shown that holding women responsible for precipitating sexual assaults is a common aspect of legal decision making that has been linked to the problem of high attrition rates in sexual assault cases (Bieneck & Krahe, 2011, p 1786). Using hypothetical, yet realistic, case scenarios, Steffen Bieneck and Barbara Krahe found that that "perpetrators of robbery were blamed more than perpetrators of rape and that victims of rape were blamed more than victims of robbery". They also found that the victim intoxication and prior victim-perpetrator relationship also significantly affected perceptions of both perpetrator and victim blame in the rape cases. Although they concede that the rape and robbery are two different crimes, they do highlight that "the issue of consent plays a critical role in rape cases" (2011, p 1794). This comparison is noteworthy in demonstrating the unique circumstances around sexual assault that too often blames victims.

As I quoted earlier, Essed stated in the description of everyday racism: "...felt persistently, everyday injustices... are often difficult to pinpoint, and can be therefore hard to counter..." (Essed, 2001), the language around rape culture does not seek to trivialise the severity of rape as a crime, rather to draw attention to the fact that the combination of multiple factors has led to a de-facto acceptance of rape as being inevitable.

In the analysis of the data, I will be seeking evidence of language or examples of everyday sexism which leads to this acceptance at the broader cultural level. Whether that leads to a 'rape culture' or not, will remain to be seen.

4 METHODOLOGY

Wendy Hollway and Tony Jefferson stated that “in researching any topic, there are two overarching questions that have to be addressed: what is the object of enquiry and how can it be enquired into?” (Hollway & Jefferson, 2000, location 393). As we have answered the ‘what’ with the preceding literature review, this section will investigate the ‘how’, or the methodology I have used to measure the extent, or lack therefore of rape culture within a New Zealand context.

4.1 EVERYDAY SEXISM PROJECT & DATA

The majority of the data that was analysed had been gathered as part of the Everyday Sexism project. The website launched in April 2012, and the brief on the front page hasn’t changed since⁷.

The Everyday Sexism Project exists to catalogue instances of sexism experienced by women on a day to day basis. They might be serious or minor, outrageously offensive or so niggling and normalised that you don’t even feel able to protest. Say as much or as little as you like, use your real name or a pseudonym – it’s up to you. By sharing your story you’re showing the world that sexism does exist, it is faced by women everyday and it is a valid problem to discuss.

If you prefer to e-mail me at laura@everydaysexism.com I can upload your story for you instead. Follow us on Twitter (and submit entries by tweet) at @EverydaySexism.

[add your story](#)

- Laura Bates (2015)

The “About” page then expands on the brief by describing some of the results of sexism (Bates, 2012). Neither the homepage, nor the “About” page defines what they mean by “sexism”. This means that the type of stories that are submitted are highly dependent, not only on the vague brief, but on the aggregate of the previous content already available.

4.2 VALIDITY OF THE DATA CORPUS

These stories, together with content gleaned from the various associated twitter feeds, form a large data corpus from which I could have drawn several data sets. Before I can consider the criteria with which to form the sets, I need to consider the validity of the entire corpus. Wendy Hollway & Tony Jefferson (2000, location 300) pose some questions which can be used to assess this validity, and to also further give clarity about the assumptions that need to be made. Note that as the questions are

⁷ Using the Wayback Machine (<https://archive.org/web/>) which takes independent snapshots of websites and catalogues them by date.

posed with 'future interviewing' in mind, while still helpful, it has been necessary to re-frame the questions.

4.2.1 Will you believe everything that you are told?

As there is no imperative, financial or otherwise, to post stories, and stories are posted voluntarily, it is therefore less likely that the stories will be fictitious. This is rendered even less likely by the fact that the majority of the stories have been anonymised. Any "fame" or "recognition" someone would get for posting on a public website is negated by the anonymity. However, you cannot rule out the possibility that people will post stories that are completely fictitious for their own entertainment.

4.2.2 What do you assume about motivation and memory?

Similarly in answer to the previous question, one can assume that the motivation of the contributor is to anonymously share their story, and perhaps purge some of the negative feelings in a cathartic way. Again, while I cannot rule out malicious or juvenile intent, if I am to assume the truth of the story, then I have to similarly accept the purity of the motivation.

4.2.3 What do you assume about the effect of the interviewer?

In answering this question, as this is not interview data, I consider the effect of the medium on the submission. Some entries are submitted through Twitter, and others through the online website form. There are also results via the associated Twitter feeds (results that have not been subsequently added to the website).

As Twitter is a social media channel, it has varying levels of anonymity depending on the setup of the user account. Some people choose to connect with both real life and virtual friends through the social network, and therefore associate the account with their real identity. Others choose to assume an online persona. While the concept behind using a pseudonym has been around for a long time, it was previously only available to published authors, or celebrities. With the relatively modern creation of the online or virtual space, the use of a pseudonym to represent an online persona has become increasingly common. Furthermore, these personas are sometimes very different to the real-life versions of the person, or may be an extension or a projection of who the person wants to be. These personas can take a long time to build, create and refine (Reed, 2010, p 487), all of which means that regardless of the anonymity associated with the persona, the person behind the persona is emotionally vested in their character and may indeed react in much the same way as if it was their real identity.

As taking part in the project is entirely voluntary, one can assume that those who choose to take part using Twitter would be aware of the ability to link the story with their online persona (whether real or a pseudonym). Furthermore, as it is just as easy to submit completely anonymously through the website channel, you can assume that those who chose to submit their story through Twitter are not only aware of the ability to link the story to their online persona, they purposefully choose to do so. While it can be hard to determine the exact result of this difference, I have at least concluded that any assumptions based on anonymity are thus cancelled out.

4.3 FEMINIST METHODOLOGY

Judith Cook and Mary Fonow define feminist methodology as “incorporating a critique of social science which includes reflections on the sources and potentials of possible knowledge (1986, pp 3-4). They go on to say that it “concerns feminist analyses of the epistemological assumptions which underlie different ways of knowing the social and of understanding women’s experiences” (Cook & Fonow, 1986, p 4). They are also careful to not try to create a “universal definition, or [even] a set of necessary and sufficient criteria;” This is because, from their research, they feel that “there is no “correct” feminist methodology within the field of sociology” (Cook & Fonow, 1986, p 5).

In critiquing Cook and Fonow’s paper (amongst others), Martyn Hammersley argued that there isn’t a convincing case for a ‘feminist methodology’ (1992, pp 202-203). In making this argument, Hammersley uses four main themes which he claims marks the distinctiveness of a feminist methodology. One of these is that feminists prioritise gender above all else, and he explains that while this can be a useful lens, it has been given too much of a focus in feminist research. Loraine Gelsthorpe counters his argument by acknowledging that while there is “perhaps a growing awareness that gender is an essential tool to understand other variables”, she argues that gender is not privileged by feminists in a uniform way (1992, p 213). Another point which Hammersley makes is that feminist research validates experience over methodology, and that quantitative methods are deemed ‘not feminist’ as they do not acknowledge the reality of the experience (Hammersley, 1992, pp 188-189). Gelsthorpe, again, counters this by stating that “experience and method are [not] polarised [in this way]”. She acknowledges, however, that [qualitative research] better reflects the nature of human, and therefore, women’s experiences. (1992, p 214). She concludes her critique by saying “feminists have expressed methodological preferences, some of which are more obviously in sympathy with feminist aims, but as within different disciplines, there has been no widely acknowledged consensus on methodology” (Gelsthorpe, 1992, p 217).

Not only is there no acknowledged consensus on methodology, “there has been no other movement for social justice in our society that has been as self-critical as feminist movement” (hooks, 1992, location 123). The feminist movement was born out of a need to question existing methodology, and as such is deeply rooted in self-criticism and self-checking.

This project is a qualitative study. It is embedded in a sociological perspective and has a feminist aim. I would resist the urge to call it a feminist methodology, but in doing the research, I have accepted that my position as the researcher will and does affect the research. I acknowledge my middle class, largely Western, feminist perspective, and have attempted to mitigate the effect where possible.

4.4 THEMATIC ANALYSIS

There have been over 5000 stories submitted to the project from around the world and countless more tweets and mentions which have not been submitted directly to the website and most of which have not been added to the site and therefore are not easily gathered. The entire project has since been split

into multiple thematic or country-based sub-sites. In order to have a more manageable amount of data, I have restricted the initial data set to only include the published New Zealand sub-site.

I have excluded any data submitted to the New Zealand sub-site that explicitly mentioned a different country, or clearly mentioned a non-New Zealand construct (for example, the use of 'grade' for schooling, or a different currency). This is likely as a result of incorrect filing by the website administrators, or an error in submission. This exclusion is because I wish to focus on the effect of everyday sexism on society only within New Zealand.

I have further excluded data that does not contain a personal story or narrative. Some items have been submitted to the project to indicate support for the project and does not, in itself, contain a narrative or a story.

If the raw data item contains several stories, I separated them into several individual data items for consideration. This was only done if the item was clearly segregated. For example, within some raw data items, the submitter has clearly numbered the parts of their story to indicate that the one submission contains several stories. I used the same Date/Timestamp and Submitter Name as the original data item, but labelled the new data items with unique Case IDs for ease of referencing.

4.4.1 Braun & Clarke's Six Phase Technique

The analysis then identified and reported on patterns or themes within the data using Virginia Braun & Victoria Clarke's six phase technique for thematic analysis. I used an inductive, or 'bottom-up' analysis to identify the themes, rather than a deductive, or a 'top-down' theoretical analysis. While this is a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing theoretical framework, I did still follow the six-phase technique outlined by Braun & Clarke as a rough methodological framework (2006, pp 87-93). "Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p 79). When coding for themes, I looked at both the "prevalence in terms of space within each data item" and "prevalence across the entire data set". I did not use, however, use this prevalence to solely determine 'keyness' of a theme, but rather looked at each emergent theme in relation to my research focus (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p 82).

4.4.1.1 Phase 1: Familiarizing yourself with your data

Multiple re-reading of the data set familiarised me with the themes and ideas that are present in the data. This initial familiarisation phase established the depth and breadth of the data. During this phase, I started to note certain recurring ideas (for example, stories which centred on harassment within a workplace environment), which I returned to in subsequent phases.

4.4.1.2 Phase 2: Generating initial codes

As this analysis is data-driven, I worked systematically through the entire data set, giving equal attention to each data item, identifying interesting aspects in each item which may form the basis of repeated themes across the entire data set. During this phase, I coded for as many potential themes or patterns as possible. Without further analysis, I was not willing to judge the importance of one theme over another. Although I did not link to any existing theoretical framework, I did note certain themes and

categories as made evident by the preceding literature review. For example, I found the rough categorisation of Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook between private and public interactions to be helpful. Specifically, they compared the difference between a 'public – non-sexual' interaction of a gender transition at a place of employment (2009, p 446), and a 'private – sexual' interaction using media accounts of killings of transgender people (2009, p 453). In coding the data, I noticed that these rough categories were present, and categorised accordingly:

- **Type of Interaction: Public, Private or Non-Interaction** – Where Public is an interaction involving multiple people, or taking place within a public space, and a Private one is one that involves either just two people, or takes place within a private space. In categorising for type, the space took precedence over the number of people. For example, in Case 23, the submitter mentions a “family members 80th birthday” where she was “standing in a circle of people”. Even though this incident took place in a ‘circle of people’, it was a private activity at someone’s house, and therefore was categorised as “private”. A Non-Interaction is a description of an act which did not include the interacting of the individual with anyone.
- **Category of Interaction: Sexual or Non-Sexual** – When determining whether an interaction was sexual or non-sexual I used a wider definition than the one in the New Zealand Crimes Act (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 1961, section 2) which describes full ‘sexual connection’. Alternatively, I found the definition of ‘sexual harassment’ within the New Zealand Human Rights Act (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 1993, section 62) to be too wide for this purpose, as it includes all sexual activity which is deemed offensive to the other person. I chose to categorise something as sexual when it specifically mentions sexual connection (whether in the form of intercourse, or inappropriate touching, or any mention of genitalia) or inference that there is to be a sexual connection (for example street harassment may not specifically mention genitalia or sexual connection but the implication is that the harasser would like a sexual connection with the person being harassed).

4.4.1.3 Phase 3: Searching for themes

This phase involves grouping codes into themes. The codes that I have started to use fit into categories which I am using as themes. At this stage, I have not discarded any themes, or codes, but have started to consider how some themes relate to others. At the end of this phase all data in my set was coded according to these themes.

4.4.1.4 Phase 4: Reviewing themes

This phase began when I had a set of candidate themes, and involved refining those themes. During this phase, some themes were discarded as they either did not have enough information, or did not fit in the overall study. Others were conglomerated into one theme, or others still needed to be broken down into several themes. I reviewed on two levels when refining my themes. The first at the level of the coded data extracts. I re-read all the collated extracts for each theme, and consider whether they appear to form a coherent pattern. If they did, I moved onto the second level. At this level, I considered the validity of individual themes in relation to the entire data set, but also whether my resulting thematic map ‘accurately’ reflected the meanings evident in the data set as a whole.

4.4.1.5 Phase 5: Defining & naming themes

This phase identifies what I meant by each theme. It involves giving them a concise name which captured their essence. If any theme is particularly complex, I looked to see if there were any sub-themes that helped to group the ideas and define what the theme is really about. Each theme, at the end of this phase had a scope and content sentence which summarised what it is about.

4.4.1.6 Phase 6: Producing the report

The report will form the main part of my results. The report provides a concise, coherent, logical, non-repetitive and interesting account of the story within and across themes. Using particular data extracts to illustrate points, I brought in theoretical research to further emphasise certain points or to elaborate on themes.

4.4.2 Special Case Study – Air New Zealand & Sports Illustrated

When coding for themes within the main data set, I found that there were a number of cases regarding the Air New Zealand pre-flight safety video featuring Sports Illustrated models. Although it only featured in 3% of the data items, I found the prevalence over a small time period of interest.

I was interested to see if I could find another data set to do with the same topic. I found a video posted by ABC News on youtube.com (2014). This video had 73 comments on it, largely in support of the video. Even though this was posted by an American news agency, and youtube.com is an internationally focussed website, a large number of the comments stated that they were New Zealanders, so I conducted a similar content and thematic analysis on the comments, as a secondary data set, to contrast with the themes found within the Everyday Sexism data.

This data set is discussed separately below in section 5.6.

5 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this research is to investigate whether incidences of everyday sexism can signify the existence of rape culture. By investigating a feminist-orientated online community's definition of everyday sexism, I seek to generalise the experiences to a New Zealand context and then to ascertain whether the components of a 'rape culture' is in existence within New Zealand society.

The primary data set contained 238 data items, selected out of a data corpus of around 5000 items. After coding and processing, there remained 226 data items with submission dates spanning from 15th of April 2013 to 6th December 2014. As described earlier (in section 4.4) some data items did not fit the parameters and were therefore excluded.

Each data item that remained, contained a narrative story, the name of the person who submitted it and a date and timestamp. I classified each item with a Type (Public, Private or Non-Interaction) and a Category (Sexual or Non-Sexual) based on the framework suggested by Schilt & Westbrook (2009).

Classification	Number of items	Percentage
Public – Sexual	77	34%
Public – Non-Sexual	51	23%
Private – Sexual	27	12%
Private – Non-Sexual	21	9%
Non-Interaction – Sexual	12	5%
Non-Interaction – Non-Sexual	38	17%
TOTAL	226	100%

After the initial coding, I could see that the majority of those classified as non-sexual were mainly coded with stereotyping or enforcement of societally expected gender norms, whereas the majority of those classified as sexual were cases of sexual harassment or even assault.

Once the initial coding had been completed, I linked some of the codes together into themes. In discussing each of the themes below, I draw linkages between the theme, the issues discussed within the theme and what would constitute a normative sexist culture.

Results below are organised by theme and each theme is discussed with some verbatim quotes from the data items. Some themes contain sub-themes, and the relationship of the main theme to these sub-themes or to other variables is also discussed. Some data items may have been coded under multiple themes. The themes are in no particular order, and where they relate to another theme, I have clearly stated this.

Note that when specifically quoted, the data extracts in the following section is not necessarily the entire data item. Often the data item is long and has extraneous information which either relate to a different theme, or is irrelevant to the current discussion. The data extract shown is likely to only include the portion of the data item which is most relevant to the current discussion.

There was extraneous information associated with a case study. This data set was considered separately and discussed separately below.

5.1 HETERONORMATIVITY & GENDER IDENTITY

Throughout the entire data set, the word 'gay' is not mentioned at all, and the word 'lesbian' is used once as a demeaning label to describe clothing choice. There is little to no explicit mention of sexuality, but several examples mention being overlooked for their 'husband' or male friend, indicating a heterosexual relationship, or at least an assumption of one from a bystander. There are no cases regarding gender identity or ones that highlight transgender issues. This is not true of the entire data corpus. According to Bates "Since the Everyday Sexism Project started, many of the stories we have catalogued have described not just sexism but sexism intermingled with other forms of prejudice...homophobia, transphobia...again and again, we've heard from women in same-sex relationships being fetishized and asked for threesomes... trans women mocked and belittled and hounded from public spaces..." (Bates, 2014, location 3158-3163).

There have been thousands of entries worldwide, and hundreds of thousands more tweets which have not been catalogued, whereas the entire New Zealand data set catalogued only contains 238 data items. The data was collected unsolicited by people who had heard about the project through social media, and as such, is analogous to a 'snowball' sampling technique. Snowball sampling is an example of a nonprobability sampling technique, and as such, the views of the sample obtained may not be truly representative of the whole (Clow & James, 2014, p 234). While this project was not seeking to generalise across the New Zealand population, this is a glaring omission and subsequent studies should seek to target non-mainstream communities to conclude if any of the findings are also present.

5.2 POLITENESS

There have been studies outlining that women exhibit a greater deference and politeness in their speech (Baroni & D'urso, 1984, p 67) and others suggesting that this reflects the 'relative lack of power' in societal situations, or as a method to 'gain compliance' (Baxter, 1984). Maria Baroni & Valentina D'Urso note that 'politeness' for female speech often includes, but is not restricted to, "use of tag questions at the end of interrogatives and the use of longer, less direct and peremptory sentences" (Baroni & D'urso, 1984, p 67).

Mary Harris investigated the effect of politeness in societal situations, and experimented with switching what she called 'courteous' behaviours from being performed by a man to being performed by a woman. In her experiment, the 'courtesies' when performed by a woman was viewed less favourably than the same act being performed by a man (Harris, 1992). These 'acts of courtesies' included opening doors and paying for a meal.

Although Harris' experiment showed that people expected common courtesies from both genders, Leslie Baxter's results indicated both that females used politeness more, and that persons with more power used less politeness. Baxter's hypothesis was based on the fact that "the essence of the human

experience is interdependence” (Baxter, 1984, p 427) and therefore in order to achieve one’s goals in conjunction with others, you had to use different compliance-gaining techniques. This correlates with a power-based framework, where presumably those with more power are expected to achieve one’s goals independent of other people.

This theme was strongly represented in the data. Some submissions explicitly noted the internalisation of ‘politeness’:

...I’m fucked off at the social conditioning that has taught me to be polite even when others are being disrespectful towards me...
– Case 88 – Submitted by “Joanne”

And others implicitly mentioned it, seemingly without being aware:

I am 16 years old...when a man that looked around 30 stopped me and asked for my name number... I **politely** said no...[emphasis added]
– Case 132 – Submitted by “anon via email”

This ‘politeness’ can be considered a type of social cognition that is expected in female-identified people, and has in fact become ‘innate’ with social conditioning.

[I’ve had] random guys come up to me and **tell me to smile** and the guys that get angry because you don’t want to dance with them when you are out...[emphasis added]
– Case 12 – Submitted by “Emma”

[In] the new club a man tried to get me to dance with him. I did but he looked somewhat dissatisfied and **told me to ‘smile’**.
– Case 123 – Submitted by “Joanne”

Sarah Bennett and colleagues investigated the gendered differences in crime and violence, and cross-referenced these differences with differences in social cognitive skills. Normative beliefs help an individual decide what type of behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable (Bennett, Farrington, & Huesmann, 2005, p 281). The societal expectation for female-identified people is to be polite, to always smile and to be pleasant, which embeds a societal structure where female-identified people are assumed to be in positions of less power. If we consider that men “dominate most social, political, and economic activities” (Ong & Ward, 1999, p 370), and if you follow this through to its logical conclusion, rape or sexual assault is the culmination of this domination which can then be “seen as the use of sexuality to establish or maintain dominance and control of women by men” (Ellis, 1989, p 11). In this context, it can be argued that a societal expectation to be polite increases a female-identified person’s vulnerability and perpetuates a sense of male privilege.

By not having the same expectations on male-identified people, society is further encouraging a gender divide which leads to a greater acceptance for anti-social male behaviour, as long as the behaviour further embeds the acceptable normalised social structure. This anti-social male behaviour can escalate towards violence, and could still fit within this framework and be acceptable.

5.3 PARENTING

Ronald Simons and colleagues measured the required conditions for constructive parenting and/or destructive parenting between the father and mother in a heterosexual marriage. They defined constructive parenting as the type of parenting that promoted a child's cognitive functioning, social skills, moral development, and psychological adjustment. Destructive parenting, however, is not the absence or converse of constructive parenting, they were clear to state that even if a parent lacked warmth, communicated poorly, or provided little supervision, they may not have displayed hostility or coercion (Simons, Whitbeck, Conger, & Melby, 1990, p 376).

A key finding in their paper was "for both fathers and mothers, a positive relationship is predicted between perceived impact of parental behaviour upon child development and involvement in constructive parenting" (Simons et al., 1990, p 377). In other words, parents were found to be more "responsive and stimulating" when they perceived that "such caregiving is related to developmental outcomes" (Simons et al., 1990, p 377).

This matches what would commonly be perceived as "the role of parenting". As the first adult role model in your child's life, one would assume that you would want to impart not only knowledge, but also your personal values to ensure your child grows to be a successful adult based on your own definition of "success".

There were several data items which specifically mentioned a parent or parenting. Some described young children:

...a small boy picks up a pink jewellery set and starts asking his Mum to buy it for him. "No" she says "and I don't care if this is sexist but my son is not going to wear pink bling."...

– Case 164 – Submitted by "Tales of Woe"

...today I was in the Two Dollar Shop and there was a mother with her daughter who looked about 3 or 4 years old. The mother was telling the shop assistant in a very frustrated voice about how her daughter had a toy dinosaur and how she'd "bought her a princess crown and a wand but she just won't leave the dinosaur"...

– Case 75 – Submitted by "Jen"

The mother in Case 164 said to the sales staff “I don’t care if this is sexist”, and is therefore consciously rejecting some personal understanding of sexism and resolutely choosing to instil that rejection into her son. She may either believe that sexism or a sexist attitude is not detrimental to a boy’s life, or she may consider the consequence of not being sexist to be of greater harm.

The mother in Case 75 is noted to be “frustrated”, presumably because she is being a ‘constructive parent’ by encouraging her daughter to conform to the societal expectation of a gender binary, and is unable to understand why her daughter is not conforming as expected.

Some data described older children:

... [at] an all girls high school. The uniform does include optional trousers [...] I much prefer wearing pants [...] When I asked my mother if I could get a pair of these uniform trousers for these very reasons she reacted almost violently. She came out with a stream of things like "It's a political statement" "You'll be black-listed" "People will look at you funny" "You'll be a social outcast" "People will call you a lesbian" "I refuse to let you put yourself through that pain" "They're horrible sack-like things" "You look fine in the skirt"...

– Case 150 – Submitted by “StokeTheRage”

Case 150 shows how ‘gender’ can be thought of as a “socially organised achievement” (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p 129), in that somehow, the wearing of a skirt at an all-girls high school is portraying the child’s “femaleness” more so than wearing trousers. In addition, note how the parent in this example equates “people will call you a lesbian” with “you’ll be a social outcast”. The (presumably cis-gendered) mother’s reaction to the daughter is an graphic demonstration of a “mechanism that uphold[s] the heteronormative sex/gender/sexuality system and illustrates the lengths to which gender normals will go to maintain a gender/sexual order that occurs ‘naturally’” (Schilt & Westbrook, 2009, p 461). Her “almost violent” reaction to something as simple as uniform choice shows how ingrained a ‘heteronormative system’ can be. Case 75’s mother exhibits the same intrinsic values – the princess crown is what a “normal little girl” should want, and she equates the dinosaur with the child not “doing gender” correctly.

The parents have been socialised within a heteronormative sex/gender/sexuality system, and wish to impress this framework on their children, as they believe that this is their role as parents.

In addition, Case 75 and Case 150 are also examples of a parent putting appearance above all other qualities for their daughters, and thus implying that appearance is the entire measure of their daughter’s worth. [See the case study on Air New Zealand’s Safety Video (section 5.6) for further discussion on objectification and body image]

Consider also this example of a father and his 11 year old son:

...a late-30's man and his 11yr old son come in [to the restaurant] [...] The 11yr old says to [the waitress] - you'll be my dad's girlfriend by the end of the night.'

She thought What! Then the 11yr old says - Anywhere here i can charge my phone?' and she said no we don't do that here in this restaurant. The dad says to her - Well if you take it home and charge it i can come and pick it up.' She said - Sorry what?. The 11yr old son says - by the way are wearing a pushup bra? She thought i've had enough of this and handed over to another waitress Who later said to her - That 11yr old boy asked what colour panties i had on?'

Apparently his dad sat there smiling through all this...

– Case 27 – Submitted by “Aileen”

In this case, the father is seen to be encouraging the son's aberrant behaviour. He is specifically being taught that sexual harassment is amusing and harmless, and in fact to be encouraged. This can be seen as especially destructive as an 11 year old boy is presumably reaching (or has reached) an age where he will start thinking about romantic or mature interpersonal relationships of his own. The boy's aggressive behaviour is being encouraged, and the lines of consent are being deliberately blurred.

In any discussion on sexism, the most common western argument seems to be that it is an issue from the past. For example, when Ms Bates started thinking about the stories that would ultimately become the Everyday Sexism Project, she said “the more stories I heard, the more I tried to talk about the problem [of sexism]. And yet time and time again I found myself coming up against the same response: sexism doesn't exist anymore. Women are equal now, more or less. You career girls these days can have your cake and eat it – what more do you want?” (Bates, 2014, location 143 - 147). An example like Case 27, shows how detrimental this line of thought can be. The harassment of the waitress is seen as non-harmful by the parent of a child. By encouraging the harassment, the father is perpetuating this sexist framework to the next generation.

The father in case 27 is exhibiting a permissive parenting style, which Megan Schaffer and colleagues shows hinders development of empathic abilities which in turn contributes to antisocial behaviour. (2009, p 594). The waitress, having felt increasingly uncomfortable and threatened, handed over to another waitress. The second waitress reports that the harassment continued. The father had not registered that the change in waitress probably meant that their behaviour was unwanted, showing a lack of empathy on his part, and furthermore, encouraging a lack of empathy in his son.

For a normalised sexist society to be considered a 'rape culture', violence and aggression needs to be normalised as desirable. This is certainly the lesson being taught to the child in Case 27. His aggressive sexualised behaviour is being encouraged by his father, and his father also joins in.

The denial from the parent in Case 164 and the fact that the child subsequently submitted the story of Case 150 shows that perhaps this normalisation is changing. For someone to recognise that there might be an issue, even if they deny it, can mean that the issue is becoming more publically accessible. For

a child to grow up and rebel against the socialisation may show a positive outlook for the future of our society.

5.4 EMPLOYMENT

5.4.1 The gender 'pay-gap'

New Zealand was the first country in the world to have universal suffrage (Electoral Commission, 2013), and as such has been enacting anti-gender discrimination practices in law for a very long time. The Human Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on sex (New Zealand Ministry of Justice, 1993, section 21) and has been in force since 1993.

Yet, in 2015, there is a gender pay-gap of 11.8% (Ministry for Women, 2015) – which has increased from 9.9% in the previous year (John, 2015) and, to explain this gap, the then head of the Employers Association, Mr Alasdair Thompson, cites that the reason is that women were less productive than men and had more time off (National Council of Women, 2011). Rachel Zweighaft notes that in cases of sexual harassment at work “harasseees are frequently less productive in their jobs, reinforcing a stereotype of women as unreliable workers” (Zweighaft, 1997, p 438). It is unclear whether Mr Thompson was referring to women that are victims of sexual harassment, or women in general.

The Ministry for Women, based on research (Ministry for Women, 2015), cites that the main reasons for a pay gap are:

- *Occupational segregation* – where there is a clustering of female-identified people in particular occupations (for example nursing), and then it has been shown that these female-dominated occupations are lower paid than those dominated by men.
- *Vertical segregation* – where there is a higher proportion of male-identified people in senior better-paid positions.
- *Greater proportion of time in unpaid & caring work* – female-identified people spend less overall time in the workforce due to child rearing and other similar activities.
- *Unconscious bias* – where stereotypical views about gender can negatively influence decisions about recruitment and promotion.

While these are greater embedded institutional issues, often where it comes to the fore is when an individual person finds a direct pay-discrepancy within the company that they work for. For example, “O” gives us an example of the single male member of their team:

finding out the newest and only male member of work team earns a salary double digits higher than similarly qualified and more experienced personnel who happened to be all women
– Case 169 – Submitted by “o”

And “HelenaS” who found it difficult to gain equal employment with her male colleagues in the same field:

even though I had better grades and better social skills than my male friends
they were still offered better paying jobs when we graduated
– Case 20 – Submitted by “HelenaS”

When dealing with a systemic issue, individual anecdotes only serve to show the extent of the problem if they are added up. Yet, when faced with the evidence, legislators will point to each individual case and ‘explain’ it away, or point out that existing legislation that is already in place.

I’ve even been told so when I did a follow up on an interview only 5 years ago
which I didn’t get – he said that they couldn’t invest in someone who would
eventual take a long period of time off to have children
– Case 71 – Submitted by “Belinda”

“Belinda”, in this case could have reported that employer to the Human Rights Commission, but she would have had little motivation to do so, as it was a past incident, and the problem doesn’t lie with this particular employer, it lies in the fact that there are countless other employers with the same mind set and countless other “Belinda”s who are discriminated against.

While an individual like “Belinda” could have taken action and fixed the issue within the existing social framework, it is the framework itself and wider cultural attitudes surrounding and influenced by it remains at fault.

5.4.2 Workplace harassment

This widespread workplace discrimination not only manifests in systemic institutional issues, it can often result in workplace bullying from colleagues or subordinates, which can be condoned – or at the very least ignored - by superiors or workplace harassment from the superiors themselves.

As a very junior accountant at kpmg I was told by a male colleague that my tits
looked nice. When I stuck up for myself and said that it was inappropriate and
bordering on sexual harassment he told me it was a compliment. I considered
raising it with management but was advised against it because I'd be labelled a
"stirrer"
– Case 194 – Submitted by “Bee”

This story from “Bee” encapsulates so many of the themes within the wider umbrella of workplace harassment. She states that she is a “very junior” accountant, presumably with greatest risk to career advancement if she complains. She minimises the harm herself by only classifying the incident as

“bordering” on sexual harassment. The colleague minimises the incident by calling it a “compliment” and presumably it was a senior colleague who advised against the complaint, which points to a systemic culture of harassment within what is a large internationally based corporation.

The story of the Prime Minister and Ms Bailey earlier sadly seems typical when compared with many of the stories submitted to the Everyday Sexism project. From stories of customers staring and making inappropriate sexual comments to groping and grabbing, something about being a female-identified person in a service role entails loss of body autonomy.

I used to work on the patio of a really popular downtown restaurant. Though the male servers were allowed to wear shorts women servers had the choice between jeans or mini skirts. Since summers here are very hot I opted for a jean skirt only to have customers grab/smack my butt and make incredibly inappropriate comments. On top of this male staff members would tell me that my skirt wasn't short enough and would come over and roll the hem shorter despite my protests. I grew so uncomfortable with this that I ditched the skirt and had to wear full length jeans in sunny 30+ degree weather.

– Case 101 – Submitted by “Clara”

In an extensive discussion on sexual harassment, Rachel Zweighaft describes the two main kinds of sexual harassment that could be considered workplace discrimination. The first, *quid pro quo* harassment is “where sexual behaviour is linked to a term or condition of employment. For example, an employer or supervisor subjecting an employee to sexual advances in return for a benefit, or under the threat of detriment to their employment” (Zweighaft, 1997, p 436). The second category is more difficult to categorise as workplace discrimination. Zweighaft describes this second kind as the creation of a *hostile environment*, where “supervisors or co-workers creates an environment of unwanted sexual behaviour [which] are difficult to fit within a discrimination paradigm because the harasser may not have any direct employment-related power over the harassee” (Zweighaft, 1997, p 437). The main difficulties arise from the fact that, firstly, the harm cannot be easily quantified in an economic sense, and secondly, if the harassment is not by someone in a supervisory capacity, the “employer’s economic power is implicated indirectly” (Zweighaft, 1997, p 437). “Clara”’s example from Case 101 fits under this paradigm, the co-workers rolling her hem, the customers grabbing and making inappropriate comments all contribute to a hostile environment as a workplace. However, as Zweighaft notes, the harasser (in some of these cases, the customer) is not acting as an “agent” of the employer, which “means that the harm is not a direct result of the employer’s power” (Zweighaft, 1997, p 441). However, this does not mean that the employer is not liable, “the employer has a responsibility to protect the integrity of their economic relationship with all employees”. The employer mandating that female employees wear short skirts can be seen as a way to emphasise a societal definition of “femininity” and thus increase the objectification of their female staff. Instead of protecting the economic relationship with their staff, they are choosing to exploit them. In this way, “Clara” is seen as a “subordinate and marginal category of worker whose greater exploitation benefits [her] employer” (Walby 1990, p 33). Zweighaft then goes on

to further explain that “an employer [also] has a duty to provide a workplace that meets certain health and safety standards”. She points out that in order to meet these standards, an employer should take preventative action, and at the very least take remedial action to address sexual harassment (Zweighthaft, 1997, p 442). In this case, the employer has clearly breached discrimination laws by having different uniform policies for each gender and by not addressing the sexual harassment after the fact.

Both Case 101 and 194, and many more coded under “workplace harassment”, all clearly breach one or more of the existing New Zealand legislation that combats workplace discrimination. Yet, the multitude of cases that have been submitted to what is quite a small online project shows that this is a problem far from being solved.

5.5 SEXUAL HARASSMENT TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Over half of the entries were coded as “sexual harassment” and an equally significant number were coded as “sexual assault”. Laura Bates herself expressed surprise at the addition of these stories. “In the early days, as the first stories of this kind were recorded, I wondered why people were coming to us – why they weren’t sharing and being supported elsewhere” (Bates, 2014, location 213). She quickly realised that “thousands of these stories had never been told. Thousands of these women had grown up in the confident assumption that these violations were their fault; that their stories were shameful; that they should never tell anybody. And their experiences weren’t ‘out of place’ among the tales of daily, niggling, normalised sexism” (Bates, 2014, location 218).

In a similar manner, the initial project plan for this research was to exclude examples of sexual assault. I had mistakenly assumed that there was a clear line that could be drawn between cases of normalised sexism and sexual assault. Like Bates, I found, instead, that these stories did not ‘seem out of place’.

My mum had her own experiences of sexual assault but that was just normal too and being a sensible woman she didn't make a fuss about it. So when my brother told her when I was 4 he'd seen my grandfather sexually molesting me well she and my dad thought it must be a "one-off" that I should be careful not to be with him alone that they'd be careful not to leave me with him alone but that the key thing was to "not make a fuss" so I didn't think it was my fault.

– Case 10 – Submitted by “Margie”

While the idea of a four year old being sexually molested and the parent not doing anything seems far-fetched, the same theme comes up over and over again.

My fathers brother was standing next to me and groped me in between my legs and backside and simply whispered "lucky it was your uncle and not some random guy" and laughed. I felt so violated and embarrassed that I went to the toilets and cried and tried to pull myself together. I didn't tell anyone for a few years but when I told my parents they just said "That's just how he is" and just shrugged it off.

– Case 23 – Submitted by “C”

I was raped by 2 men at the age of 14 and my family normalised it by ignoring it...I was confused...I was sure it was wrong!

– Case 83 – Submitted by “Kath”

What is alarming is the language of normalisation and the excuses made for serious sexual assault is the same as all the other stories within the project.

A multitude of articles have shown that when a child is abused sexually, they experience acute psychological responses to the abuse. These may include, but are not limited to, anxiety, fears, regressive behaviours, post-traumatic stress disorder, low self-esteem, sexualised behaviours, delinquency, withdrawn behaviour and a host of other long-term psychological sequelae (Beitchman et al., 1992; Mullen, Martin, Anderson, Romans, & Herbison, 1996; Polusny & Follette, 1995; Shaw, Lewis, Loeb, Rosado, & Rodriguez, 2000). In particular, Jon Shaw and colleagues' finding “suggests that minimising sexual acts [is] ignoring the truly abusive and aggressive nature [of the abuse]” (Shaw et al., 2000, p 1599).

The inexplicable reaction of the parents in Case 10 correlates to a behavioural strategy of ‘emotional avoidance’. Melissa Polusny and colleagues suggests that this behavioural strategy is employed to “temporarily avoid or alleviate negative abuse-related internal experiences” (1995, p 158). What is particularly harrowing is that Polusny and her colleagues are reflecting on adult sexual abuse victims adopting these behavioural strategies to provide themselves some short-term relief. For a parent to employ this technique in reference to their children will exacerbate the feelings of shame and self-blame in the child, while coincidentally providing short-term relief for the parents. P E Mullen and colleagues note, that child sexual abuse is particularly damaging to a sense of self, and this in turn heightens the risks of self-destructive or suicidal behaviour (1996, pp 7-8). An exceptionally ironic finding from Joseph Beitchman and colleagues was that the quality of ‘maternal warmth’ was the strongest predictor of psychological difficulty in adulthood (1992, p 114). In other words, where a parent was supportive, the child in the long term studies had the least long-term psychological sequelae.

Compare the reaction of the parents to the following cases:

[The male teacher] said: "Play me a song that will lift my heart... And something else." My friends and I were shocked. It took us a while to believe what had been said. At the time we were creeped out by his statement that we actually moved to a different location. But what I find interesting now is how we thought how "normal" it was to be spoken like this by a man and how we just laughed it off.

– Case 35 – Submitted by "14 year old self"

They wolf whistle at you. I've had it numerous times. Some girls take it as compliments and brush it aside

– Case 67 – Submitted by "anonymous"

Then I asked her if those men made her feel beautiful. "I think they were just giving me a compliment" she replied

– Case 91 – Submitted by "Sammi"

The normalisation of sexual harassment, and in fact re-framing it in a positive light by calling it a 'compliment' not only minimises the harm of unwanted sexual conduct, but in fact can be seen to encourage it in a wider societal context.

The majority of the cases coded as 'sexual harassment' were to do with unwanted sexual attention, frequently on the street by strangers (euphemistically called cat-calling). Anne Esacove points out that if you believe the myth that men have "uncontrollable animal urges", then you can "excuse uninvited propositions as nothing more than a healthy 'red-blooded' response to a women's attractiveness. The woman is [then] pressured to view such an advance as a compliment rather than the sexual harassment it actually is" (1998, p 182). She then sadly points out that, even in academic literature, "everyday unwanted sexual attention by male strangers is often minimised when discussed" (Esacove, 1998, p 182). In an attempt to fix this gap, her qualitative study looks into the coping mechanisms of several women who had experienced unwanted sexual attention from male strangers, much like the multitude of stories within this data set. In her study, the "accumulative effect of [the encounters] left the women feeling ineffectual, vulnerable, and angry" and in fact, they "often blamed themselves for not properly handling the situation" (Esacove, 1998, p 189). This strongly correlates with the data found in the wider data set. Almost every data item coded as "sexual harassment" had language that correlated with "avoidance of blame".

Consider the following:

[I was] in a shapeless uniform

– Case 2 – Submitted by “Retail”

Luckily I don't really like wine so sipped it and luckily had my wits about me

– Case 74 – Submitted by “Karen”

Just for the sake of being clear, I was wearing jeans a tank top and a blazer
though it really shouldn't have mattered

– Case 21 – Submitted by “Anonymous”

Her study was seen by the participants as “validating their experiences”, and many of her volunteers had not shared the story previously as they had “a fear of being seen as excessively sensitive or bragging about the amount of attention they receive” (Esacove, 1998, p 189). This statement shows the crux of the issue, not only did the women admit that their experiences were “detrimental to their physical and mental health”, this was further compounded by a culture that does not allow them to report it. The re-framing of unwanted sexual attention as a “compliment” has the horrific result that the women who complain about it are seen to be bragging. Thus, instead of support, they would receive further derision. If there was one concept of everyday sexism that directly correlates to what would be considered a ‘rape culture’, I would conclude that ‘cat-calling’ is a strong contender.

5.6 CASE STUDY: SAFETY IN PARADISE

In February 2014, New Zealand’s national airline, Air New Zealand, released a safety video in conjunction with Sports Illustrated – a magazine that emphasises women’s bodies in sports settings (Dearnaley, 2014). Since a 2009 corporate re-branding exercise, Air New Zealand has been known for innovative pre-flight safety videos and this particular video was released to coincide with Sports Illustrated’s 50th anniversary edition (Dearnaley, 2014). Air New Zealand removed the safety video from circulation by the first weekend of July, replacing it with an older video, officially stating that “the airline typically changed safety videos every few months” and claiming that they did not remove it due to public pressure (The Editor, 2014).

In the six months the video was being used, the social media debate continued. Some called for the video to be removed, such as a change.org petition which garnered 11,049 votes (Young, 2014). Some merely called the video ‘sexy’ and lauded its celebrity status (Feenstra, 2014). Others, such as the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation’s general manager, Graeme West, supported the video saying that it would “give the tropical island international exposure” (3 News, 2014). Mr West’s commentary is especially problematic as he is in a position of power. As the general manager of the Tourism Corporation, his endorsement of the video would bear particular weight as being a mainstream opinion. Any opposition can then be subsequently attributed to ‘crazy’ fringe groups.

As can be expected, due to the nature of the Everyday Sexism project, the data items which related to this case study, reiterated a range of themes, such as objectification, pornography, and innuendo, but all were against the video in principle.

As described earlier, this special case study considered a thematic analysis of internet commentary on a video about this story. The video was a story by ABC who is an American news agency. This case study gave an interesting peek into a different type of subculture that was not available from the Everyday Sexism data.

In considering this data set, it became apparent that the Everyday Sexism data is heavily pre-selected. All the people submitting to that project were aware of sexist structures, and had therefore self-selected as someone who is either affected by, or at the very least concerned by sexism. This data was gathered as commentary on an American news report of a New Zealand story, it is a much different segment of the population, and you could assume a much more representative sample of New Zealand as a whole.

5.6.1 Not 'our' problem

As this is commentary on an American news report, a small portion of the commentary seemed to be misguided patriotism. Comments such as "those americans are full of bullshit", "[Air New Zealand are engaging and funny] as we kiwis are", and "I am from New Zealand, We love women and safety videos, sorry if you don't like it" show that perhaps the commenters think that the issue is with the reporting of the story, rather than any issue within the story itself. This could point to a larger issue, where within New Zealand society, the general public thinks that there is no problems with sexism, and it is only external commentators exaggerating the issues that are being reported.

5.6.2 Beneficial

An interesting section of the data draws attention to the fact that it is a pre-flight safety video. A number of entries seems to excuse the sexism, sometimes even tacitly acknowledging that there are sexist structures in play, but excusing it for "the greater good". There was a general consensus that as people needed this information, and as they were usually ignoring it, then by blatantly including women in bikinis it would encourage "them" to "pay attention".

There is an inherent heteronormativity in this line of thought. It is assuming that the people who are ignoring the video will appreciate a near-naked woman because they are heterosexual.

This theme closely ties in with Objectification below (section 5.6.4).

5.6.3 Attacking the Complainant

Even though this was a video posted by an American news agency, a number of the commenters assumed that the complainant was a certain type of person, and proceeded to attack them throughout the comments. Almost half the comments used phrases such as "morons", "fat, ugly and jealous", "people insecure about their weight", "petty, stupid, ignorant, abusive, whiny, insecure, self-absorbed, self righteous, self important little buffoons". By attacking the complainant (whether or not they actually

exist in this case) the commenters are insinuating that the issue lies directly with an individual's personal issue, and that there is no matter to discuss outside of that.

Furthermore, the number of commenters who used weight as an attack, e.g. calling someone fat, or "fugly", lends weight to this theory. The premise being that, had the complainant "looked" like the models within the video, there would not have been a complaint, and that the entire issue was because of an insecure jealousy.

5.6.4 Objectification

A number of cases explicitly mentioned sexist structures such as objectification, and chose to disregard them. For example, a commenter called "MrFoolishFiend" specifically mentions objectification as a theme, and effectively states that it does not exist as a concept. Or a commenter called "Jeremiah Brooks" stating that "y'all keep bitching about wanting equality when you already have it" claiming that the "women in videos and pictures like the one above are not forced in any way to be in them they do it to make money and feel beautiful".

Janet Nowatzki & Marian Morry, in an investigation on self-sexualising behaviour, notes that while physical attractiveness can be used by women as a means of attaining indirect social power, this should not be confused with empowerment. Women who receive more attention from (and therefore have more influence over) men as a result of being perceived sexually desirable, have this attention and influence at the cost of being objectified and treated as a subordinate. They note that even though some women may feel empowered by embracing sexualisation, the behaviour must be considered within the context of a wider society that contains gender imbalances of status and power (Nowatzki & Morry, 2009, pp 95-96). "Jeremiah Brooks" claims that the models' use of their physical attractiveness empowers them, "makes them feel beautiful". When considered in the wider context of patriarchal society, in fact, using self-sexualising behaviour to gain male attention is an attitude that emphasises that a woman's place in society is to be objectified or that their role in a heteronormative cultural standard is to be hyperfeminine (Nowatzki & Morry, 2009, p 96).

6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Conducting a feminist gender analysis requires investigating power: what forms does power take? Who wields it? How are some gendered wieldings of power camouflaged so they do not even look like power?

- *Cynthia Enloe (2014, location 392)*

Due to space constraints, I did not discuss all the themes with the depth that I would have like to. The common thread through it all is this concept of power, and who wields it. In every main theme discussed, there is a power inequality, and as a result the person being discriminated against is being oppressed and have limited avenue to redress this oppression. Consequently, online projects such as the Everyday Sexism Project thrive, where people can publish their grievances in an anonymous fashion, reclaiming some of the lost power.

sexism has not meant an absolute lack of choices. They may know they are discriminated against on the basis of sex, but they do not equate this with oppression.

- *bell hooks (1952, location 262)*

It starts with the power structures being embedded at a young age. The discussion around parenting shows how patriarchal concepts are being instilled in children through the actions of their parents and other adults. These children are growing up internalising these structures and when they become adults will perpetrate them as well.

The section on employment shows how, even as discrimination has been outlawed through legislation, without a societal change, it continues with impunity. It also shows how it manifests, from an entrenched societal mind-set, which then leads to systemic issues at a nationwide level.

Finally, the section on sexual harassment and sexual assault shows the tragic conclusion of everyday sexism. The same societal construction which excuses gendered marketing is used to normalise sexual assault.

However, even as I split the discussion into thematic sections, it is important to take a step back and look at the project as a whole. As Ms Bates said “a week of little pinpricks... little incidents I was just putting up with from day to day” (Bates, 2014, location 117). Every single one of the themes connected in some way to the others, several data items had multiple themes running through it. Several submissions had to be split into several narratives, as once the submitter got started, they could not help but continue to purge. In contradiction to those that claim that “sexism is over”, for many women, it is a lifelong battle with “tiny pinpricks”, which in most cases you cannot report, and cannot do anything about.

As I was writing this conclusion, another case involving senior boys at an unnamed New Zealand secondary school broke on official news sites. The story may as well have been a re-reporting of the Roastbusters case introduced at the beginning of the project. "The boys had a competition where they would get young girls drunk and they would dangle their genitalia over their faces and take photos" (Bilby, 2015). The photos were then uploaded to a Facebook page.

The boys have been issued a warning, and no charges will be laid.

The story on the New Zealand Herald by Lynley Bilby ran with the headline "Warnings for Roast Busters II" implying that these boys are in fact just like the Roastbusters.

In the two years since the Roastbusters case broke, it seems that things have degenerated instead of improving. Patrick Walsh, a member of the Secondary Principal's Association's executive says: "There are, across the country, increasingly, groups particularly of young men who think that they can act this way with impunity, and despite the best educative efforts of the schools to warn them of the harmful effects of this type of behaviour they continue to do it" (Weber, 2015).

This project has shown the persistence of an everyday sexism culture. When invited to submit their stories, those most affected by sexism submitted stories in abundance, and the stories ranged from stereotyping to sexual assault. The people affected were both male and female, and of all ages.

It has also shown that the response is often a dismissal, or a denial, or worse, re-frame into a positive light.

When people have the courage to speak out against it, they are belittled and personally attacked, the issues side-lined in a barrage of abuse.

Even as a successful site like the Everyday Sexism Project empowers people, it is ineffective against society's conventional institutions. A person's family, law enforcement, the judicial system and educational systems seem to be working in concert to continue the discrimination.

Is it any wonder why the male adults of tomorrow feel that they can act with impunity today?

7 LIMITATIONS

This small sample is obviously not indicative of New Zealand as a whole, and in choosing to conduct a qualitative study, I did not seek to generalise this research across New Zealand society. As Michael Patton puts it, “qualitative data describe[s]. [It] take[s] us, as readers into the time and place of the observation so that we know what it was like to have been there” (Patton, 2002, p 47).

While the data does not give an overall picture of New Zealand, it does give a rather detailed snapshot of part of it, based on those with internet access and the motivation to post stories anonymously online. It also became clear, upon analysis of the data, that the snowball effect (described above in section 5.1) created a very particular sub-set of the New Zealand population to be aware of, and therefore post on the project.

The snowball effect not only restricted the characteristics of the submissions (to what appears to be fairly middle class heterosexual people) there was also no mention of other forms of intersectionality. Not one data item mentioned race or transgender issues, for example. These forms of intersectionality are vitally important when making public policy suggestions for New Zealand, and any subsequent data should consider targeting specific groups to ensure that they are included.

As this is a study focussing on everyday sexism, I specifically ignored data that implied an institutional or an established sexist practice, for example, Case 9 which talks about Auckland Bowling Club specifically excluding women from their membership charter. In most cases, these examples would be breaking existing anti-discrimination laws and regulations within New Zealand, and while the issues surrounding non-prosecution and further discrimination during legal processes are valid and relevant, they fall outside the scope of this project. The slight exception to this rule is the discussion around pay equity for reasons stated already.

I acknowledge that I have a feminist perspective and while the study was not specifically grounded in feminist theory, the topic does lend itself to being analysed via a feminist lens.

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9 APPENDIX 1 – RADIO LIVE TRANSCRIPT

As the interview has been removed from the archives on RadioLive's website, I obtained a recording of the interview and have transcribed it below. The italics is "Amy" and the non-italics is one or another of the hosts.

...and who's a friend of one of these girls who has allegedly been raped, Hi Amy

Hi there

so tell us, what do you know of the situation Amy?

Um I go to school with all of the boys

Yea

They are not only rapists, but they are really disrespectful. One time I actually went to a party with them, they went completely sober, and they actually said that they would take home. They went to go take me home, and they actually dropped me off at a party, and they took me there at 3 o'clock in the morning.

Tell me this, how old are you?

I'm 18 right now.

OK, when these incidences occurred, you were?

About 15 or 14?

Right, now, what, how, does your parents consent to youse just going out as a 14 year old to 3am in the morning

Well, like most kids, I didn't tell my parents what I was doing, but that's why I think most of the girls aren't coming forward because most of their parents didn't know that they were actually drinking.

ok, ok, so anyway, so you, lied, fibbed, whatever, and you went out to the parties, did you not know that they were up to this mischief?

This was before I knew about any of it. This was 3 years ago, so it was a bit of time before they started doing it.

well, you know when you're going to parties?

yea?

yea, um, were you forced to drink?

no, I didn't drink then, but now, when we see them at parties, they're completely sober, and they are giving the girls drinks. They buy drinks to give to girls, and they don't drink themselves.

Ok, now, the girls, like don't you know what these guys are up to? you seem to be pretty savvy about it?

yea, so the thing is, like, someone on the radio before, girls shouldn't be taking the drinks from strangers, but around these parties, they are well known.

But the girls shouldn't be drinking anyway, should they?

no, they shouldn't be.

If you want to go down that track, so if you go to the parties, um, you know, that's why you don't tell your parents you're going to the parties, right? right? yea, they shouldn't be drinking at 14 or 15. So when you go though, there must be some trust in some of the boys you go to the parties with, right? some of them are your friends?

Yup. One of the guys that is involved, he is actually 23 years old.

Right, and so, and how do you see these boys? these allegations of rape, do you think that's true?

umm personally I think most of them is rape, because the girls get that drunk that they don't have consent whatsoever, but then there's some girls that know it's going to happen and they know that that's what they are going to go hang out with them for, but then it makes me sick to think that these three girls on Facebook that are saying that they are going to the news to try and stick up for the boys when one of the girls is actually a victim.

But, see, here's the thing. I understand, Amy, what you're saying. If you are calling one of the girls a victim, and she's on Facebook defending the boys, right?

yea

How can she be a victim, when she's a consenting individual in the behavior?

well, she used to say that she got raped from them, and now, because people know about it, she's going to try and stick up for them?

Now tell me this, how many, well, why is it that this has gone on for so long, and you are adamant that rape has occurred and none of the girls have complained of rape to the police.

Can you please say that again?

Why is it that none of the girls have complained of rape?

I think it is because they are scared that other people are going to find out that it happened to them.

You mean that they've had sex?

yea and that they've had sex with people that are rapists, or that are the Roast Busters

you see, why is it that it's only taken you, sorta like this arvo to stand up to say, hey I say that this happened, were you subjected to, or did you witness any of these acts yourself?

um, someone that is very very close to me actually did, and I tried to get her to go forward but she doesn't want her name to be there, she doesn't want the guys to know that its her going forward and all that sort of stuff.

Can I put another question to you. I know you're only 18. But as the pressure comes on, a lot more girls that might've consented who are identified might well line up and say that they were raped as well. Out of your own mouth, you've already got some that say they were raped, and some were consensually right?

yea

gosh well yes

I know someone that had sex with one of the boys, but has actually had consent to it, not being that drunk that she couldn't consent to it.

How free and easy are you kids these days out there? You know, like, you were 14? yea?

yea, I think I was about 15

15, when you first had sex?

oh no!

oh! well that's what we're hearing from Facebook and everything else, you see?

no I wasn't 15

Goodness me

Were the schools fully informed of this?

The schools? well when it happened to one of my friends, um, she had to go to the principal to tell them what was going on, and they didn't even have to. their parents didn't even have to say the names of the boys, they said it first without the parents even mentioning the names.

What do you, so what you're saying today is some of the girls have been raped? and some of the girls have consented, is that what you're saying? Amy?

yea, but for myself, I think that their rapists.

ok, but if some of the girls have consented, that doesn't make them rapists, does it? right?

no, they are still raping other girls, then it does make them rapists.

Right, right, and what you're saying is that most of the blame is with them because the girls trusted them, right? is that what you're saying?

yea

ok, ok. And the girls won't come forward, just clarify why won't they come forward? because they'd already lied and they shouldn't have been drinking. and so they feel that they're at fault, because they shouldn't have lied and been there in the first place, so that stops them from making a complaint. Do you think any of them will come forward Amy?

I hope that once one of them goes forward, I hope that they all go forward.

How many girls are we talking about?

well, it's a very big number that I can think of right now.

so what's that number?

probably about 20 to 30 girls?

you see Amy, when you get to that sort of number, and you've got people like you that have been around for three years, I just, you know what, I find it very difficult to understand why, um, an allegation if you say rape has occurred hasn't happened before.

Because I never knew about anyone that had, that had been raped, or had sex with them, not over those three years.

well, when did it come to your attention?

maybe, 6 months ago?

6 months ago

but, when it's going around like that, you don't expect for it to be true.

yea, nah, I understand what you're saying.

but then, once it's come from someone that is so close to me, hearing it from them...

so you're very angry with these boys?

I hate them, I hate them with all of my heart

well, why is it that they are seemingly so popular then?

I don't know, I think it's just cos girls think their good looking and you know I think that, I think that girls think its cool these days to go out and lose their virginity, to anyone, because everyone is having sex these days.

yea, that's why I'm getting a bit confused here, right, so the girls like them, the girls think their handsome, the girls go out with them, and then you say they get raped, right?

yea

yea, ok, but they found them all handsome and all that sorta thing, so that, but um,

it's not consent because they are feeding them alcohol and they're not in any state to say yes, I want to have sex with you, yes I'm happy to have sex with you. Especially when it's two or three of them doing it all at one time.

yea, no good, no good, it's no good, Amy, but then the other side comes to it, are they willing drinkers, all those questions come in, but what you're saying is that they get the drinks and there's probably drugs in the drinks, is that what happens?

i'm not sure about the drugs in the drinks, but I know that they buy alcohol to give to the girls.

yea, I understand that, what do you think about, um, do you think over this period, that, um any of the girls could've got together and just said, na, this is just not on?

yea, that's what I think, that all of the girls should get together and go on twitter, so it's not all on one person.

how many guys are we talking bout?

how many guys?

yea

um, seven?

seven of em aye?

but there's mainly two?

yea, the two we're seeing in the newspapers right

yep

young Parker, and who's the other boy?

Beriah

Beriah, one's a policeman's son and one's a celebrity's son, right

yep but I don't think its fair that they're getting their families involved and Joseph's older brother lost his job, he's just had a baby, and now he's lost his job, because of his brother.

hmm

and he's a really really nice person

ok Amy, well thank you for calling in, and giving your view and your hope is that the girls get together and nail these boys right? they're gonna have to put in a complaint, do you think that will happen?

hopefully, I think that will happen

OK Amy, thank you for calling.