Sexual Assault Prevention And Community Equity

(SPACE) Toolkit

A roadmap for institutional transformation grounded in insights from the book ***Sexual Citizens: Sex, Power, and Assault on Campus (W.W. Norton & Company) by Jennifer S. Hirsch and Shamus Khan***

CREATED BY

Jennifer S. Hirsch
Columbia University

Shamus Khan
Princeton University

Kathy Leichter
Two Suns Media

Alexandra Zeitz-Moskin
Columbia University

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What is SPACE?

SPACE stands for **S**exual Assault **P**revention **A**nd **C**ommunity **E**quity. This **SPACE** toolkit provides campuses a new approach to sexual violence prevention – one grounded in a broad commitment to equity. The process invites diverse stakeholders, from students to the senior administration, to be on the same team. SPACE is both practical and hopeful. It is grounded in empathy, giving communities ways to work together toward their shared goal of campus equity. The work rests upon a simple and well-established truth:

Assault is about power.

The SPACE toolkit uses that truth to develop a plan for campus transformation.

Applying the SPACE toolkit will help your campus understand how its physical space reflects and even amplifies power inequalities. For this reason, campus spaces are part of why sexual assault is so common. That troubling insight comes with a hopeful implication. We can redesign spaces and policies to promote equity. This is a new approach to sexual assault prevention, with benefits that go far beyond sexual assault.

Sexual Assault: This toolkit will help you see how sexual assault is built into your campus environment and outline a process to redesign it out.

Prevention: The focus of the SPACE Toolkit is to prevent sexual assault by working at the community, rather than the individual level.

And

Community: A campus is not a hunting ground, it is a community of citizens. Changing campus spaces is part of a collective project to set your community on a path to a healthier campus culture.

Equity: Is where it all begins. Sexual assault isn't just gender-based violence; it is the result of many intersecting power inequalities. Creating and maintaining equity is key to eliminating sexual assault (and other types of violence) and to building a community where everyone can thrive.

The SPACE toolkit encourages you to think less about individuals and more about environments. It describes how to bring your campus together, to assess how residential and social spaces are organized, and to make a plan to leverage the organization of residential and/or social space on campus to advance campus equity.

SPACE applies insights from public health and distills some of the ideas from the book *Sexual Citizens* into four practical phases. **A fundamental tenet of a public health approach is to focus on creating environments where people are less likely to act in ways that hurt others or themselves, and are more able to thrive.** *Sexual Citizens* hones this insight through the concept of "sexual geographies" which we explain more thoroughly below.

The SPACE toolkit was developed by academic researchers as a possible alternative option for sexual assault prevention. The toolkit is provided to the user "as is" without any implied or express warranties, including but not limited to the implied warranties of satisfactory quality, fitness for a particular purpose, non-infringement, compatibility, security and accuracy. Each user should make its own independent assessment that the toolkit is appropriate for use under its particular circumstances. In consideration for user's use of the toolkit, user hereby disclaims, releases and waives any claims against the researchers and their respective universities arising from user's use of it.

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This work is challenging. It will take buy-in from senior leadership, support of those involved, patience, and time. But it will also be deeply rewarding and holds promise for new ways of thinking and working that can create profound, lasting change.

This is a transformational project. The process requires that communities convene a diverse set of stakeholders to have real conversations about inequalities on campus. This process, especially at first, may not create happy feelings; it may even create a lot of discomfort. Institutions of higher education face significant challenges with inequalities and the harms that those inequalities produce. But, if any set of institutions are able to face this challenge, it's schools. We are equipped to have these difficult conversations, and when we do we can move the needle on a range of harms, including sexual violence.

This process is most appropriate for institutions that have decided to move from a mindset of "compliance" to "transformation." It requires the engagement of those who have done diversity, equity, and inclusion work as well as sexual violence response. Communities don't need to do it all at once. We even encourage groups to think about taking on a small part of their campus geography at first, and then build upon that experience (and hopefully, success!). Communities that have buy-in from the highest levels of their leadership are the ones that are likely to be most successful in this work.

There are four phases your community will engage to make change in its environment:

PHASE 1. COMMIT

Get buy-in and support from senior-level administrators.

PHASE 2. CONVENE

Bring people together with the power, understanding, and shared intention of redesigning campus spaces and policies governing those spaces.

PHASE 3. CONSIDER

Help your community understand what you'll soon come to call your campus "sexual geography."

PHASE 4. CHANGE

Generate real changes to your campus sexual geographies by advancing equity on campus.

Clean Water: An Example of the Public Health Approach

Every year over one million people around the globe die from diseases associated with unsafe drinking water. Huge strides have been made in reducing these deaths because of a public health approach. But access to safe drinking water reflects both global inequalities–6% of deaths in low income countries are because of unsafe water–and local ones, like a lack of funding to replace corroded pipes.

Effective solutions to the clean water crisis don't rely upon shaming people ("Why are you drinking unsafe water?!?"). Teaching each individual how to protect themselves, ("Here is how you clean your own water,") is both inefficient and unlikely to lead to sustained community-level improvements. Instead, we take an "environmental approach." That means looking upstream as to why the water is unsafe in the first place; creating a norm that safe, drinkable water is a fundamental human right: and modifying environmental contexts so we don't have to rely upon individual behavior. This way, people can open their taps, and clean water comes out. **SPACE asks you to apply a parallel environmental perspective to sexual assault prevention.**

This toolkit is a compilation of resources, suggestions, and ideas, not a recipe or fixed set of instructions. Appendix 1 outlines a general timeline and workflow plan for this process.

Before you embark on this journey, we need to first introduce a foundational idea for the work you are about to undertake: ***sexual geographies***.

What are Sexual Geographies?

"Space is inextricably intertwined with sexuality."
- *Sexual Citizens*, **p. xix**

The campus social and built environment produces opportunities for sexual violence. **Changing that environment can be a powerful approach to prevention**.

Imagine two college students heading back to one of their rooms after an evening of flirting. They're not sure what they want, but the bars have closed, the parties have ended, and there's nowhere else to go but to one of their rooms. When they open the door to that room they see four items: a desk, a chair, a bureau, and a bed. If they don't sit together it's awkward. But sitting together means sharing a bed. And like it or not, that has a powerful meaning. Furniture is one part of the campus sexual geography. As explained in *Sexual Citizens*, sexual geographies encompass the spatial contexts people move through and the friends and organizations that regulate access to those spaces. **Space is not just a backdrop, where certain behaviors tend to occur in certain places.** Instead, space can deeply influence our behavior.



The use of space reflects power inequities.

Unequal access to space on campus is not inevitable. It can be the result of well-meaning policies and of pre-existing structures and resources. Changing these can mitigate power inequalities on campus. This insight points to a powerful opportunity: schools can reorganize space to make sexual assault less likely to happen.

Power is essential to understanding assault. On campus and beyond, access to and control over space is a manifestation of power. As an example, the sexual geography of many residential colleges and universities reflects the assumption that more advanced students should have greater access to better housing–specifically, housing with more social space and single bedrooms. These policies can give more powerful students even more power. On some campuses, it's also shaped by national Greek life policies that ban sororities—women-controlled spaces—from hosting parties that serve alcohol. This effectively gives men control over party spaces and the distribution of alcohol, and funnels younger women into spaces controlled by older men. These spatial dynamics—control, access, feeling at ease—are major players in sexual assault. They're built into the campus environment. On non-residential campuses, other dynamics of space matter—where parking lots are and how students are expected to get to and from campus, or whether or not the common areas of campus are universally available or privatized, requiring one to buy a cup of coffee or a meal just to be able to use a particular space.

We've spoken at over 150 communities and in pretty much every single one we've seen how space increases power inequalities. The SPACE toolkit presents strategies to create a campus where the physical environment mitigates inequality, thereby reducing the risk of sexual violence. Before you get too worried that this is going to cost millions, let us assure you: a lot can be done without significant financial cost to your community. Some changes will require no financial investment at all.

How do sexual geographies contribute to sexual violence?

Sexual Citizens highlights several examples of how sexual geographies contributed to sexual violence on Columbia University's campus. We use these concrete examples from stories told to us by students to help explain the concept of sexual geographies. Each campus context is different from Columbia University in the city of New York, but these stories illustrate the general concept. The aim is then to apply these insights to each unique campus context.

- Lupe, a first-generation Latinx student, felt isolated from their heritage by Columbia's white binge-drinking culture. They sought refuge at a Dominican nightclub, where their drink was spiked. "Lupe should have been safe sitting at a bar, listening to the bachata, but if there were a space where Lupe felt at home on campus… then they'd never have wandered away, in despair at their isolation" (p. 5).

- The book also **provides an example of how a space where Lupe could feel at home might be created, describing a party at which Latinx students borrowed a fraternity living room to celebrate Mexican Independence Day**. At this party, diverse Latinx students were able to come together in a "sense of collectivity, of panethnicity… where they felt at home." (p. 52) However, this fleeting sense of the community was only made possible by the 'generosity' of the white male students who controlled it, and chose to hand it over to Latinx students one evening. *What would it look like to have a more permanent space where Lupe would feel at home? And where minoritized students, in general, were able not just to be guests in spaces controlled by others, but have social spaces of their own?*

- As a freshman from an "elite but sheltered boarding school in Thailand" (p. 5), Luci met Scott at a bar. Her fake ID got her in the door, but Scott was a senior and was able to buy them plenty of drinks at the bar. They danced and made out, and Scott asked Luci back to his fraternity. Hard alcohol was not permitted in the fraternity's public areas, and so Scott invited Luci upstairs to a private space where he could evade these school regulations. Luci then went further upstairs to his room, where Scott raped her. Scott was in a space he controlled, in a room that was surrounded by his friends. Luci was alone, inexperienced, and overwhelmed by the many forms of power Scott was able to marshal. Scott controlled Luci's access to alcohol in every space they moved through. *Could Luci's experience have been different if there were public or private spaces that Luci had ownership over where she could drink and meet others? Or if the social scene for first year students wasn't so dominated by spaces controlled by men?*

For those who want to know more about how sexual geographies influence sexual violence, we have written about it here. We also explain the concept of geographies more thoroughly in this video.

For an even deeper dive into *Sexual Citizens*, this YouTube channel has a dozen videos, mostly short introductions to the main points of the book.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The spaces people live in and move through shape sex and sexual assault.
- Access to and control over space is a critical way that power works.
- Designing spaces and policies that moderate rather than augment existing power inequalities is essential to sexual assault prevention.

APPLYING THESE INSIGHTS TO YOUR CAMPUS:

- Think about ways that students/certain student groups may be experiencing isolation on their campus. How is that related to access to and control over?
- What kinds of students control the spaces where students socialize on your campus?
- What kinds of students don't have control over spaces where they can socialize, or host others?
- How do campus spaces, policies over spaces, and existing power inequalities relate to one another?

Now that you have the main idea down, it's time to embark on SPACE's four phases!

USING THIS TOOLKIT? We'd love it if you'd let us know by filling out this short form.

Phase 1:
Commit

"Once it becomes clear how the sexual geography... is essentially a sexual assault opportunity structure, we can start to imagine what it would look like to design safety into campus life."

- *Sexual Citizens*, **p. 259**

The aim of SPACE is to make real, lasting change within campus communities. For this to be successful, we strongly encourage securing institutional commitments from senior-level administrators. While an enterprising campus group could do this process on their own (and perhaps, that's where some communities will start–to show that the process can work), having buy-in from those with power to lead change will make this process much easier.

The major part of committing to this process is getting institutional leaders to move from a mindset of compliance to one of transformation. What this means is that institutions go beyond asking, "Have we complied with all local, state, and federal mandates?" and go a step further to ask, "What are the bold steps we need to take to build communities in which all students can thrive?" The frequency with which sexual assaults happen on college campuses points to the limitations of existing efforts, no matter how well-intended. Even on campuses making great efforts to comply with Title VII, Title IX, Clery Act, and state laws, students can experience substantial harm.

Getting institutional support for SPACE is the first phase in a four-phase process. There are three things to ask of your senior administration:

- **To provide institutional support for an approach to sexual violence prevention and diversity, equity, and inclusion work.**
  This new approach has two core elements. First, to go beyond trainings for individuals about consent and not being racist (these are essential, but not sufficient). The process requires expanding individual-level efforts by focusing far more on community level interventions (the clean water case, above, is a good example). Second, to recognize the interrelationship between diversity, equity and inclusion initatives and sexual violence prevention and to see DEI work and sexual violence prevention as interconnected.

- **To give faculty, staff, and students involved in the process the time to engage in this work**.
  Senior administrators can show support for this process by checking if those who engage in it would like to reallocate some of their existing responsibilities so they have adequate time to do this work without getting burned out. For many participants this work should take the place of other work obligations, not simply be in addition to them. Senior administrators can make it clear to managers that participation is part of a high-value institutional project. If a cafeteria staff person participates, for example, it should not be for additional unpaid work hours; it should be conveyed to the food service manager that this work is extremely valuable and should be prioritized.

- **To provide resources.**
  These need not be extensive. Financial compensation should not be required for most participants, though it should be used for some. Low income students, for example, should not have to pick between a paid job and being engaged in this process; compensating for their time will enable them to participate in the process. Meetings may require modest investments for food, supplies, and administrative support to schedule meetings or find space for people to meet.

For communities that cannot secure institutional commitments, this toolkit can still be followed. If it's not possible to secure support from high-level leadership, it may make sense to focus work with the SPACE toolkit on aspects of the campus sexual geography that can be transformed without substantial engagement from senior administrators. Success on a small scale can help make the case for future commitments and help the community learn in ways that will make larger projects all the more successful.

PHASE 1 - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Secure whatever buy-in is possible from the senior administration.
- Ask for three things from the senior administration:
  - Support to connect diversity equity and inclusion work with sexual violence prevention.
  - Support for staff to have work taken off their plate as they participate in the task force and to make it clear to managers that this work is a high-level institutional priority.
  - Financial support for meetings and for students to help support diverse participation.

After whatever degree of senior-level commitment is provided, it's time to convene the stakeholders that will make up the core SPACE task force!

Phase 2:
Convene

"The physical landscape is a critical player in young people's futures, and is intertwined with all kinds of inequalities."
- *Sexual Citizens*, **p. xx**

The second SPACE phase is to convene a group of community stakeholders–what we'll call your "task force"–who can share knowledge and perspectives and join together to design and implement change. The specific elements will vary; on some campuses, fraternities and sororities dominate social space, and on others they are less prominent. On some campuses religious spaces may be key centers for social activities. Regardless, the SPACE task force should include relevant institutional and student stakeholders.

Institutional Stakeholders

In any institution of higher education, many administrative divisions make decisions that affect who has access to campus spaces and how those spaces are used. Therefore, it is important to start by bringing these offices together. This should include leadership as well as those "on the ground" in order to generate a conversation about how everyone, from the dean of students to the custodial staff, plays an important role in student life and the experience of space on campus. Think creatively and comprehensively about who needs to be at the table. This might include:

- Senior Administration: e.g. President, Provost, General Counsel, Development, etc.
- Offices of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Title IX, Facilities, Housing / ResLife, Greek Life, University Police/Public Safety
- Faculty
- Student Activities: Student Life, Athletics, Office of the Chaplain, and those tied to student affinity groups
- Student Wellness / Counseling
- Institutes that focus on social power, including Women and Gender Studies, African-American Studies, Latinx Studies, schools of social work or public health, etc.
- Facilities/Grounds management, Transportation

Got Project Management?

The process we lay out in the toolkit will require people's time - to schedule meetings, take notes, follow up on action items, or even to make sure that there are snacks when people meet. On some campuses, it may be possible to reallocate responsibilities to free someone up to do project management. Other campuses might think about applying for state funding to hire someone to do this work.

Student Stakeholders

To bring in student stakeholders, the 'must-do' step is to facilitate participation by students who come from a variety of backgrounds and are engaged with a broad range of campus activities. For example, if the work does not include stipends for students, low-income students may be unable to participate because they cannot afford to donate their time.

Convening a group of students who represent diverse student experiences helps ensure that the collective understanding of space reflects the practical, everyday experience of students. Don't just rely upon student leaders. *Transforming sexual geographies uses space policy to address campus-wide power inequalities, so it is vital to hear from disadvantaged and minoritized students about their experiences*. You will also want to include some more socially advantaged students, as redistribution of resources will require their support. Here are examples of communities and identities to connect with:

- Black
- Latinx
- AAPI
- Indigenous
- International
- Students from every year
- Female-identified
- Male-identified
- LGBTQIA+ (try to represent the diversity of this group)
- Students with different physical and mental abilities
- Commuters
- First-generation
- Transfer
- Work-study
- Social clubs
- Religious students
- Greek life
- Student Athletes
- Resident Assistants
- Activists
- Student government leaders

In bringing these students together, it is crucial to attend to pre-existing power dynamics and to intentionally create space for voices that are the least likely to volunteer and be heard. See Appendix 2 for tips on running meetings.

Bringing Your Groups Together

We first suggest independently convening institutional and student stakeholders, introducing them to the project, getting their feedback on who is not in the room but should be, and then inviting new members. Because some members of the group may be less familiar with the range of experiences that constitute sexual assault, one idea for an early meeting is to invite in a staff person from a local rape crisis program, and have them provide some anonymized descriptions of student experiences. Alternatively, the group could together read the first chapter of Sexual Citizens, with some caution for student survivors who might find those descriptions hard to read. After constituting these two groups, bring them together to form their unified SPACE task force. SPACE is an opportunity for students and the administration to work toward a shared goal, understand each others' perspectives, and recognize that they are all part of the same community. SPACE is all about creating a collective positive vision for change grounded in equity. Part of that requires flipping the script, so faculty, administration, students, and staff all think of themselves as part of the same community.

Convening a group of community stakeholders is no easy feat! Not everyone will be willing or able to participate. But no matter the limits to the task force, having a diverse group of community members committed to the same project is a huge step on the way to campus transformation!

PHASE 2 - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Assemble a group of institutional stakeholders who have different perspectives and some of whom control access to campus spaces.
- Assemble a group of students with different degrees of power and with diverse experiences.
- Bring these two groups together to create a SPACE task force.

Once the task force is in place, the next phase is to CONSIDER, which means developing a shared vision and mission.

Phase 3:
Consider

Educate the team & gather their experiences

"What if prevention work did more to address the social context that makes rape and sexual assault such a predictable element of campus life?"
- *Sexual Citizens*, **p. xii**

Once the task force is convened, the next phase is to empower them with a vision and a mission. Ground this work in empathy and hope. Empathy means capturing the perspective of as many people as possible. That's what the convening was all about. Hope means thinking not about how bad things are, but instead coming together to develop an actionable plan to build a safer and more inclusive campus. That's what this *considering* phase is all about. Educating the task force in the concept of sexual geographies will give them the understanding necessary to develop a strategy for transforming the campus climate. Sexual geographies is an abstract idea; task force members are the experts on their own campus and will need to make the idea of sexual geographies more practical and specific in light of that campus' particular experiences.

We suggest organizing the consideration phase in **two parts: (1) education and (2) description**. Appendix 2 outlines some suggestions for how to effectively run inclusive meetings. We suggest reviewing this to help prepare for covering challenging topics with a diverse group of community members who have commitments beyond the task force.

Got Project Management?

The process we lay out in the toolkit will require people's time - to schedule meetings, take notes, follow up on action items, or even to make sure that there are snacks when people meet. On some campuses, it may be possible to reallocate responsibilities to free someone up to do project management. Other campuses might think about applying for state funding to hire someone to do this work.

Part 1: Education

Meeting 1: Introductions, and homework

STEP 1

Have everyone introduce themselves and talk about their role on campus.

STEP 2

Establish agreed upon ground rules for discussion (see Appendix 2 for guidance).

STEP 3

Share and briefly have everyone review this toolkit, paying attention to the concept of "sexual geographies."

STEP 4

Assign everyone some homework: read this SPACE toolkit, more thoroughly review the concept of sexual geographies, and be ready to talk about what each person took away from the concept. This homework shouldn't take more than one hour, though people could certainly dedicate more time. We've created four resources that people should engage with as part of their homework:

- **SEXUAL GEOGRAPHIES STORIES:**
  One of the most effective ways to engage stakeholders is through storytelling. Stories allow people to integrate the emotional and practical implications of abstract ideas. What from the book compelled you to seek out this toolkit? You can draw from the stories in the Sexual Geographies section on page 5 and 6 of this toolkit, or others that compelled you–either from *Sexual Citizens* or, better yet, from your own campus.

  Other stories from the book to refer to:
  - Charisma, p. 16-18, p. 243
  - Octavia, p. 185-188
  - Austin, p. 60-61

  These are all excerpted in Appendix 4.

STEP 4 (Continued)

- **VIDEO EXPLAINING CAMPUS SEXUAL GEOGRAPHIES:**
  This video from professors Jennifer S. Hirsch and Shamus Khan can lend support to your vision and story, particularly for those who have not read the book.

- **VIDEO ON A PUBLIC HEALTH (COMMUNITY-LEVEL) APPROACH TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE:**
  This video explains the public health approach to sexual violence and relates it to the findings of *Sexual Citizens*.

- **FOR THOSE WHO WANT A DEEPER DIVE:**
  This YouTube channel provides several more micro lectures on *Sexual Citizens*. The SPACE toolkit is one example of an approach to sexual violence prevention sometimes called "situational prevention". For other examples of work in this area see: Valor.us, JHU and MCASA, Women's Safety Audits, Shifting Boundaries Resources (designed for middle schools, updates described by Valor.us).

- **SEVERAL MEETINGS OR A RETREAT?**
  Some campuses might find it easier to do this work spread across several meetings, as we have described. For others, it will be more conducive to focused work to plan retreat-style work, for example setting aside several Friday, Saturday, or Sunday afternoons in a row.

Meeting 2: Discuss Sexual Geographies, and New Homework!

The aim of this second meeting is to come together and talk about what, upon further reflection, task force members took away from the idea of sexual geographies. The purpose isn't to analyze the campus–we're not quite there yet! Instead, it's to build a common language for talking about space and power on campus. Because some people may want to ground their discussion in their own campus or life experiences (which is perfectly fine to do), it's important to educate everyone who is participating about mandatory reporting requirements. Appendix 2 addresses this and other guidelines for future meetings.

One way to structure this conversation is to ask your team to consider **5 different kinds of campus spaces** outside of the classroom:

1. **RESIDENTIAL:**
   Where students live. This could be on campus, off campus, or both.

2. **SOCIAL:**
   Where students have fun. Should include any affinity group spaces (e.g. Greek life) affiliated with your campus.

3. **VIRTUAL:**
   How students use digital technologies, and how this usage may be unequally distributed. This will include dating/hookup/meetup apps, social media, etc. These are important for a lot of reasons, some of which are less obvious (they influence who is invited to events, and how people get information about what is happening on campus).

4. **PROGRAMMATIC:**
   Where students host and attend official non-academic programs (clubs, speakers, performances, etc.)

5. **PUBLIC:**
   Where students gather and interact informally (e.g. outdoors, libraries, lounges, student union, class-rooms, dining halls, etc.)

At the end of this second meeting, the task force should have a better understanding of the concept of sexual geographies. Once the task force has created this common language, it can be put to work to make sense of the campus' particular and unique dynamics.

For the next part of the process, **Description**, prepare for a volcano of ideas. And that's exactly what you should ask of your team. Dream big! Think about all the ways sexual and power geographies affect the campus community. It's okay if this is impractical. The homework for the task force is to spend the time between the meetings thinking about everything they can, and to be ready to share it. You should also designate an email address that people can write to if they're not comfortable talking in front of the group, but have an idea they'd like to share.

Part 2. Description

Stage 2 of the Convening is to describe campus sexual geographies. Task force members can imagine themselves as cartographers, drawing a map of sexual geographies. It might even be a good exercise to do just that: put a map of campus on the wall (or collectively annotate on a digital version) and have people describe different spaces and how power works in and through them. Mapping sexual geographies should capture how power inequalities are built into the campus environment. How is inequality reflected in, and maybe even amplified by, the ways that students use social, residential, digital, and public spaces? Who controls and has easier access to which spaces? We have visited over 150 campuses talking about our work, virtually and in person, and some examples of what we heard about space and inequality illustrate the wide range of issues and policies that impact students.

- *On one campus we visited, participants told us of a rather run-down space. An alumni saw it and offered to pay for it to be renovated into a café. Most of the students were happy about this, except for the minoritized and low-income students who had previously used the space and found it "homey." Not only was the space not as welcoming for them–they actually found themselves working at the cafe that had been put in, serving coffee to their classmates. A space they had informally controlled and called home was transformed into a place where they waited on their classmates.*

- *Another campus told us of how they were very happy to have finally created spaces for LGBTQIA+ students and their Latinx community. It had couches and books and magazines and students used it in between classes. The problem was that it was in an administrative building, which was locked to students other than 9-5, Monday to Friday. When it came to "prime" socializing hours, these students did not have access to their spaces.*

- *On a campus with a large commuter population, parking policies did not allow students to leave their cars in lots after 9 pm. The campus bus service that connected campus to town and regional transportation also stopped at 9. That meant that students couldn't be on campus in the evenings, when most socializing happens, unless they lived on campus.*

The aim in this portion of the project is not to come up with solutions. **It's to gather together descriptions of campus life.** There may be different understandings of the same thing. That's fine. A diverse group will have diverse experiences and understandings. The goal is for task force members to use the concept of sexual geography to make sense of their own experiences or those they've heard about, and hear about the experiences and understandings of other people.

Meetings 3, 4 & 5: Making a rough outline

The purpose of these meetings is to outline a process to create a more detailed map, which can include feedback from individuals and communities outside the room who both experience and recreate the unequal distribution of space that contributes to sexual violence. **We suggest dividing these meetings into three parts**: 1) Getting it all out there, 2) Challenging assumptions, and 3) Narrowing focus.

1. MEETING 3 - GETTING IT ALL OUT THERE

Provide enough time for task force members to talk about their own experience on campus and what sexual geographies mean to them. There are lots of options here. Everyone should have done some homework and be ready to talk about what they think is the most important and/or least understood part of campus sexual geographies. Task force members could compile info into a shared document, or annotate a map in advance, and then use the meeting time to review. Or, the meeting can be organized thematically around five kinds of space: Residential, Social, Virtual, Programmatic, and Public.

2. MEETING 4 - CHALLENGING ASSUMPTIONS

The goal in describing campus sexual geography is to understand how the **power dynamics** students experience are reflected in – and shaped by! – the spaces where they live, work, and play. This is more than a question of where sexual assaults happen. **The goal is NOT to map where violence occurs. It is to map unequal access to and experience of space**.

The allocation of campus space doesn't just reflect power relations–it reproduces them. For example, think about the experience of a shared room with bunk beds compared to that of a suite with private bedrooms. Who gets the suites on campus? Are they already powerful people (like seniors)? And what are the policies that determine who lives in that shared room and who lives in that suite? For commuter campuses, who is able to take day classes? How does that influence major selection and time to degree? Where is parking located and how is it allocated by cost or status?

At the end of this meeting the task force should be given an assignment: think about what they would like to focus on, among the many ideas presented, and be prepared to talk about that in Meeting 5.

As the task force shares ideas, everyone will have certain assumptions informed by their perspective. That's good! That's why they're there to begin with! The role of the group leader is to zoom out and keep everyone attuned to this bigger picture. Here are some considerations and reminders that may help challenge the assumptions in the room:

- Getting the **broadest, most inclusive** student and stakeholder participation possible will strengthen the process.

- Power inequalities in the room may influence people's willingness to share or speak up. Regularly return to meeting rules and guidelines (and to the resources provided in Appendix 2). Breakout sessions can also create contexts in which task force members are more comfortable speaking. Those sub-groups can (anonymously) report back what was discussed in their group.

- **Perception vs. reality**: Perceptions of how violence occurs may not align with what comes out of your task force process. This gap between perception and reality is tied to longstanding myths surrounding sexual violence and reporting processes that privilege students with more institutional and social power. It is nearly impossible to have a complete picture, but even so it is important to dig deeper, pushing well beyond results or findings that feel expected.

3. MEETING 5 - NARROWING FOCUS

After getting it all out there, it's time to focus on a part of the picture that feels actionable. This narrowing meeting creates "buckets" or themes the task force will concentrate on for the rest of its time. Start by setting realistic expectations. If there is a lot of institutional buy-in, a task force might be able to take on lots of different kinds of spaces, and dedicate time for each one. If not, focus on something that's actionable. Who is in the room may influence what the task force should do. For example, if no one on the team is part of dining services, it's less likely that the task force can implement effective solutions that focus on that part of campus life. The task force can limit its focus to one or more of the five categories of spaces (residential, social, virtual, programmatic, and public), to a specific type of space within those categories, to a population it wants to reach (i.e. first year students), or to a lens it wants to use in drawing its campus map (see Appendix 3 for some ideas). If the task force chooses more than one focus, or wants to focus on a broad category, anticipate having several more meetings, each dedicated to the identified theme.

How to narrow:

As the group narrows its focus, make sure to return to its decision-making rules. Remember that power is often about the ability to define what "the problem" is. Don't just be aware of this challenge. Actively raise it within the group and encourage task force members to talk about it openly.

Meeting 6 (and potentially 7, 8, ...): Filling in the details

The aim of this next meeting (or set of meetings) is to thoroughly describe the geography that the task force has decided to focus on. At this stage, the aim is *still* not coming up with a solution. What the task force is trying to do is include as much detail as possible, collecting stories from the diverse stakeholders gathered together. The guiding focus is on the interrelationship between space and power. The task force can also reach out, before this meeting, to other community members to have as much information as possible.

Some ideas for getting more information from people not in your group:

If you want to engage even more community members, or gather even more information from campus, there are further steps you can take. These are not required, but they can help provide an even richer sense of campus life, and help the task force consider things they may have not, until that point.

- Partner with a faculty member who could potentially teach *Sexual Citizens*. Discuss the possibility of the class doing an exercise where they map the sexual geographies of campus. See how it compares to your findings.
- Conduct focus groups and walkthroughs with representative groups of students, particularly students who disproportionately experience (and perhaps commit) violence will provide more powerful insights into the structural and social dimensions of a space.
- Use existing 'experts' on student life (like residential advisors) to provide input through small-group discussions.
- Develop a digital strategy for collecting input, using whatever platform most students are on. (Just remember to explain that this is not about designating certain spaces as risky or safe, but about space and power).

In Appendix 3, we have provided a list of resources that might help with this process of filling in the details. There are lots of options to help with this process. Granularity is great! Don't be afraid of getting into the weeds!

The questions you ask should address the **physical, social, and institutional power dynamics** students experience in the spaces you're describing. So in this meeting consider making lists of these three dimensions of power. They can help orient the description of the sexual geography that the task force has chosen to focus on. Take the example of two residence halls:

- **PHYSICAL:**
  What is the experience of a shared room with bunk beds compared to a suite with private bedrooms?

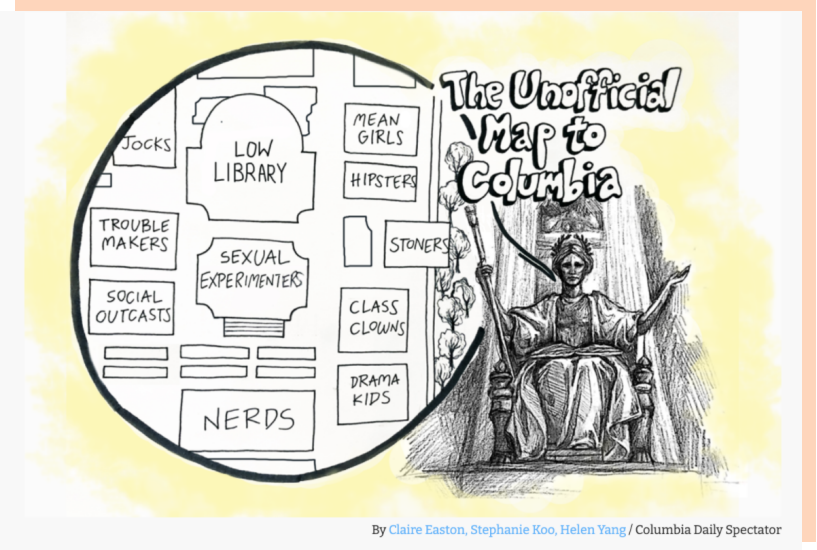
- **SOCIAL:**
  Who lives in that shared room and who lives in that suite? What are the relationships between those individuals and their communities like? What are the experiences of shared spaces within those rooms? And how do the shared-room dwellers interact with the suite-dwellers, and vice versa?

- **INSTITUTIONAL:**
  Which policies determined who lives in that shared room and who lives in that suite?

PHASE 3 - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Educate and empower your team with the resources necessary to build a shared mission and vision.
- Collaboratively and inclusively describe the interrelationship between space and power on your campus.
- Narrow your focus and dig deep, capturing a wide range of understandings and experiences. Think about the map of the Columbia University cafeteria that Tian Griffin made (see below). It highlights the kinds of unwritten shared social rules about who uses which space that the task force is seeking to uncover.

The illustration below is a Columbia adaptation of the cafeteria map from the movie, Mean Girls. The image was created by Tian Griffin and appeared in the student newspaper, the Daily Spectator.



The next step is to CHANGE: to use the task force's description of its campus' sexual geography to advance community equity as a sexual assault prevention strategy.

Phase 4:
Change

"Our goal is to impel action, but from a position of empathy and understanding, rather than fear."
- *Sexual Citizens*, **p. xiii**

The task force has described its campus sexual geographies.
Now what does it actually do?

The point of this process isn't just to understand how sexual geographies are making sexual assaults more likely. It's to enact changes that can improve the lives of everyone in your community. This is going to be hard. But the task force has done so much already! By this point a variety of stakeholders should be committed to this process and have a reasonable amount of goodwill that will help enact real change. The process leading up to this point is designed to make effective changes more likely. Some of the people and offices that have the power to make change happen will have been in the room as the process unfolded.

Step 1: Policy Review

A policy review is the first step in creating a plan for change. This means developing a clear account of existing policies and practices related to sexual geographies the group has focused on that:

- Address diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- Establish social norms and hierarchies;
- Allocate resources and create formal and informal ownership of space and power; and
- Prevent sexual violence.

This review should include members of the task force and where necessary, external points of contact for each policy/program. At this point the task force may want to create working groups which focus on building connections with different campus stakeholders, gathering insights from them, and reporting back to the task force as a whole.

It could be helpful to ask task force members to tell stories about times they were part of effective and ineffective policy changes, and gather lessons from that. Because each institution is different, task force members will have to do some exploration to figure out how change is possible in their particular context. It may also be useful to consult with the Office of the General Counsel at your institution, or to find out if there is a formal process in existence for changing campus policies.

Some policies may require more work to change than others. For example, campuses might want to change the policy on campus parking. This would mean consulting with a range of stakeholders, from transportation, to safety and security, to community liaisons (those on campus who are connected to people in the municipality who are responsible for roads, traffic, etc.).

This toolkit can't fully outline this process for the diverse range of institutions that will use it. But it can provide examples of questions to ask, and policies–formal and informal–that are important to consider. Think about the different kinds of spaces that exist on your campus, and how access to and control over those spaces are decided:

- RESIDENTIAL SPACES:
  What kinds of housing spaces exist on campus? How do those spaces differ in terms of privacy, prestige, access to social spaces (e.g. suites with living rooms)?
  - **What policies determine who gets which space?** This could include: room draw, roommates, athletics policies, affinity housing options, variable pricing models, Greek life, and other implicit and explicit sorting mechanisms.

- **AFFINITY GROUP SOCIAL SPACES:**
  What are the social spaces that are only accessible to certain groups of students, and who are those students? How do these spaces differ in terms of size, quality, location, control, alcohol distribution, music choices, and prestige? To what extent does the ownership of these spaces facilitate campus equity?
  - **What policies dictate which groups are eligible for social space, and how those spaces are distributed?** This could include: social space allocation and sharing policies, alcohol licensing, party licensing policies, student life budget allocation policies.

- **AFFINITY GROUP PROGRAM SPACES:**
  How are affinity groups assigned space and budget for programmatic activities, such as speakers, trainings, trips, etc.?

- **PUBLIC SPACES:**
  What are the policies that exist in public spaces that make them more or less accessible to students?
  - **Policies could include:** Dining hall hours and access, lounge access and restrictions, libraries, the rules regarding access to commercial spaces on campus, rules about swipe-in access, etc.

- **OTHER POLICIES TO CONSIDER:**
  Orientation, student health, transportation.

An example of how policies can create inequalities:

GREEK LIFE POLICIES:

- **Alcohol policy:** Alcohol is banned in sororities that belong to the National Pan-Hellenic Council (NPHC). This creates a climate where often fraternities play a more dominant role in campus social life and control alcohol distribution. However, there's disagreement among students on what effect changing this policy would have. Additionally, not all sororities are affected, for example, historically Black fraternities and sororities have the same national governing body, the NPHC.

Step 2: Brainstorming Solutions

After conducting the policy review and inquiry, reconvene the task force to report back and start brainstorming solutions. We encourage an iterative process. We also encourage you to invite seemingly radical solutions, particularly at first. Even fantasy situations can be helpful to spark creativity. Imagine that resources were not a constraint. Want to build a totally different residence hall or student center? You can! What would it look like, and what kind of spaces would it have? Then think about why that solution is so desirable, and how elements of it could be realized within more realistic constraints.

Effective brainstorming requires a recognition of what the group dynamics have been, up until this point. If in previous meetings there have been silences from particular members of your task force, it may be wise to give those members space in smaller settings to talk about their ideas.

Creating subgroups to generate ideas that will be presented to the full group can spark creative and ambitious next steps. These subgroups could be created randomly, or they could be constituted by gathering together those task force members who feel most comfortable with one another–for example, a group of all students.

This brainstorm process can be fun. Subgroups could be asked to prepare a 5 minute "pitch" to the broader group. Or they could give two pitches–one that has a budget of $0 and another that has a limitless budget.

It's important that groups don't think about ideas as "winning" or "losing" but instead as resources that the entire task force works on. If the task force uses the "pitch" idea, recognize that elements of different pitches could be combined for an ideal solution.

One idea is for students in the group to pair up with administrators and walk them around campus, sharing how spaces are used at different times of the day. (Obviously, this should be at a time like a weekday morning, when students are less likely to be actually socializing.)

The process should be iterative for two reasons:

1. **RECOGNIZE THE ENORMOUS IMPORTANCE OF STUDENTS TO THIS PROCESS.**
   Administrators can design a wonderful plan, but if it doesn't fit within the ways that student life works on a day-to-day basis, it will never work. Solutions need a validity check with student members.

2. **SOLUTIONS WILL REQUIRE ENLISTING THE WORK OF OTHERS WHO ARE NOT PART OF THE TASK FORCE.**
   So as the task force begins to settle into an idea, it needs to reach out to those who would be responsible for implementing that idea, gather their feedback and their buy-in, and redesign the solution in light of community feedback.

Step 3: Making Change

Change can mean a lot of things. From creating awareness, redistributing ownership or access, changing policies, or reorganizing the spaces that most impact students' sense of belonging, particularly students who come to campus with less access than their peers. Here are five contexts to think about when your task force pivots from diagnosing the problem to realizing creative solutions. This is not an exhaustive list. We provide it for you to think about the types of changes you might consider, drawing upon the experiences and ideas of other campuses.

1. SPATIAL REGULATIONS:

Often, unexplored regulatory frameworks are relics of ambiguous, imprecise, or outdated decisions. Exploring the justifications for a campus' inherited spatial regulations might reveal some unnecessary or archaic protocol worthy of revision.

2. RESIDENTIAL SPACES:

Change priorities in housing lotteries and create more affinity housing options for marginalized students to redistribute power and resources in a way that responds to students' experience.

- **Housing Lotteries:** The majority of sexual assaults occur during a student's first six to eight weeks of school because of the disproportionate social and structural vulnerabilities first years face during this time. Therefore; one way to change this, as Middlebury College has done, is to reorient housing lotteries to be intersectional: favoring first years, and paying attention to the other inequalities students are contending with. By giving preference for the more spacious and influential housing options to students with the least structural power, you can reshape existing power dynamics.

- **Affinity Housing:** As illustrated by the Mexican Independence Day party story in *Sexual Citizens*, affinity housing (housing that is structured around a shared and meaningful identity) and social venues can create safe spaces for the most marginalized, and therefore vulnerable, students. Hundreds of schools across the country, for example, now offer some form of Gender-Inclusive Housing (the Campus Pride Index list goes from University of North Alabama to University of Wyoming), and Rutgers, University of Maryland, Lehigh, and MontClaire State all have LGBTQ-specific housing and residential policies. Some campuses, such as University of Michigan, have created alternative housing options to meet these students' needs.

- **Affinity Social and Housing Spaces:** Spaces such as fraternities and sororities that combine both living and social space can be incredibly important for students searching for a sense of belonging. However; they have also been associated with harms. Those harms aren't because they are affinity spaces. Instead we would point to two reasons that explain some of the harms. First, that they are affinity spaces that are primarily used by already powerful students, augmenting inequalities. And second, other kinds of affinity groups do not have such spaces, again, augmenting inequalities. There are many different types of affinity group spaces. For example, Oberlin College offers a wide variety of identity-based communities, language houses, co-ops, and themed living/learning spaces. How can space on campus help create a greater sense of solidarity and belonging in ways that

3. SOCIAL SPACES:

Modify features, policies and practices to prioritize access to social spaces for disadvantaged populations, and to encourage the formation of new social norms. This could include reorganizing event licensure and student life budget priorities, or redistributing ownership or sharing existing spaces to ensure that under-empowered and under-resourced communities are given equal opportunities to access and control safe events.

- The Valor study also includes guidelines on using design to heighten the sense of ownership, pride, and care, such as: removing areas of concealment, increasing light, strengthening access boundaries and controls, etc.

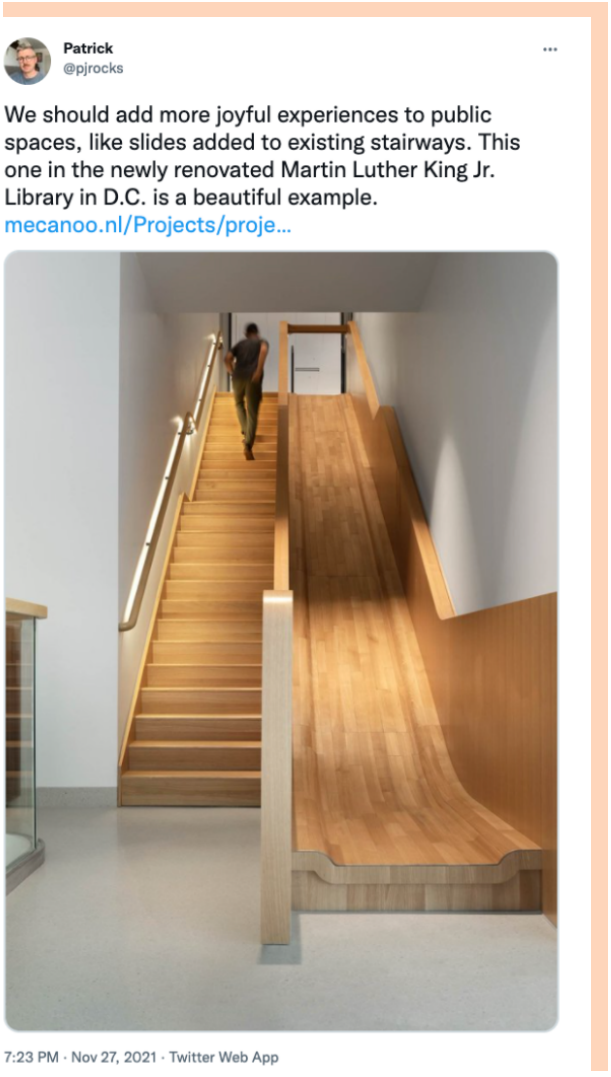
4. PUBLIC SPACES:

With all else equal, improvements to public spaces will most directly benefit students who are most marginalized in private spaces. So, how can your public spaces better serve the communities that have the least access to and ownership? How can public spaces promote a sense of belonging, or even joy? (See for example, the image of a slide in Washington, D.C.'s Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library – because slides are fun!) Principles of placemaking and participatory design have been used in urban planning and public health to serve this exact purpose, consequently improving physical and emotional health in a variety of public settings (such as schools, housing, and domestic violence shelters). William (Holly) Whyte and Jane Jacobs helped create this approach, explained by the Project for Public Spaces as a collective reimagining and reinvention of public spaces which centers "the physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution." Here are some open-source resources that may be useful:

- The Project for Public Spaces: Eleven Principles of Placemaking: a simple and effective overview of the approach to placemaking that provides some useful and efficient tips to help get you started.

- The Project for Public Spaces: Case for Healthy Places: a deeper dive into a peer-reviewed, evidence based report on ways that diverse communities have used placemaking to improve public health. Many approaches listed do not require costly changes to the physical landscape, and some are as simple as hosting exhibits and events in public spaces that represent the diversity of cultures who use these spaces.

- The Gehl Institute Tools, including: Inclusive Healthy Places Framework: The Gehl Institute offers a number of free tools for data collection and analysis, which may be useful during your describe phase. They also offer comprehensive reports like the Inclusive Healthy Places framework which provides a comprehensive guide to their framework for building health equity through placemaking, as well as examples of how it has been applied in different communities globally. This is an incredibly useful and detailed guide that includes many low-cost and free modifications to public spaces that build healthy communities.



5. DIGITAL SPACES:

It's likely that most of the digital spaces used by students on campus are regulated off campus and will be difficult to change. However, making students aware of unequal regulations can be a great way to spark activism and encourage people to seek or create alternative digital networks. After all, the most prominent digital networking spaces were created by college students. Your students could be the people who create their replacements!

PHASE 4 - KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Review existing policies that might reveal unnecessary and antiquated regulations that can be easily changed.
- Get a sense of how changes happen on campus and model the groups' response on successful examples.
- Brainstorm ideas for change that allow group members to first think big before getting practical.
- Allow brainstorming to be an iterative process, getting input from community members who would have to implement the idea.
- Recognize that changes to housing and event policies, layouts, and options can create a safer campus climate.
- Make a win-tracker! Preserve the story of the work that you have done, and use every small bit of progress to build support to keep going. This could be a public website with goals and achievements.

Implementing change is a process, not an event. We suggest thinking about that process in iterations, where:

1. The task force identifies something to change, grounded in an analysis of sexual geographies and a commitment to equity. Figure out how to make that change possible. Start small and learn from that experience, rather than taking on something huge at first.

2. Evaluate how it went. This evaluation is both of the change process itself, and of the potential impact of the change. That means talking to students and stakeholders.

3. Report back to us! Use the slack channel to tell us and others going through this process what you did and how it went. The aim of hearing back from participants in the SPACE process isn't to judge whether people did it right or wrong. Instead it's to use everyone's experience and knowledge to help each other.

4. As we learn lessons about this process we can share these valuable, practical insights with one another (maintaining privacy, of course). Communities that are doing this work can learn together. And we can refine our processes and this toolkit in light of practical experiences from a diverse range of learning communities.

5. After the first experience of going through the process and evaluating how it went, the next step is to start again. This means getting a greater institutional commitment, convening a new group of stakeholders (with some who have experience from the last round), considering campus life by gathering new information, new insights, and taking on bigger changes grounded in past experiences, and hopefully, successes.

This is a big undertaking. But tackling big problems with new insights, a commitment to equality, and building better communities is what educational institutions are all about! It may seem like an impossible task, yet we were made for this. We're so excited you've decided to take this journey. We can't wait to hear how it goes. **And we are thrilled to learn together, using SPACE as a way to create communities where everyone can thrive.**

***

Appendix 1:
General Timeline & Workflow Plan

You and those you gather together are the experts on your campus, so select the ideas and practices from this toolkit that make the most sense for you. Or use the framework to develop your own innovative approach. Each campus' unique social and physical landscape will influence how you work both to understand and to change it.

While each campus is unique, any effort to understand, reimagine, and transform your campus' sexual geography will require two things:

- A four-phase approach that secures ***commitment*** from senior level administrators, ***convenes*** a group that includes both students and staff or administrators from a variety of divisions, including those with the power to make policy change, teaches them to ***consider*** the sexual geographies of their campus, and empowers them to join in ***change***.

- A living approach that reflects the evolving nature of your school's population and landscape, with built-in opportunities to review and revise the work.

Here's a sample timeline (which of course may vary):

Sample Timeline

<table>
<tr><th>MONTH 1 2 3</th><th>4 5 6 7</th><th>8 9 10</th></tr>
<tr><td>YEAR 1</td><td>COMMIT AND CONVENE:
Secure commitment from administration.

Convene & empower institutional and student stakeholders.

Hold meeting to introduce group to each other and the process.</td><td>CONSIDER:
Meetings 2-6+.

Diagnose the problem and focus on an area of campus life.

We suggest 2 hour meetings every other week.</td><td>CHANGE:
Review policies.

Brainstorm solutions.

Implement policy changes.</td></tr>
<tr><td>YEAR 2</td><td colspan="2">EVALUATE: Building additional partnerships to monitor and evaluate progress.</td></tr>
<tr><td>YEAR 3</td><td colspan="2">Celebrate accomplishments and rest!</td></tr>
<tr><td>YEAR 4+5</td><td colspan="2">New cycle of SPACE toolkit work.</td></tr>
</table>

Workflow Plan

WHO: Staff with training in sexual violence prevention and diversity, equity, and inclusion on college campuses that have made a commitment to move from Title IX compliance to transformation: making their campus more equitable by reorganizing the ways social and physical spaces are used, experienced, and distributed.

1. COMMMIT: GAIN INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

- ☐ Reach out to high-level administrators to introduce them to this process.
- ☐ See what kinds of institutional support you can get for the process.

2. CONVENE: CREATE A SPACE WORKING GROUP COMPOSED OF STUDENT AND STAFF STAKEHOLDERS.

- ☐ Build together a group of institutional stakeholders who affect how space is used and distributed to form one half of your working group. Secure senior-level administrative support for their participation.
- ☐ Build a representative group of student stakeholders who occupy diverse positions of power and privilege to form the other half of your working group.
- ☐ Meet with each group individually, explain the process, share this toolkit, and get feedback on who is missing who should be invited to participate.
- ☐ Bring the two halves of your working group together, begin to establish norms that recognize existing power differentials and address the uneven ability of members to speak and be heard (see Appendix 2 for more details).

3. CONSIDER: BUILD A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF SEXUAL GEOGRAPHIES AS A CONCEPT, DESCRIBE THEIR ROLE ON YOUR CAMPUS, AND ESTABLISH A SCOPE OF WORK.

- ☐ **Meeting 1:** Introduce the team, establish ground rules to promote safety and inclusivity, provide an overview of the concept of sexual geographies, and ask everyone to start applying this concept to your campus.
- ☐ **Homework:** dive deeper into the idea of “sexual geographies”.
- ☐ **Meeting 2:** Build a common language and understanding of what sexual geographies mean on your campus, paying attention to these 5 dimensions of space: 1) residential, 2) social, 3) virtual, 4) programmatic, and 5) public.
- ☐ **Homework:** Think about how the concept of “sexual geographies” can make sense of campus life.
- ☐ **Meetings 3-5:** Outline your next steps to map your campus’ sexual geographies in 3 parts:
  - ☐ **Meeting 3:** Give everyone a chance to express their understanding of and priorities for mapping sexual geographies to enhance equity and prevent violence.
  - ☐ **Meeting 4:** Reorient these ideas around the unequal access to and experience of space.
  - ☐ **Homework:** Taskforce members should think about what they want to focus on.
  - ☐ **Meeting 5:** Narrow your focus onto the dimensions of your mapping process to the areas of your campus’ sexual geography that you have the capacity to map and take action on your findings.
  - ☐ **Homework:** Consider reaching out beyond the task force to gather more information about the aspect of sexual geography that will be the focus of future meetings.
- ☐ **Meetings 6+:** Map the physical, social, and institutional power dynamics students experience in the spaces you’ve chosen to focus on (see Appendix 3 for resources).

4. CHANGE: MAKE CHANGES IN THE SOCIAL AND PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE TO PROMOTE EQUITY.

- ☐ Conduct a review of relevant policies and practices affecting your target spaces.
- ☐ Brainstorm possible solutions to address the barriers to equal access the task force has uncovered.
- ☐ Gather feedback about possible solutions from community stakeholders.
- ☐ Create a plan of action based on the task force's findings, utilizing the resources in the toolkit to draft new policies and practices that build more equitable ownership, safety, and belonging for minoritized students within your target spaces.

Once this process is completed, build partnerships either internally or externally to help evaluate progress, and potentially start again, in order to take on additional elements of campus life.

Appendix 2: Tips on Running Meetings

Developing a shared vision and mission will require creating **a space where everyone feels recognized and free to speak openly**. Discussions of sexual violence can raise painful memories and thoughts. Many people in the room will have experienced sexual violence personally, and everyone has an emotional connection to this issue. If your team includes students and staff, staff may be mandated reporters for violations of Title IX or other state and federal laws; this can substantially inhibit conversation. To create a space where your team can speak openly and honestly, we encourage you to think about five things:

1. ACKNOWLEDGE THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT
   of these conversations and our word choices, regardless of their intent.

2. EXPLAIN MANDATED REPORTING PROCESSES AND RULES CLEARLY
   because your goal as a team is to understand students' lived experiences, you may choose to separate students and staff at different points in the conversation, or offer students who would prefer not to report their experiences some options, such as speaking in hypotheticals or providing anonymous forms.

3. ESTABLISH SHARED NORMS AND A SHARED LANGUAGE
   that center the needs of those with the least privilege. Shared norms could include:

   A. **Confidentiality:** Anything discussed in the room stays in the room. If something mentioned needs to be referenced externally, be sure to 1) explain why, 2) get the express consent of everyone involved, and 3) take care to anonymize the content or give credit, depending on the situation, as well as group and individual preferences.

   B. **Safety:** You may not be able to protect all forms of speech, which should be made explicit (see #2, above). However; you can establish some norms that make it safer to speak honestly. It is important to acknowledge existing power differentials. Some students may have encountered harm from some administrators (or their colleagues) involved in this process, regardless of intention. Because it is your goal to address institutional harm, you want to **collectively** understand the constraints on speech, and set norms that reflect what students need to feel safe to express their concerns to staff. There are also power differentials among many in the room, and it's important to acknowledge and validate not just students' but also staff's humanity and constraints. Some helpful resources are:

      i. Setting some intentional practices to build a shared feeling of equality. For example, get everyone to commit to using first names, regardless of their position at the university, or have members speak in reverse age order. For more on this, see "Thinking about Group Dynamics" in Storch et al., "A Governance Challenge Presents a Governance Opportunity."

      ii. Framing ideas with "I" statements to acknowledge different perspectives.

      iii. Responding equally to emotional and "factual" content.

      iv. Asking clarifying questions.

      v. Creating space for empathy before responding.

      vi. Using norms of **Step up, Step back**. That means asking group members to step up when they feel their voice or the voice of those who haven't been speaking has not been heard. And stepping back when they find they've been talking a lot. This is a process of consciously making room for less powerful people, and those who often feel like they don't have "permission."

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vii Create a process where those who don't feel comfortable speaking in a meeting can still reach out to those running meetings to provide information or feedback. This can be as simple as an email address. It will help make sure that silences in the room can be corrected by allowing voices to speak in different ways.

What works for your group will depend on your own context. We encourage you to share these resources widely, and dedicate some of your early meetings to discussions of what principles are best for organizing group discussions.

4. ENSURE THAT A MEMBER OF THE CAMPUS ADVOCACY TEAM OR COUNSELING SERVICES IS AVAILABLE

during every meeting and make it clear before each start that anyone may step out at any time to be alone or speak with the counselor confidentially.

5. PROVIDE A RESOURCES SHEET

to participants that outlines on-campus and off-campus resources should they wish to reach out for help given the challenging nature of the conversations.

6. STRUCTURE YOUR CONVERSATIONS TO BUILD RAPPORT

and ease into more sensitive topics, and provide frequent breaks.

7. MAKING DECISIONS

Finally, the group process isn't just about how to run meetings. It's also about how to make decisions within meetings. We suggest three academic pieces to help you through this process:

- McAuliffe, Donna, and Lesley Chenoweth. "Leave no stone unturned: The inclusive model of ethical decision making." *Ethics and social welfare* 2.1 (2008): 38-49.
- Karen Bell, Mark Reed, The tree of participation: a new model for inclusive decision-making, *Community Development Journal*, 2021;, bsab018, https://doi.org/10.1093/cdj/bsab018
- M. Gupta, "Consensus Building Process in Group Decision Making—An Adaptive Procedure Based on Group Dynamics," in *IEEE Transactions on Fuzzy Systems*, vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 1923-1933, Aug. 2018, doi: 10.1109/TFUZZ.2017.2755581.

Appendix 3:
Thoughts on Mapping Sexual Geographies

Two approaches that may be most accessible:

- **PHOTOVOICE:**
  PhotoVoice tells stories that center marginalized groups through participatory photography. Everyone who has a phone with a camera can participate in this.
- **FOCUS GROUPS WITH TARGET POPULATIONS:**
  Some task forces may have extra bandwidth to gather their own information. If task force members have experience with qualitative research methodology, they might consider conducting focus groups with students who are disproportionately at risk to either experience or commit sexual violence. These focus groups could assess those students' ownership, comfort, and safety in different spaces. This would reveal how ownership over and power within the spaces where students socialize, live, work, have sex, and experience violence is unequally distributed. By modifying safety walkthroughs or Shifting Boundaries Hotspot Mapping tools updated by Valor, you can conduct interactive exercises for these focus groups that compare the structural and social power dynamics that dictate each group's experience of different spaces.

Exciting but more technologically complex approaches:

- **INTEGRATING STORY CAPTURE INTO THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:**
  Adding instruments to record feedback on how students interact with the spaces they live in and travel through can provide efficient, real-time insights into the student experience, and may capture untapped perspectives. These instruments can be low-tech, like stickers or post-its, or could be set up to use QR codes for students to comment digitally on spaces as they are in them.
- **URBAN PLANNING RESOURCES:**
  Tools informed by placemaking and participatory design principles can help reveal and assess the quality of a place. The Project for Public Spaces underscores four key criteria: access and linkages, comfort and image, uses and activities, and sociability. A few open-source tools include: the Project for Public Spaces' Place Diagram and the Gehl Institute.
- **CORTICO:**
  Cortico and MIT's Center for Constructive Communication have partnered to create a platform to facilitate audio story capture, analysis, and dissemination tools that center underheard voices to support a more equitable dialogue. Though the platform is not free, organizations can apply for subsidization at the Fund for Public Conversation.

Food for Thought:

- The Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) or Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) framework laid out in Valor's 2020 report may be a useful tool to help frame your questions.

Appendix 4: Stories from *Sexual Citizens*

This appendix contains the stories of Charisma, Octavia, and Austin, exerpted from *Sexual Citizens*. These excerpts represent real-life students stories that reflect different experiences of sexual assault. We present them with the aim of helping task force members see how attentiveness to the concept of sexual geographies transforms part of our understanding of sexual assault.

Charisma

Race as well as gender structures space. At Columbia University, socializing spaces and music choices that reflect the tastes and preferences of high status white students predominate. This drives some students of color to seek partners off campus, away from classmates who might remember their bystander training and who, because of community norms or solidarity, might intervene to help them. Charisma, for example, felt turned off by the mainstream campus social scene that she saw as 'fratty white guys who drink too much, have bad taste in music, can't really dance, and go for skinny girls with straight hair and thin noses.' She was also frustrated by the relatively small numbers of Black and Latino men, who she deemed more suitable partners, on the Columbia campus.

Charisma, a Black Latina senior from Albuquerque who was a varsity athlete, was quick to answer the question about what she'd choose for her one college "do-over" if given the chance. She'd love to have back one Saturday night toward the end of her freshman year. She'd met Raymond, who lived out in Brooklyn, through her roommate. After texting back and forth for weeks, he invited her out to his place. There were so many signs that it was not going to be a good night: the subway she was planning to take was closed for the weekend, making her trip almost twice as long; on the walk from the train the skies opened up, a torrential downpour soaking her to the bone, and her cell phone died so she couldn't call him for directions when she got lost. Miraculously, she had his number written on an actual piece of paper, and some change in her pocket; she was lucky enough to find a bodega with a working pay phone, and called him to get her. Sodden and demoralized, she was happy to peel off her shoes and socks and dry out. They watched tv, did a couple of shots, smoked a joint, and then started to make out. She was fine with all that, but clearly had not been expecting more to happen. She was firm in providing us with "evidence": she was wearing "granny panties" and had not brought her oral contraceptives or even a toothbrush. But more did happen. She "didn't really want it to" and she tried to convey that with her body language. When he reached in between in her legs:

> I wasn't expecting that to happen. So I was like "Okay, let me move his hand." And then his hand didn't move so I was like oh, okay, this is happening. So then it's like he started taking his clothes off, I started taking mine off, just like let it happen. 'Cause it's like I didn't know how to say no. 'Cause it's like my way of saying no was through body language, trying to move his hand, 'cause that's what had worked in the past to slow things down if I didn't want to be touched in a certain area. But in this moment that didn't work. So it was like my plan, I never had a plan B....It's like plan A was always just body language, just move their hand. Like, they get it. But this time plan A didn't work, and I didn't, like, plan B would be saying no. But I just, I didn't know how to, I didn't know what to do....Verbal wasn't really my form of communication....

Charisma conveyed in nonverbal ways that she wasn't enjoying their sex. She told him that it hurt, and at one point when it was hurting she did, in fact, say "No." He may have heard but he didn't listen; instead of stopping, she told us, he just tried a different position. Refusing sex can be awkward, but it's a teachable skill—unfortunately, not one that Charisma had been given an opportunity to learn. Nor, to be sure, had Raymond understood, or maybe even been exposed to, the practice of affirmative consent. There's a distinction between how much someone wants sex (their internal desire) and their verbalization of that desire. Raymond may have had no idea how much she did not want to be having sex. However, his ignoring the way she moved his hands away as he tried to touch her sexually shows a lack of respect for Charisma's citizenship. Being attentive to the other person's right to sexual self-determination—thinking about sex as something to share rather than something to get or to have—may have gone a long way to prevent this kind of encounter. Geography matters too. Charisma was stuck in Brooklyn late at night in a downpour. The train would take almost two hours. Some

students wouldn't think twice about a $60 cab ride home, but she wasn't one of those students. Charisma told us they had "sex," as she called it, twice that night and then once in the morning. Perhaps anticipating our curiosity about the second and third times, she told us, unprompted,

> I didn't stop it the other times 'cause I was like, well, we already did it once. What's another time? I just, like, literally had no energy to open my mouth or say anything, I just laid there....It was just sad. I was probably thinking about my other friends who have casual sex...and like it was never a big deal for them when they do it, and maybe it's like really not a big deal. Or I was feeling ho-ish, or easy, or whatever....I was like, my friends do this and it's fine for them, so it's not actually a big deal.

Octavia

Octavia was thrilled when she got the invitation to hang out Saturday night at one of the most prestigious fraternities on campus. She hadn't previously needed an invite to get in the door, but receiving one conveyed that she'd been noticed. When they host parties, fraternities have one member work the door—often to keep out other men, but also to regulate the kinds of women they want inside. "Oh, I'm cool!" Octavia thought to herself, upon opening her personal invitation to the party. "I'm getting invited to ABK! I'm just a freshman, and I got an invite to ABK! That's so cool."

Octavia couldn't believe her further luck when she was asked to go hang out upstairs. There she was, doing shots with some of the hottest guys on campus. She felt special, chosen. She wasn't some random freshman no one knew. She was with the in-crowd. Everything was fine until it wasn't. As if on cue, all the guys except one got up to leave. They wanted to go back down to the party, they said. The only man still sitting, a senior, told Octavia to stay for one more drink. She wanted to leave with the group but felt pressured to stay. It would be rude to leave. She might not be invited again, ruining her chances of being able to hang out with the cool guys. She decided to stay for one more drink. The man started kissing her; she didn't really mind but she wasn't really into it. Then he forcefully removed her clothes and raped her.

Octavia never reported what happened. "I was embarrassed because I was so dumb to go there in the first place and not realize that I was only going there to have sex with this guy... I felt so dumb for not knowing why I was invited." She blamed herself. She felt she couldn't reasonably say something against a senior from ABK. They were powerful, respected, the "coolest" on campus. Her story didn't have a chance against them. The brothers who left Octavia may not have known that she would be raped, or they may have found it unimaginable that she would be anything other than thrilled to have sex with one of them. They did, however, facilitate her going up to a senior's room, have some shots, and then depart en masse, turning this social situation into a distinctly more sexual one. It may have been a sexual situation, but for Octavia it wasn't sex; it was rape. The group acted to set up this situation, and then its reputation influenced Octavia's own behavior. They didn't do anything to silence her—possibly because even the man who raped her might still think of what happened as sex, not rape. But they didn't need to do anything: the power disparity acted for them.

Some fraternities have reputations for being "rapey"—for being places where you need to be on your guard. The word is an important sign–post in students' symbolic universe—and, critically, one that sometimes points to relative social prestige, rather than actual risk of assault. Fraternity members we interviewed expressed extreme worry over this kind of reputation, because even if they're not the one committing rape, the association creates a stigma. As one brother told us,

> In a fraternity you have to be especially careful because it's so easy for anyone to jump to the "fraternity guy rapist" assumption. And not only do I not want to rape anyone, but if I did it affects every—one I'm associated with!

A reputation for being rapey can be very sticky. A sorority member we talked to described one of the low-status fraternities on campus: “You hear weird stuff coming out of there. They’re just weird guys. I wouldn’t go there. They guys are all pushy and stuff. I mean, they’re always trying to prey on little freshman girls and stuff.”

We followed up on this, looking into the reputation and the reality of this lower-status fraternity, which we will call PDQ. We spent time there, and talked to members of the house. The responses were fairly consistent: passionate denial, accompanied by comments bemoaning the struggles the fraternity had with its image. It seemed not to matter what PDQ did. No matter how they responded, they just couldn’t shake their reputation. One brother was so animated about this it was hard to keep up with his torrent of words—

> Someone posted on social media that a woman was raped at our house. I freaked out. Like, did I join the wrong frat? Who are these people I’m in with? Did I make the wrong decision? I had made the drinks and was handing them out that night with my friend! I looked into it, and talked to all the guys, and no one did that! I make all the drinks, and I make them kind of weak, just because I don’t want someone to get drunk fast and feel that and think they got roofied. Our brothers would rather not get laid than to do that. I mean, I know they’re not getting a lot of sex, but they wouldn’t do that.

High-status frats like the one where Octavia was raped tend not to have reputations for being rapey. One of the ways—at least at Columbia, but also increasingly elsewhere—that a male-dominated or all-male organization gets to be “high-status” is to brand itself as feminist, or at least gender-egalitarian. Many fraternities have gay members, demonstrating their opposition to homophobia and heteronormativity. However, we learned of instances of assault in both the high- and low-status frats. Being high-status makes a fraternity’s members sexually desirable—or at least socially desirable for sex. This can make it a far greater challenge to report or talk about sex as “unwanted.” Sometimes it is even hard for someone who is assaulted to perceive the sex as unwanted—they are weighing the unpleasantness of the experience against the lure of recounting having been with a prized social object. High status provides men with some protection against allegations of sexual assault because it’s harder for others to imagine that sex with such men could be unwanted. This leads to a disturbing conclusion: the reputation of the group may help protect its members from accountability.

Again and again, we saw how explicit and conscientious group members were about protecting or improving their status. We heard high-status groups call lower-status groups “rapey,” “pushy,” “sexist,” or “creeps,” to publicly affirm that they were none of those things. Groups use their reputations to preserve their status and to dominate other groups lower in the hierarchy. We saw this dynamic very markedly with fraternities and athletic teams, and much less so with identity-based groups, organized religious life, or other kinds of extracurriculars. It’s possible that high-status people and groups are actually less likely to commit assault—that is, that their status reflects actual behavior that is more socially desirable, and that conversely the rape stigma attached to lower-status groups reflects actual behavior, not relative social prestige. It also could be the case that being high-status means that when people commit assault, they’re less likely to be reported, and if a report is made, the accuser is less likely to be believed. Or, as we believe, a combination of all of those things is likely true. In Octavia’s case, her rapist was aided by his group affiliation in a number of ways, from his brothers getting up to leave so he could be alone with Octavia, to his group’s power and desirability, which contributed to Octavia’s self-blame for and silence about what happened.

Austin

It had taken Austin several years to grow into who he was when we interviewed him. The Austin who was so attentive to his girlfriend on the Fourth of July [a story we tell earlier in the book] hardly seemed like the Austin in this story from freshman orientation.

> My roommate was hooking up with this girl, sex and everything. So they made me sleep in her roommate's place. The first night, she was really drunk, and they were just like, "Oh go over there." And I didn't know what to do so I just lay down next to her and she was like "Oh I just threw up, like, I don't want to do anything," but I kind of just laid next to her for a bit and kind of rubbed her body for a bit. I definitely grabbed her boob, but then I felt weird about it, because I was also drunk, and then I slept in the other bed. And then the next time I saw her because they continued hooking up I went back and we talked for, like, two or three hours about bull-shit. We actually got along pretty well, and like, it was never bad, it never felt like it was wholly a bad thing, but I definitely felt bad about it. I shouldn't have done that. But I was definitely happy that I had slept in the other bed. Glad I did that. I stopped and was like, "Uh, this isn't it." She didn't seem like she was hating it, but she didn't seem like she was loving it. Okay, she probably didn't give affirmative or negative consent. This is a gray area. And I was just like "Okay, this is weird, this is a bad idea." I don't know, it wasn't one of my best moments.

When we asked him how he would categorize the event, he said, "Not something I would do again." When we asked him if it was a "hookup," he was definitive. "No, because we didn't make out. I don't know what to categorize it as. Just kind of shitty." As the interview continued, we asked Austin to share more about his definition of sexual assault and, in light of that, to reflect on what had happened. "I know the definition of sexual assault, like any kind of nonconsensual sexual action, so yes…that would probably be considered sexual assault."

By now, Austin was near tears. He distinguished between rape and assault. "Well, rape in terms of vaginal rape. And sexual assault being, like, a lot of, like, bad touching. Which is I guess what I did. But umm. But also, like. Yeah damn. Well, fuck me, right? Yeah."

He looked crushed, as if he'd just realized something terrible about himself.

The assault that Austin told us he committed during orientation week was typical of many campus sexual assault incidents: he and the woman were both drunk, it was not reported, they maintained a social relationship afterwards but never discussed what happened, and in fact the interview seemed to have been the first moment that Austin considered that it was assault. Austin was desperate to accrue sexual experience, anxious because he thought he was less sexually experienced than his peers. Intoxication clouded his judgment. People know that being drunk is associated with an increased risk of being assaulted, but less remarked upon are the ways in which heavy drinking raises the risk of assaulting someone. An opportunity presented itself, set in motion by the community norm that part of being a good friend is going along with being shuffled into a virtual stranger's bedroom, or having a virtual stranger shuffled into yours. We don't know how the woman in Austin's story experienced what happened. But we do know how Austin felt, after he began thinking about what he'd done. It's hard to think about Austin as a sociopath or a predator. Did he commit assault? In our view, yes. Is he a terrible person? In our view, no.

About Us



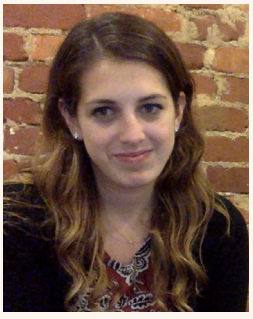
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Jennifer Hirsch is a Professor of Sociomedical Sciences at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health. **Shamus Khan** is a Professor of Sociology and American Studies at Princeton University.

Together they are co-authors of *Sexual Citizens: A Landmark Study of Sex, Power and Assault on Campus*, published by W.W. Norton. That work was realized as part of Columbia's Sexual Health Initiative to Foster Transformation, or SHIFT, co-directed by Jennifer and clinical psychologist Claude Ann Mellins. A review in Science described *Sexual Citizens* as "profoundly eye-opening", and the book was listed as one of NPR's best books of 2020.



Kathy Leichter, Engagement Strategist and Impact Producer is an award-winning documentary producer, director, engagement strategist and impact producer with over thirty years working in media. She has extensive experience designing and implementing successful outreach and engagement campaigns for documentary films, and has produced over 400 impact events (in-person and virtual) across the country on issues including racial and economic justice, climate change, mental health, women, civil discourse, juvenile justice, and Jewish identity.



Alex Zeitz-Moskin is currently completing her MPH at Columbia's Mailman School. Prior to graduate school, she worked for 10 years in politics and at non-profits focused on sexual violence prevention and response. From 2016-17, she served as Deputy Director of (then) Vice President Biden's 'It's On Us' Campaign to address campus sexual assault in DC. From 2019-21, she was the Director of Development and Communications at the NYC Alliance Against Sexual Assault.