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10/9/2018

PGC - Day 9

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**Social justice on campus:**

I'm thinking about sexual assault. I'm thinking about the pervasive heteronormativity of my campus, the fraternity culture, the fact that I'm afraid to walk alone at night on the campus my tuition money funds. I'm thinking about the intersectionality of all my identities, all of which make me equally vulnerable and valuable to society.

Everything exists within its own little bubble; the environmental science majors come to climate change events, the queer community goes to queer outreach events. This is no sustainable way to educate people, nor to create a community with a diverse, intersectional education.

**Sexual assault:**

The statistics are overwhelmingly clear that college campuses rarely follow through with disciplinary actions as it regards to sexual assault. I know for a fact there is a rapist on my campus, a repeat offender, who according to our handbook should be expelled. And yet he's still here, and I am told by upperclassmen who to avoid for my own safety, passed along like some forbidden knowledge.

This isn't right. There's no justice for survivors, no protection from repeat offenses. I don't want to be afraid of becoming another statistic.

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This isn't even new. We've known about these trends and nothings happened in more than thirty years, brought back into relevance, daily, by new events and movements. This time, Kavanaugh, #MeToo. I hope they bring permanent, lasting change to the country and campuses within.

Schools, by not removing rapists from campuses, contribute to a hostile environment and thus discriminate in education, violating Title IX. The allegations are true. Rapists are sheltered on campuses.

I suppose this factors into prioritizing corporations over citizens. Perpetrators are protected because institutions have a financial incentive to do so. Institutions have a reputation to uphold, they have a brand to maintain - one free of any tarnishes. In the future, I suppose institutions will have to grapple with the reputation they'd prefer: a moral, justice-holding institution that protects and supports its students, or an institution that maintains money over justice, rapists over victims.

### **Becoming a changemaker:**

I've so far interacted with the Progressive Student Union, and very recently participated in a discussion on sexual assault on campus. This has recently been a hot button issue on campus, and I hope to see further events, discussions, and action on campus in the future.

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I think we need education you can't escape from, no easy pass consent course or seminar. The college needs to deal appropriately with assaulters and keep them off campus. This education, in whatever form it may take, needs to permeate fraternities, ROTC, and athletics on campus, in addition to all students, without the unnecessary censoring and squeaky cleanliness that makes it easy to ignore the severity of these crimes.

In my action plan, education is central, but so are survivors. It is imperative to support them. I would, hopefully, work with the PSU, to facilitate further discussion events, and to educate myself further on consent, and campus sexual assault.

My next steps are to firstly, educate myself, probably by looking through Title IX in its entirety, and seeking out facts, anecdotes, and information on the matter. Only then will I feel confident enough in my ability to reach out to others, theoretically in another discussion like the one I'm in tonight, or on an even larger scale.