The Cyclical Theory and Public Opinion: Preferential Treatment of Student Collegiate Athletes in Violation of Title IX Policy

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***Introduction***

“And then, at the bottom of the article, after I learned about the graphic details of my own sexual assault, the article listed his swimming times. She was found breathing, unresponsive with her underwear six inches away from her bare stomach curled in fetal position. By the way, he’s really good at swimming. Throw in my mile time if that’s what we’re doing. I’m good at cooking, put that in there, I think the end is where you list your extracurriculars to cancel out all the sickening things that’ve happened” (Buncombe 2016). This testimony is from the survivor of the infamous Stanford rape case wherein Brock Turner, a swimmer and student at Stanford University, maliciously raped a woman while she was unconscious. After months of trial and negotiation, he served a minimal sentence and now has appealed it. The case has attracted national attention and brought into debate the preferential treatment of collegiate athletes amid sexual assault cases and violations of Title IX policy.

Although, this was not the first time this topic has taken center stage. There have been many headline stories featuring prominent collegiate athlete’s names and a sexual violence allegation. In the documentary, *The Hunting Ground* the case of Jameis Winston is specifically highlighted. Winston was accused of raping a woman while he was a student and starting quarterback for Florida State University. There is substantial evidence that the police and FSU officials protected Winston from rape charges in order to keep his eligibility to play. While the NCAA knew of the charges no action was taken, he continued to play, won the Heisman Trophy while the investigation was still going on and is now a quarterback in the NFL. While this case has now been brought into the spotlight, there are predictably many more like it that go unreported and unpunished.

Brock Turner and Jameis Winston got away with rape while being watched by the entire country and with substantial evidence against them. Why? Because they were successful student collegiate athletes. These types of cases have been seen one too many times. It seems each year there is a new story of a woman being raped, having plenty of evidence, and the man, an athlete, is punished minimally or not at all. Sexual assault on college campuses has been a pressing issue for years. In fact, one in five women will experience sexual assault while in college (White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault 2017). And even more disturbing is the lack of steps taken by universities to end rape culture and follow Title IX policy on their campuses, especially when an athlete is involved.

***Synopsis***

Although there is literature proving athletes commit these crimes and receive very small punishments, there is no research to investigate whether we as an American society hold a preference for athletes in these cases and if so why this occurs. Thus, my research question is: Why do Americans give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment regarding Title IX sexual harassment violations? In my research paper, I aim to fill this gap and answer this question as well as test whether Americans give preferential treatment to student athletes. To begin my research and exploration, I first review previous literature. From this I construct a cyclical theory that pulls together the toxic jock identity, external societal factors, gaps in Title IX policy, other pieces of policy and government documents, and data of student collegiate athletes committing sexual harassment violations. I assess how these elements perpetuate one another to form and continue this cycle of sexual violence and preferential treatment regarding retribution for allegations. Secondly, I form a hypothesis that Americans are less likely to follow appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete. My expectation is that when presented with a scenario involving a collegiate student athlete, Americans will choose the inappropriate response according to Title IX guidelines. To test my hypothesis, in the next section of my paper I design my research and outline how I collect data using a survey through a split scenario question. I also explain the reasoning and variables behind this method. After I conduct the research, I analyze my results and discuss the implications of my T-Test. Through this I draw the conclusion that my hypothesis is incorrect and that Americans are nearly just as likely to choose the appropriate response when presented with a sexual assault scenario when the student is an athlete versus when they are not an athlete. In the final section of my paper, I discuss what my research suggests, shortcomings and flaws within it and what can be done from this point forward based on my conclusions.

***Literature Review: Creating the Cyclical Theory***

Why do Americans give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment regarding Title IX sexual harassment violations? I argue that a cyclical theory exists by which these situations are produced. This cycle consists of four mutually reinforcing components: the toxic jock identity, external social forces, gaps in Title IX policy, and violations of Title IX. The connecting pieces of this puzzle are missing within this literature, but my research aims to construct the cyclical relationship that will connect the toxic jock identity to external societal factors to gaps in Title IX policy to athletes committing acts of sexual violence. This cycle leads student athletes who violate Title IX to receive preferential treatment—only exacerbating and continuing the cycle. The first component of the theory is the toxic jock identity. Student athletes are prone to develop a toxic jock identity which is explained as valuing oneself over the sport and team (Miller 2009; Miller, Melnick, Farrell, Sabo, & Barnes 2006; Watt & Moore 2001; Martin 2015). The development of this identity contributes to the preferential treatment athletes receive and their belief that they can commit violations without consequence which perpetuates the cyclical relationship in Figure 1. The second component of this cycle is the external societal factors that produce preference for athletes in these situations. These factors include hero and athlete worship, the economic gains of collegiate athletics, support from alumni and boosters, and the favoritism society holds for perpetrators already (Adler & Adler 1989; Watt & Moore 2001; Ladika 2017; Martin 2015). The third component addresses specific public policy and government documents that promote and allow for error in the execution of Title IX policy and guidelines in situations involving student collegiate athletes to occur (U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Financial & Contracting Oversight – Majority Staff 2014; United States Department of Education 2011; Johnson & Taylor 2017; White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault 2014, 2017). Taken together, athletes with a toxic jock identity which believe they can be above the law, a society that is predisposed with factors that favor athletes and vague unimplemented policies, primes the unfortunate final component of this cyclical relationship—athletes violating Title IX sexual harassment policies and receiving preferential treatment when prosecuted and investigated (Stotzer & MacCartney 2016; Siers-Poisson 2014; Benedict 1994). This cycle feeds from its own components thus resulting in an unbreakable cycle. Within the literature, these components were connected, but not as a clear cyclical theory that propagates itself as I have presented. This led to the need for more research to delve into why and how these components exist and how they influence one another. In the following section, I will explain how these components and schools of thought connect and collectively create a societal tendency to give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment in cases of Title IX violations along with why this occurs.

**[Insert Figure 1 Here]**

*The Toxic Jock Identity*

The fist component of this theory I will address is the toxic jock identity. There are distinguishable differences between students who identify as a collegiate athlete versus a jock; the toxic jock identity is defined as valuing ego-centrism whereas the athlete is task oriented. This means those who identify as a jock are more focused on their ego and reputation as a collegiate athlete whereas those who identify just as a student athlete value the actual involvement in the sport rather than the celebrity status from it (Miller 2009). Those who identify as a jock have a much stronger connection to ideals of masculinity, dominance, and toughness than those who identify first as a student athlete These ideals lead to tendencies and behavioral changes such as heightened participation in violence, sexual violence, a desire for possession of dominance in interpersonal relationship, and a main value in winning ((Miller 2009; Miller, Melnick, Farrell, Sabo, & Barnes 2006). These tendencies increase and promote violation of Title IX policy as it is already engraved in their identity and behavior to be inherently dominant and violent.

The creation of this toxic jock identity stems from Alder’s glorified self which explains even more in depth the creation of these ego centric identities (Miller 2009). The glorified self arises when individuals acquire intense interpersonal and public attention, and eventually achieve celebrity status. The development of the glorified self creates the toxic jock as it focuses on ego and the continuous climbing of the dominance ladder in both sports and interpersonal relationships (Miller 2009). A contributing factor to the creation of a glorified self is the external factor of the treatment of the athlete as an object or commodity by society (Adler & Adler 1989). This is especially seen in collegiate athletes as they are essentially owned by their respective university, fan base and past teams. They are expected to perform and create revenue which further infiltrates the creation of a glorified self, and therefore the toxic jock identity. This brings me to my next component in my cyclical theory, external societal factors that cause Americans to give preferential treatment to athletes.

*External Societal Factors*

My second component, the external societal factors, encompasses factors in society such as the glorified self as mentioned, Adler’s reflected self, hero worship, athlete worship, the economics of collegiate athletics and dues to alumni and booster which produces preference for athletes on a societal and university scale. The reflected self is formed when the individual who has achieved celebrity status observes how others treat them and responds to that by forming a new sense of self, one that is centered around power over others. This treatment, especially regarding athletes, is that of worship and admiration; thus, the attitudes toward someone who achieves celebrity status influences the celebrity’s perception of self to be higher (Adler & Adler 1989).

Hero worship begins because of this construction of the reflected, and glorified self. It was recognized because the collegiate basketball player identified that people treat him as a hero, and when he first did not know how to react to the attention, he changed his identity to fit the hero society wanted him to be. As the season progressed in this study, the athletes started to identify as heroes; thus, the external treatment and worship of athletes directly created an identity and acknowledged preference for the athletes (Adler & Adler 1989). Hero worship as an external factor was further supported by Watt and Moore as they identified that collegiate athletes are worshipped for the attention and fame they bring to the institution. Hero worship in of itself is preference for athletes and serves as a factor that society imposes into the situation that assists in the continuous movement of the cycle. In fact, the worship of athletes as heroes has become so widely known in sociology that it now has its own term: athlete worship (Ladika 2017). These students are placed on a pedestal and held to different expectations than other students, which often plays in their favor when conflict arises (Martin 2015). Hero worship, and more specifically athlete worship is one of the external factors that shapes preference for athletes in American society.

The other external factors that contributes to this school of external factors that society holds which contribute to the preference and protection of athletes are the economic benefits of collegiate sports, alumni support, and dues universities feel they owe to boosters. Collegiate sports are a business which create mass revenue for universities; thus, universities want to protect their athletes especially those who are top players to keep the money flow. In 2014 alone college football brought in $3.4 billion dollars, and on average each school each year generates around $30 million dollars just from football (Ladika 2017). The economic gains from collegiate sports at institutions of higher education are more times than not seen as more important than the application of Title IX thus creating a preference and protection of the athlete rather than the student. This theory is also supported by Watt & Moore as they identify that the relationship between collegiate athletics and higher education is problematic. They pull into question how collegiate athletics can be a high-grossing business and bed for media attention while still fostering a safe environment for the student athlete to exist as well as other students. This institution identifies the decades long struggle since the NCAA was created by Theodore Roosevelt (Watt & Moore 2001). The emphasis on revenue from sports and the business of it influences the preferential treatment of athletes specifically in cases of Title IX; the priority is to save the moneymaker.

In addition to this, universities feel they owe top performance to alumni and boosters, and aim to please these groups. Martin explains that often universities will turn a blind eye to sexual assault on their campus to ensure the image of the school is up kept, and that alumni and boosters will continue to support and donate to the school. Alumni strongly support collegiate athletics and want to see their team win; thus, the athlete is a priority and not the student (Martin 2015, Watt & Moore 2001). Boosters also have a major influence on athletes, athletic programs, and universities. This leaves the university in debt to external individuals and puts pressure on universities to keep a clean record and a winning team at whatever cost that may be (Martin 2015). In addition to these external factors, society already holds a preference for perpetrators as reported by Martin. This research explains the external societal factors that produce preference for student collegiate athletes. These factors help perpetuate the cycle and assist in the creation of the toxic jock identity along with other components of the cycle.

*Gaps in Title IX & Other Policy*

The third component of this cyclical theory are the gaps and misuse of Title IX policy which propagates the preferential treatment for athletes and overall rates of sexual violence by athletes. The gaps and misuse of policy reveal the systematic issues that perpetuate this cycle and influence other components. The United States Subcommittee on Financial and Contracting Oversight identified major issues they found regarding Title IX policy and its place on campuses. Some of the issues found were a lack of a Title IX coordinator, no place for students to report, no encouragement or support to report, no campus climate surveys, faculty that were unknowledgeable about the scope of the problem, and failure to give training and prevention programs among other issues. Essentially, many colleges and universities are not in compliance with Title IX. The report notes that although sexual violence is prevalent on campuses, 41% of institutions have not conducted an investigation of a reported case in the past five years. This proves that reports are not taken seriously; thus, supporting the perpetrator and creating preference. Another issue is that more than 20% of institutions give their athletic department oversight when an athlete is involved in the case (U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Financial & Contracting Oversight – Majority Staff 2014). This is a large issue as these departments then have control over both the perpetrator and accuser, and thus the whole case in general. In the context of my research, this information describes how misusing this policy perpetuates this cycle and allows for bias to seep into the system.

Although, the government did attempt to address the issues of athletes becoming exceptional cases in the *Dear Colleague Letter*. It states athletes *should* be treated on the same basis as other students (United States Department of Education 2011). But this is essentially the issue and what allows gaps to form—these are just guidelines and suggestions. And in these reports, specifically in *Not Alone*, athletes are not addressed specifically even though they are treated differently amid investigations and are pinpointed as a separate group of students (White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault 2014, 2017). Along with this, since these documents and policies are perceived as mere guidelines every institution has a different and unique grievance process. (Johnson & Taylor 2017). This creates issues as there is no real process and just guidelines as to how cases of sexual violence should be handled such as keeping the accuser safe and performing an investigation. Ambiguity and uncertainty allow for error and therefore more cases go unreported and unpunished which perpetrates the cycle. These documents allow me to exemplify why the systematic guidelines contribute to this cycle. It reveals that Americans may give preferential treatment to collegiate student athletes because the systems do too, and that the system allows for the other components to factor into this cycle.

*Student Collegiate Athletes in Violation of Title IX*

The fourth component of this cyclical theory are student collegiate athletes violating Title IX sexual violence policy. The literature I analyzed assessed schools by the RAT method. This method evaluates cultures, communities and situations for the three components of a rape-prone situation: a motivated offender, available victim, and lack of guardians. Student athletes have been identified as a group of motivated offenders as they tend to hold certain campus fame and have social power. This was found specifically in Division 1 institutions; in fact, the rate of sexual violence on these campuses was the only group found to be statistically significant. Thus, Division 1 institutions have a much higher rate of sexual violence, and that is not due to the number of women (Stotzer & MacCartney 2016). This rape-prone culture creates, perpetuates, and is a result of this cycle of external societal factors, the identity of athletes, and gaps in policy, and it proves to be true. In 1994, a study of ten Division 1 institutions found that while student athletes made up just three percent of the male population they were responsible for 19% of sexual assaults (Benedict 1994). This pattern now continues, and it was found that athletes make up around 1/3 of perpetrators of sexual assault (Siers-Poisson 2014). Thus, athletes are committing these crimes at high rates for the small population they do make up, and these are just the reported cases. Also, as I discussed above, these athletes have a behavioral higher tendency to commit sexual violence and have violent tendencies (Ladika 2017). Even without the statistical evidence, we see these cases on the news and media far too often. Athletes are committing these crimes, and my research connects these components into a cyclical relationship wherein these crimes are committed, there is virtually no punishment, external societal factors keep it that way, and thus a toxic jock is created.

*Moving Forward*

Through the assessment of this literature I have formulated a cyclical relationship regarding student collegiate athletes and Title IX. This cyclical theory aims to explain why Americans give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment when it comes to violations of Title IX. In order for this theory to be entirely accurate, I must then prove that Americans do indeed give preferential treatment to athletes when proposed with a scenario. This will test the basis of my theory because the entire theory aims to explain why athletes are given privileged treatment. Thus, by testing it, it would support the entire theory. Because of my supporting literature and research, I hypothesize that Americans are less likely to support appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete. I intend to test this by utilizing an opinion survey to test whether respondents will give preferential treatment to a student collegiate athlete when presented with a scenario. Within my survey and hypothesis my independent variable is whether the student is an athlete or not, and my dependent variable is whether the response to an alleged violation is appropriate according to Title IX guidelines (see Appendix A for model). In conclusion, I plan to prove that Americans give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment when it comes to violation of Title IX policy and have a large bias towards athletes and their success. By surveying for this I can confirm my idea that athletes are given preferential treatment, and then utilize my research to explain why that is. It is because of the four main components of toxic jock identity, external societal factors, gaps in policy, and eventual violation of Title IX policy and the strong relationship between them, that I hypothesize Americans will favor the athlete and I will test this via a survey.

***Research Design***

By using my research, I aim to answer why Americans give student collegiate athletes preferential treatment regarding violations of Title IX sexual harassment policy. For my cyclical theory to be supported, I aim to test a piece of my research question through the form of a survey whether American citizens, when presented with a situation, will give a student collegiate athlete preferential treatment. Based on my literature, research and creation of the cyclical theory, I hypothesize that Americans are less likely to follow appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete.

*Method*

To test my hypothesis, I will utilize an online survey administered through the online survey platform Qualtrics in which I will evaluate responses to gather my data. I chose a survey because I aim to gather opinion regarding the presented scenario of a large population. The 57 question survey included questions designed to tap into political attitudes and behaviors with each question being provided by a different student in an undergraduate research methods course (Appendix B). The sample was recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk crowdsourcing program. Mechanical Turk, in spite of being a more recent tool for recruiting survey respondents, is inexpensive and documented to produce reliable data (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Mason and Suri 2012; Berinsky, Huber, and Lenz 2010; Levay, Freese, and Druckman 2016). The convenience sample limits the ability to draw conclusions regarding the full American public because the survey respondents had to have access to the internet, be above the age of 18, and had knowledge of the online survey platform through Amazon. Thus, the universe cannot be generalized to the full American population because it is not random or representative. But it does provide sufficient leverage to test my hypothesis.

The survey, available for one week during the fall of 2017, recruited respondents by paying them $0.50 upon completion of the survey. The survey had a total population of 702 respondents. The average time of completion for respondents was 12 minutes and 13 seconds. This translated to an effective average hourly rate of $2.45.

Within the survey, I decided to present a scenario and question that was in the Social Policy section of the survey. It is designed to test if respondents will give preferential treatment to a student collegiate athlete. Below is the presented scenario, question and listed responses:

Please consider this hypothetical scenario. Earlier in the evening, two college students Erika and James meet for the first time at a bar. The next morning, Erika is in the hospital with evident bruises and is being treated for a reported rape.

Erika reports to the investigator that she accepted a drink from James and later felt disoriented before leaving the bar in a taxi with James to go to his apartment. She indicates that he had forceful sex with her after she pushed him away and said no. She identifies that James’ roommate entered the room, witnessed this happen, and told James to stop. Erika tweeted that evening, “someone help me” before a friend assisted her, calling the police, and taking her to the emergency room to be given a rape kit. James, **[who is on a full athletic scholarship to play football for the university and is nationally recognized as one of the nation’s top players,]** denies that he put anything in Erika’s drink. He reports to the investigator that the sex was consensual and that he drove her home later that evening and they left on positive terms.

What should the university do?

1. The university should take immediate action and test the rape kit and James to see if the DNA is a match.
2. The university should postpone the investigation to ensure it is a serious accusation.
3. The university should ensure Erika and James are not in contact in any way for the sake of Erika’s safety.
4. The university should ignore the allegation because the criminal court will take care of it.

I numbered the responses for ease of reference and I placed the information regarding James’ student collegiate athlete status in bolded brackets as it was the information that changed between the split scenarios. I presented a split scenario, this means that in about half of the surveys, respondents received the scenario that included the information that the perpetrator, James, is a collegiate student athlete and in the other half that information is exempt. These are the only details that change between the scenarios. I did this to gather the most accurate responses as to what respondents would choose for the university to do when presented with the same scenario, just different student types. This made my test controlled and implies a causal inference because there is no other variable influencing the respondents’ decision besides the ones I have presented. It predicts that my independent variable will cause my dependent variable response. Also for this reason I do not need control variables as it is already controlled and I am testing this relationship.

To create this scenario and the responses, I chose a case to model and did research as to what appropriate responses to this scenario would be. I modeled my scenario after the Jameis Winston case as I mentioned in the introduction. But I changed his name to James to avoid racial-profiling which would have been an intervening variable. The other details in the scenario are directly from the documentary, *The Hunting Ground* in which Erika, the accuser, shared her story (Ziering & Dick 2015). The responses were created to mirror real life situations that universities have done before. From here I created the responses which served as my dependent variable.

*Variables*

My dependent variable, which is also discrete, is whether the respondents’ answer is an appropriate response to the alleged violation according to Title IX policy or not. I first formed four responses in which two followed Title IX policy and the other two did not. I then operationalized these responses by making them dichotomous and are operationalized as written. These responses I formed were designed to be two that were in line with the Title IX requirements for a grievance process at a university and two that were not. Thus, “The university should take immediate action and test the rape kit and James to see if the DNA is a match” (1) was grouped with the response, “The university should ensure Erika and James are not in contact in any way for the sake of Erika’s safety.” (3) I did this because both responses are appropriate according to Title IX. The other two responses were inappropriate responses for a university and were actions I gathered from the Winston case and other cases on college campuses involving athletes that have occurred before. So, “The university should postpone the investigation to ensure it is a serious accusation” (2) and “The university should ignore the allegation because the criminal court will take care of it” (4) were grouped together. I selected all the responses based on research and actual events. They have indeed occurred; thus, they are not drastically exaggerated to sway a respondent’s answer. By grouping the responses into categories of *appropriate* and *inappropriate* I can then measure whether the respondent has selected the correct action to take after being presented either the athlete or non-athlete scenario. My hypothesis is that when given the scenario naming the student collegiate athlete, respondents are less likely to choose one or three, and more likely to answer two and four since those are the inappropriate responses and would provide preferential treatment.

My independent variable, which is discrete, is whether the student is a collegiate athlete or not. I operationalized this through making the survey split. So, respondents received either the survey with James disclosed as a collegiate student athlete or not which operationalized the independent variable.

I have dichotomous independent and dependent variables, and I aim to test whether there is a difference in means between appropriate responses for non-student collegiate athletes and student collegiate athletes. I chose to use a t-test in order to examine the difference of means. The purpose of this is to test if being presented with the information that the alleged student is an athlete or not varies the respondents’ answer to be appropriate or not. I predicted that the t-test would provide statistically significant evidence that Americans are less likely to follow appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete. By utilizing a survey to test my hypothesis, I hope to provide statistically significant evidence that there is a difference in appropriate versus inappropriate responses when presented with different independent variables. I will use a 95% level of significance. My null hypothesis is that there is not a difference between responses when students are identified as a collegiate athlete versus when they are not. By utilizing the survey, I will evaluate whether respondents will give preferential treatment to collegiate student athletes when presented with different varying independent variables and responses categorized as appropriate versus inappropriate.

***Analysis of Results***

Through this survey, I expected to find that significantly less respondents chose the appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guideline when presented with the scenario that the perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete. When I gathered my responses, I found evidence that begged to differ. My independent variable was successfully randomly assigned which resulted in 341 respondents receiving the scenario with the non-athlete, and 358 received the scenario with the athlete vignette. This totaled to 699 respondents (see Figure 2). The mean for my independent variable was .512 and the standard deviation was .5 which means that both options were essentially equal and dispersed both ways.

When I originally received my results, I was curious to see the general distribution and frequency of my responses (see Figure 3). But to test my hypothesis as I stated in my research design, I combined options two and four to be the category that did not follow Title IX appropriately while options one and three did follow Title IX in an appropriate manner based upon whether the respondent was presented with the scenario with the collegiate student athlete or not (see Figure 4). When I disregarded the independent variable and assed my responses, it became clear that more respondents chose an appropriate response (see Figure 5). 104 of the respondents chose options two or four which was inappropriate, while 595 chose an appropriate option of one or three. The mode was one which meant the most frequent response was “Option 1 & 3.” The range was also one, so the entire range of responses was covered.

Since my variables are already dichotomized, I did not create a new variable. I chose to run a T-Test because I wanted to assess whether there was a difference of means for the responses based upon if they received the scenario with the athlete or not (see Figure 6). For the 341 people who received the question with the non-athlete, the mean was .86 which means that the average response was one. Since choice one are the appropriate responses, 86% of the responses for the non-athlete group were appropriate and followed Title IX guidelines. There were 358 people who received the student athlete question and the mean was .84 which means that the average answer was one. This means that average response was also appropriate and 84% of the answer did follow Title IX guidelines. Thus, those who received the non-athlete question responded 2% more appropriate. To fully test my hypothesis, I then had to assess whether this difference of means was statistically significant. With degrees of freedom of 697, I found whether there was confidence by first finding the difference of the means which was .021 divided by the overall standard error of the differences which was .027. The answer was .79. This means that I cannot reject my null hypothesis because I am only 79% confident and I am using a 95% confidence level.

These results depict that there is no statistically significant evidence that there is a difference between responses based upon whether the student is identified as an athlete or not. Through my data, I could not find a difference in attitudes based upon student type. My hypothesis that Americans would be less likely to follow appropriate Title IX guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete was proven to be false according to this data; my hypothesis is incorrect.

***Conclusion***

Through this paper, I aimed to answer why Americans give preferential treatment to student collegiate athletes when in violation of Title IX sexual harassment policy. I did this by first reviewing previous literature and from that constructing a cyclical theory to explain the infinite cycle of sexual violence and inappropriate responses to violations of Title IX policy when student collegiate athletes are the perpetrators. I then reviewed my hypothesis which was that Americans are less likely to follow appropriate Title IX sexual harassment guidelines if the alleged perpetrator is a collegiate student athlete. After this I designed my research and explained my mechanism and reasoning for my variables. I then analyzed my data and evaluated the results of my t-test to assess whether these is a difference in means of appropriate or inappropriate responses according to Title IX for a scenario involving an athlete or not. At the conclusion of my analysis, I discovered that my hypothesis was incorrect and had no statistical significance.

As I reviewed my research design, survey, and data I realized a few shortcomings and possible explanations for my results. First, I believe there could be a social desirability bias within these responses because it is fairly evident from my scenario, question and listed responses what I am testing. This could influence respondents to answer what they perceive as the correct way which were the appropriate responses. Also, respondents may not want to admit any apprehensions they feel towards cases of sexual harassment and assault for fear of ‘looking bad.’ Secondly, the demographic that took this survey was overall more liberal and educated than the general population thus, they may be more aware and knowledgeable in this area than the average American. This could sway my data significantly. Thirdly, the sample size was fairly limited thus if I were to conduct this research again I would target a larger and more diverse sample with more scenarios. I believe interviewing also might be a better form of measurement although it is time consuming and expensive, I believe the results would alter due to more pressure coming from a person to person interaction rather than answering a survey. I would also propose more questions that are less straight forward in order to gather results and inferences.

I also recognize that by answering a survey question these respondents do not necessarily fit into my cyclical theory. This means that they do not feel all of the societal pressures as I listed in my literature review as a President of a university may feel when discussing situations of Title IX violations. Thus, it is easy to respond appropriately when there are no threatened consequences or anything on the line. Also, although I was researching whether Americans give preferential treatment to collegiate student athletes, at the end of the day the people who make the decisions are not an average American citizen. These people are the NCAA officials, university boards, police officers, and higher up individuals who make the decisions or lack thereof to inappropriately respond to Title IX cases. Thus, since my research showed no evidence that there is preferential treatment for student collegiate athlete perpetrators from Americans and this cyclical theory still circulates, there is another piece to this puzzle that is failing survivors of sexual harassment, assault, and rape. I believe the next step for research would be to either improve this research and survey or analyze the current policy and do ethnographic work to see where the gap is and who is making these decisions. If the American population is not giving collegiate student athletes accused of violations of Title IX preferential treatment, who is and will they be held accountable? There is simply more work to be done.

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Figure 1:

Figure 2:

Figure 3:

Figure 4:

Figure 5:

Figure 6:

Appendix A:



Appendix B:

**DEMOGRAPHIC MODULE (keep module last)**

1. In what year were you born?
   * Drop down menu: 1900-2016
2. What is your gender
   * Male
   * Female
   * Prefer to self-describe: \_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Please specify your race or ethnicity (check all that apply).
   * White
   * Hispanic or Latino
   * Black or African American
   * Asian / Pacific Islander
   * Native American or American Indian
   * Other (Please Specify):
4. Do you consider yourself to be:

* Heterosexual or straight
* Gay
* Lesbian
* Bisexual
* Not listed above (Please Specify):

1. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
   * Less than high school
   * High school degree
   * Some college, no degree
   * Trade or vocational school
   * Associate Degree
   * Bachelor's Degree
   * Graduate Degree
2. What is your religious preference?
   * Protestant
   * Catholic
   * Jewish
   * Muslim
   * Atheist
   * None
   * Other (Please Specify):
3. How much guidance does your religion provide in your day-to-day living?

* No guidance
* Some guidance
* Quite a bit of guidance
* Great deal of guidance

1. In which U.S. state do you currently live? (Drop down menu with all 50 states, D.C., and U.S. territories)
2. Which of the following best describes the place you live?
   * Urban
   * Rural
   * Suburban
3. Information about income is very important to understand how people are doing financially these days. What is your total household income? *Drop down menu: Below options*

* Less than $10,000
* $10,000 to $19,999
* $20,000 to $29,999
* $30,000 to $39,999
* $40,000 to $49,999
* $50,000 to $59,999
* $60,000 to $69,999
* $70,000 to $79,999
* $80,000 to $89,999
* $90,000 to $99,999
* $100,000 or more

1. Which of the following categories best describes the industry you primarily work in (regardless of your actual position)?
   * Retired/ unemployed
   * Agriculture/ Forestry/ Mining
   * Manufacturing
   * Transportation
   * Real Estate
   * Education
   * Health Care
   * Construction
   * Retail
   * Telecommunication
   * Information Systems
   * Finance and Insurance
   * Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
   * Government and Public Administration
   * Scientific or Technical Services
   * Military
   * Other: Please Specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**PARTISANSHIP MODULE (randomize module & question order)**

1. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a/an …?
   * Strong Democrat
   * Not so strong Democrat
   * Independent
   * Not so strong Republican
   * Strong Republican
   * Other: *(Please specify)*
2. We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. Here is a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal to extremely conservative. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Extremely Liberal Extremely Conservative

1. On a scale from one to 1 to 5, how willing are you to discuss a topic with someone with an opposing view.

1 2 3 4 5

Very Unwilling Very Willing

1. On a scale from 1 to 5, after engaging in a conversation with someone who has an opposing view, how likely are you to have a new outlook on the issue?

1 2 3 4 5  
Very Unlikely Very Likely

**ELECTIONS AND REPRESENTATION MODULE (randomize module & question order)**

1. Did you vote in the most recent 2016 General Election?
   * Yes, definitely
   * I do not recall
   * No
2. [If Q16 == 1]: Who did you vote for in the 2016 Presidential Election? (randomize order)
   * Hillary Clinton
   * Gary Johnson
   * Jill Stein
   * Donald Trump
   * Other: (Please specify)
3. Do you more often than not tend to vote for one party exclusively in municipal elections (e.g. mayor, city council, school board, etc.)?
   * Yes
   * No
4. (Split 1/5 Sample): Imagine there is a nonpartisan, judicial election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and John Russell. Michael Dawson is registered Republican. John Russell is a registered Democrat. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

* Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for John Russell
* Much more likely to vote for John Russell

1. (Split 1/5 Sample): Imagine there is a nonpartisan, judicial election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and John Russell. Michael Dawson is conservative. John Russell is liberal. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

* Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for John Russell
* Much more likely to vote for John Russell

1. (Split 1/5 Sample): Imagine there is a nonpartisan, judicial election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and John Russell. Michael Dawson is the incumbent running for reelection. John Russell is running as a challenger for the first time. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

* Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for John Russell
* Much more likely to vote for John Russell

1. (Split 1/5 Sample): Imagine there is a nonpartisan, judicial election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and Jane Russell. Michael Dawson is a 44 year old small business owner who is married with two children. Jane Russell is a 46 year old small business owner who is married with two children. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

* Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Jane Russell
* Much more likely to vote for Jane Russell

1. (Split 1/5 Sample): Imagine there is a nonpartisan, judicial election in your state with two qualified candidates, Michael Dawson and John Russell. Michael Dawson is a Caucasian, 44 year old small business owner who is married with two children. John Russell is an African American, 46 year old small business owner who is married with two children. Who are you more likely to vote for in this election?

* Much more likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for Michael Dawson
* More likely to vote for John Russell
* Much more likely to vote for John Russell

1. How much time do you spend on research on candidates running for local office (e.g. mayor, city council, school board, etc.)?

* 0 hours
* 1-3 hours
* 4-6 hours
* 7-9 hours
* 10+ hours

1. When deciding which candidate to support, what is most important to you in determining your vote?

* The Partisanship of the Candidate
* The Ideology of the Candidate
* The Experience of the Candidate
* The Demographic Characteristics of the Candidate
* A Specific Issue Stance of the Candidate (please specify:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: elected representatives tend to serve the interests of lobbyists more than the average American citizen?

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Neither Agree nor Disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

**ATTENTION CHECK MODULE (randomize module around midpoint)**

1. This question is to determine whether or not you are paying attention to instructions. Please select the number 3 in the box below.

* Drop down menu: 0-5

**SOCIAL POLICY MODULE 1 (randomize module & question order)**

1. Which one of these opinions best agrees with your view regarding abortion?

* By law, abortion should never be permitted.
* The law should permit abortion only in case of rape, incest, or when the woman’s life is in danger.
* The law should permit abortion for reasons other than rape, incest, or danger to the woman’s life, but only after the need for the abortion has been clearly established.
* By law, a woman should always be able to obtain an abortion as a matter of personal choice.

1. What is your main source of information informing your abortion attitudes?

* Religion
* Education
* Physician
* Media
* Other: (Please Specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

1. Americans have differing attitudes toward the death penalty. Those that support it often argue that it is a just punishment for a crime committed and acts as a deterrent against future criminals. Those that oppose the death penalty often argue it is immoral and does not act as a deterrent against future criminals. Which comes closer to your view?

* Strong supporter of the death penalty
* Supporter of the death penalty
* Neither a supporter nor opponent of the death penalty
* Opponent of the death penalty
* Strong opponent of the death penalty

1. (Split ½ Sample): Are you in favor of the legalization of Cannabis?

* Yes
* No
* Yes, but medical use only

1. (Split ½ Sample): Are you in favor of the legalization of Marijuana?

* Yes
* No
* Yes, but medical use only

1. Do you identify as a feminist?

* Yes
* No
* Unsure

1. Do you agree that there are currently political, social, and economic inequalities between the sexes?

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Neither Agree Nor Disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

1. Some people think the government should provide fewer services even in areas such as health and education in order to reduce spending. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Other people feel it is important for the government to provide many more services even if it means an increase in spending. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

* 1-7 Scale with Provide Fewer Services on one end & Provide Many More Service on the other

1. Jon and Phil are equally qualified applicants, who are applying for entrance into a highly competitive university. The university admission board is deciding who should receive admission, for there is only one space left. Based on the university’s past enrollment history, the university seeks to make itself more inclusive. Jon and Phil come from different ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Should these factors be taken into consideration when determining whether or not to admit either applicant?

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

1. Which value is more important for the government when considering to pass legislation?

* Fiscal responsibility
* Social responsibility
* Fiscal and social responsibility are equally important

**MEDIA STUDIES MODULE (randomize module & question order)**

1. What is your level of confidence for identifying fake news?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Confident Somewhat confident Not at all confident

1. What social media do you use? From which one of these social media sites do you get most of your information about politics and current events?

* Twitter
* Facebook
* Instagram
* Reddit
* Other (Please Specify:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)
* None of the above

1. From which one of these national news sources do you get most of your information about politics and current events?

* Broadcast Network News (such as NBC, CBS, or ABC)
* Fox News
* CNN
* MSNBC
* Other (Please Specify)
* None of the above

1. When it comes to local media coverage of the issue of voter fraud during the last election cycle, do you feel that your local media outlets covered voter fraud:

* Far too little
* Too little
* About the right amount
* Too much
* Far too much

1. Which of the following headlines do you believe were fake news stories? *Please check all that apply.*

*\_\_\_\_* “Denzel Washington switches to Trump shocks Hollywood, speaks out against Obama”

\_\_\_\_ “Donald Trump: US Airspace to close 4th of July”

\_\_\_\_ “In vitriolic Senate floor speech, Cruz accuses McConnell of lying”

\_\_\_\_ “Queen Elizabeth said that she would “take America back” if Donald Trump gets elected

\_\_\_\_ “Majority says Russian hacking made no difference in 2016 election”

\_\_\_\_ “Former Trump aide Priebus questioned in Mueller’s Russia Probe

\_\_\_\_ “Trump defense inflammatory comments, asks ‘Who is doing the raping?’”

\_\_\_\_ “Trump’s health deteriorates as white house pressures mount”

\_\_\_\_ “Democrat Hillary Clinton’s behind the scenes tirade after NBC’s Matt Lauer asked Clinton the one question she had not pre-approved: Was her foul-mouth tirade for real?”

\_\_\_\_ “Trump argument bolstered: Hillary Clinton received 800,000 votes from noncitizens”

\_\_\_\_ “How America overlooked the Russia election hack in one crazy day”

\_\_\_\_ “Hacked emails show Clinton campaign communicated with State Dept.”

1. When it comes to local media coverage of the issue of gerrymandering during the last election cycle, do you feel that your local media outlets covered gerrymandering:

* Far too little
* Too little
* About the right amount
* Too much
* Far too much

**GLOBAL & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS MODULE 1 (randomize module & question order)**

1. Do you believe limiting and restricting free trade is disadvantageous to a country's domestic and international economic competitiveness and growth?

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: immigrants make a positive contribution to the overall economy of the United States?

* Strongly Agree
* Agree
* Neither agree nor disagree
* Disagree
* Strongly Disagree

1. When it comes to environmental regulation, which of the following most accurately reflects your viewpoint?

* I fear environmental regulations will cause me to lose my job
* I fear environmental regulations will harm the U.S. economy
* I agree with both statements
* I disagree with both statements

1. On a scale from one to ten, one being strongly oppose and ten being strongly support, do you support giving unauthorized children and young adults who have been brought into the United States by their parents at a young age a two year work permit without giving them legal status?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Strongly Oppose Strongly Support

1. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: The United States should be a member of an international climate change policy that focuses on reducing carbon emissions and lowering the effects of climate change nationally and globally?

* Strongly Disagree
* Disagree
* Agree
* Strongly Agree

1. What percentage of the federal budget do you believe foreign aid takes up?

* Less than 5%
* Between 5% and less than 10%
* Between 10% and less than 15%
* Between 15% and less than 20%
* More than 20%

1. In your opinion, do you believe the United States gives foreign aid to human rights abusing countries?

* Yes
* No

1. On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being very little fear and 10 being a great deal of fear, how would you describe the level of fear you have regarding the threat of terrorism?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10  
Very Little Fear Great Deal of Fear

1. Americans have differing attitudes towards domestic surveillance as some believe it provides safety and security while others believe it violates civil liberties. Which comes closer to your view?

* The government should take all steps necessary to prevent additional acts of terrorism in the U.S. even if it means your basic civil liberties would be violated.
* The government should take steps to prevent additional acts of terrorism but not if those steps would violate your basic civil liberties.

**SOCIAL POLICY MODULE 2 (randomize module & question order)**

1. Now, I’d like to get your feelings toward different groups in society and rate them using something we call a feeling thermometer. Ratings between 50 and 100 degrees mean that you feel favorable and warm toward the group. Ratings between 0 and 50 mean that you don’t feel favorable and don’t care too much for that group. You would rate the group at the 50 degree mark if you don’t feel particular warm or cold toward the group.

* Gay Men 0 50 100 *[respondents will see 0 to 100]*
* Lesbian Women 0 50 100
* Bisexual Men 0 50 100
* Bisexual Women 0 50 100
* Transgender People 0 50 100
* Feminists 0 50 100
* Immigrants 0 50 100
* Racial Minorities 0 50 100
* Evangelical Christians 0 50 100
* Lobbyists 0 50 100

1. Which of the following describes the contact that you have had with transgender people? *(Please check all that apply)*

* No contact
* Acquaintance
* Friendship/relationship
* Close Friendship/relationship
* Member of family

1. The Religious Freedom Restoration Act was implemented by the US Government for the purpose of removing government interference from individual’s behaviors, so long as those behaviors are motivated by religion and are in accordance with the constitution. Some parties argue RFRA is necessary in ensuring the religious freedoms of Americans, while other parties argue it allows for legal discrimination against groups whom the religion does not support. Which argument do you support, and to what degree?

(1-7 Extremely Agree with First Argument, Extremely Agree with Second Argument)

1. When it comes to revitalizing urban areas, some argue that efforts ought to focus on making neighborhoods more attractive for outside businesses and potential homebuyers which opponents believe lead to the displacement of primarily racial minorities that live in urban communities. Others argue that efforts ought to focus on working with businesses and residents currently living in urban communities which opponents believe lack the necessary resources to make neighborhoods more attractive. Which comes closer to your view:

* Efforts ought to focus on making neighborhoods more attractive for outside businesses and potential homebuyers
* Efforts ought to focus on making neighborhoods more attractive for current businesses and residents

1. Americans have differing attitudes toward redistricting reform as some believe it should be addressed by the state legislature while others believe it should be handled by an independent commission. Which comes closer to your view?

* The state legislature
* An independent commission

1. Americans have different attitudes toward voter ID laws. Those in favor of voter ID laws argue they are necessary to keep people who aren’t eligible to vote from voting and prevent people from voting multiple times. Those opposed to voter ID laws argue they are unnecessary because voter fraud is very rare and can prevent people who are eligible from voting. Which comes closer to your view?

* Voter ID laws are necessary
* Voter ID laws are unnecessary

1. How do you define the attack in which a man drove his car into a crowd that occurred during the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August of 2017?

* Vehicular Homicide
* Hate Crime
* Domestic Terrorism
* Other (Please Specify:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

1. (Split ½ Sample): Please consider this hypothetical scenario. Earlier in the evening, two college students Erika and James meet for the first time at a bar. The next morning, Erika is in the hospital with evident bruises and is being treated for a reported rape.

Erika reports to the investigator that she accepted a drink from James and later felt disoriented before leaving the bar in a taxi with James to go to his apartment. She indicates that he had forceful sex with her after she pushed him away and said no. She identifies that James’ roommate entered the room, witnessed this happen, and told James to stop. Erika tweeted that evening, “someone help me” before a friend assisted her, calling the police, and taking her to the emergency room to be given a rape kit. James, who is on a full athletic scholarship to play football for the university and is nationally recognized as one of the nation’s top players, denies that he put anything in Erika’s drink. He reports to the investigator that the sex was consensual and that he drove her home later that evening and they left on positive terms.

What should the university do?

1. The university should take immediate action and test the rape kit and James to see if the DNA is a match.
2. The university should postpone the investigation to ensure it is a serious accusation.
3. The university should ensure Erika and James are not in contact in any way for the sake of Erika’s safety.
4. The university should ignore the allegation because the criminal court will take care of it.
5. (Split ½ Sample): Please consider this hypothetical scenario. Earlier in the evening, two college students Erika and James meet for the first time at a bar. The next morning, Erika is in the hospital with evident bruises and is being treated for a reported rape.

Erika reports to the investigator that she accepted a drink from James and later felt disoriented before leaving the bar in a taxi with James to go to his apartment. She indicates that he had forceful sex with her after she pushed him away and said no. She identifies that James’ roommate entered the room, witnessed this happen, and told James to stop. Erika tweeted that evening, “someone help me” before a friend assisted her, calling the police, and taking her to the emergency room to be given a rape kit. James denies that he put anything in Erika’s drink. He reports to the investigator that the sex was consensual and that he drove her home later that evening and they left on positive terms.

What should the university do?

1. The university should take immediate action and test the rape kit and James to see if the DNA is a match.
2. The university should postpone the investigation to ensure it is a serious accusation.
3. The university should ensure Erika and James are not in contact in any way for the sake of Erika’s safety.
4. The university should ignore the allegation because the criminal court will take care of it.

**FRAMING MODULE (randomize question order, keep next to last before demographic module)**

1. (Split ½ Sample) Please read the following excerpt supporting the death penalty:

Why should that man live for killing your daughter? Why should that woman live for killing your son? How is a murderer’s life worth more than the one lost? The life that was supposed to earn a graduate degree, build a home and family, light the world with such a brilliant mind? A light that had been snuffed out. Killed. Murder — to take the last breath, the last beat of a heart — is the highest crime one can commit and it shall have the highest punishment, the death penalty. Does the United States of America not stand for justice? Do we not call for the gavel of vengeance on those who have taken what was sacred? The balance must be retained, and the heinous act of taking a life must be paid for in full by the one who dared to take it in the first place.

Which comes closer to your view?

* Strong supporter of the death penalty
* Supporter of the death penalty
* Neither a supporter nor opponent of the death penalty
* Opponent of the death penalty
* Strong opponent of the death penalty

1. (Split ½ Sample) Please read the following excerpt opposing the death penalty:

This cruel and unusual punishment — this death penalty — has no place in the United States of America. The death penalty is immoral. It is immoral and detrimental for a society as great as ours to sink to their level, the level of murderers, to call out the blood on their hands while ours hold the syringe. It is immoral to charge them as human beings and then treat them as subhuman, to strip away their humanity, their life. The death penalty is an offense to the inviolability of life, the life that everyone must hold dear and sacred to their beating hearts. And not just the life of one’s own, but the life of a brother, a sister, the life of the inmate in a prison cell because yes, every life has the right to live and nobody — not a judge, not the government — has the right to take life away.

Which comes closer to your view?

* Strong supporter of the death penalty
* Supporter of the death penalty
* Neither a supporter nor opponent of the death penalty
* Opponent of the death penalty
* Strong opponent of the death penalty

1. (Split ½ Sample) Please read the following excerpt opposing the Religious Freedom Restoration Act: The Religious Freedom Restoration Act is a thinly veiled attempt to discriminate against certain groups, specifically members of the LGBTQ community. A group of people who have fought so long to have their rights recognized, rights that were long spelled out in the Fourteenth Amendment but never acknowledged, should not be forced to take a step back. As citizens, as Americans, we have made such progress and proud victories such as legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide. Again, do not force us — the United States of America as a whole, for we progress and we regress as a whole — to take a step back. We shall move forward. We shall move forward with equal rights for all citizens and we will move past any sort of discrimination.

Which comes closer to your view?

* Strong supporter of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Supporter of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Neither a supporter nor opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Strong opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act

1. (Split ½ Sample) Please read the following excerpt supporting the Religious Freedom Restoration Act: The Religious Freedom Restoration Act is just that — an act to restore our right to practice religion as outlined in the First Amendment. We call only for our right to be restored, a right that the Founding Fathers established as fundamental, one to be automatically given to the people by the people. The practice of religion can be a private matter, yes, but what is the use of practice if it cannot be seen by others? Religion may not always be popular, for it often calls one to follow a narrow and difficult path, but those who are dedicated will follow that path toward righteousness. Do not make that path any more difficult by violating our right to religion, a right that we have always found to be the basis of humanity.

Which comes closer to your view?

* Strong supporter of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Supporter of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Neither a supporter nor opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act
* Strong opponent of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act