

Spring 2018

Heroes and Villains: A Cultural Analysis of the 2011 Penn State Football Child Abuse Scandal

Kyle J. Adams

Bucknell University, kja006@bucknell.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.bucknell.edu/honors_theses



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Adams, Kyle J., "Heroes and Villains: A Cultural Analysis of the 2011 Penn State Football Child Abuse Scandal" (2018). *Honors Theses*. 432.

https://digitalcommons.bucknell.edu/honors_theses/432

This Honors Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Theses at Bucknell Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of Bucknell Digital Commons. For more information, please contact dcadmin@bucknell.edu.

Heroes and Villains: A Cultural Analysis of the 2011 Penn State Football Child Abuse Scandal

by

Kyle J. Adams


A Proposal Submitted to the Honors Council For Honors in Comparative Humanities

April 1, 2018

Approved by:



Adviser: John Hunter



Second Reader: Erica Delsandro



Department Director: James Shields

Acknowledgements

This work would not have been possible without the assistance of Erica Delsandro, Ghislaine McDayter, Peg Cronin, Deirdre O'Connor, and Bill Flack. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my family and friends for their unwavering support throughout the research and writing processes. Finally, I would like to express my sincerest thanks to Professor John Hunter for his guidance, insight, and encouragement at all stages of the thesis.

Contents

Chapter	Page
Introduction: Facts and Icons.....	1
Before We Begin.....	1
A Timeline of Events	3
Thesis Goals and Scholarly Context.....	12
Literature Review.....	13
Chapter One: Not-so-Happy Valley	18
Classification of Verbal and Nonverbal Rhetoric	18
Select Insider Perspectives	20
Penn State Student Body and Fan Base	20
Local Retail Business Owners	32
The Paterno Family.....	35
Select Outsider Perspectives	42
Outside Media.....	42
The NCAA and Louis Freeh.....	47
Chapter Two: We Are!.....	52
Penn State Forever.....	52

The Siege Mentality: Who Are the Real Victims?	60
Gender: Associative Emasculation and the “Unspeakable” Offense	69
The Financial Engine	79
Chapter Three: Beyond Beaver Stadium	86
Introduction to Comparative Analysis	86
The University of North Carolina	87
The Scandal in a Nutshell	87
The Influence of Big-Time College Sports.....	89
The Involvement of Legendary Coaches	92
Community Defense	97
Conclusion: College Sports Creating Community.....	101
The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston	103
A Crisis in the Archdiocese	103
Religion and Sport	106
The Culture of Cover-Up.....	109
Masculinity and Power	111
Responses to the Boston Scandal.....	113
Conclusion: What is to be Done?	118
Works Cited	123
Appendices	138
Appendix A: Dramatis Personae	138
Appendix B: Sample Merchandise Sold Following Scandal	140
Appendix C: Sample Editorial Cartoons Published Pertaining to the Scandal	142

Tables

Table	Page
1. Timeline of Significant Events in Sandusky Scandal (Adapted from Louis Freeh's Investigative Report and CNN's Sandusky Scandal "Fast Facts").....	3

Illustrations

Figure	Page
1. Beaver Stadium During a “White Out” Game	1
2. Penn State Students Celebrate After Toppling WJAC News Van.....	18
3. Shop Window in Downtown State College	52
4. University of North Carolina Football Helmet	86
5. T-Shirt likening NCAA to Communist institution.....	140
6. “O’Brien’s Lions” T-Shirt	140
7. T-Shirt depicting Joe Paterno’s feet and the number 409.....	141
8. “We Are More Than Football... We Are Still Proud!” T-Shirt.....	141
9. Untitled Cartoon by Rob Tornoe (2012)	142
10. <i>Pope JoePa</i> by Rob Rogers (November 10, 2011)	142
11. <i>Wait, JoePa Was Fired?</i> by Charley Gifford (November 13, 2011)	143
12. Untitled Cartoon posted on SC6 “Cartoons of the Week” by Mark Reino (July 15, 2012) ..	143
13. <i>Paterno Statue</i> by Rob Rogers (May 12, 2014)	144

14. <i>Paterno fumbles moral obligation</i> by Jeff Darcy (November 12, 2011)	144
15. <i>Jerry Sandusky horsing around</i> by Jeff Darcy (November 18, 2011)	145
16. <i>Penn State penalty severity</i> by Jeff Darcy (July 25, 2012)	145

Abstract

In the wake of the sexual abuse of young boys being revealed to the public in November 2011, the Penn State community was launched into the forefront of public attention. Loyal Penn Staters were obviously shaken by the news, reacting in a manner consistent with trauma or crisis response. Select subgroups of those affiliated with Penn State, including fans, students, the Paterno family, and local retail business owners, employed many defense mechanisms in responding to the scandal. The defense mechanisms employed by Penn Staters included, but were not limited to, simple denial, appeals to the inherent morality of Penn State (and its football program), self-victimization, focus on icons, and the elimination of Sandusky's true victims from public consciousness. Further, hegemonic institutional ideology played a distinct role in conditioning the behavior of these "insider collectives" in the wake of the scandal. The need for the PSU community to protect normalized conceptions of acceptable masculinity in a football setting, as well as the financial well-being of the community (capitalist interests), played a significant role in motivating the inability to acknowledge the true victims of the scandal: the boys. The group dynamics that were clearly at play in Happy Valley involved a subconscious public rejection of the psychological splitting required to authentically and effectively interrogate these group dynamics and their silencing effect. Thus, identification with Penn State University and its football program played an integral role in determining crisis response.

In contrast to these Penn State insider subgroups, outside observers of the scandal reacted much differently to Sandusky's transgressions and the subsequent cover-up by Penn State coaches and administrators. These groups, which include the NCAA, outside journalistic observers (not affiliated with the university), and Louis Freeh (who was commissioned by Penn State to conduct an investigation into the cover-up of Sandusky's assaults), demonstrated a willingness to criticize Penn State fans and students for their responses to the scandal, shed light on the corruption within the Penn State administration (and coaching staff), and acknowledged the victimized boys. These outside observers also interrogated the institutional habits that allowed the long-term enabling of sexual abuse within the Penn State football program.

The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston and the University of North Carolina encountered scandals of their own in the early 2000's and 2010 respectively. The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston had been involved in decades of cover-up regarding clergymen sexually abusing minors. In Chapel Hill, the UNC Athletic Department came under fire for a high number of student athletes (mostly football and men's basketball players) getting involved in fake classes in order to retain their eligibility. While these scandals are unique in many ways, they each possess characteristics that overlap with the situation at Penn State in 2011, as the Archdiocese of Boston's scandal also involved sexual abuse (and notions of "appropriate" sexuality) and the University of North Carolina's saga also dealt with the implication of a major athletic program. By engaging in comparative analysis of these three events, many commonalities can be observed in public response to them, including denial, scapegoating, self-victimization, and silencing of threatening discourse. Those affiliated with the Archdiocese of Boston and the University of North Carolina utilized many of the same defense mechanisms as insider groups at Penn State. Thus, it can be seen that similar group dynamics and identity politics have the ability to

contextually condition individual behavior (insider populations not responding to criminal activity in the same way as they would if an institution they did not identify with were under fire).

This comparative analysis proves that members of institutions, as well as their leaders, will go to great lengths to preserve the reputation of their community when exposed to “crisis” situations. These same actors employ the same rhetorical and psychological defense mechanisms regardless of institutional context. These similarities also prove that the pristine conceptions of masculinity, capitalism, and institutional image are consistently prioritized over the lives and traumas of victims of scandal or institutional betrayal. Thus, the responses to any institutional scandal are predictable, although, at first glance, they may seem unique and “subjective.” This thesis also effectively demonstrates how the behavior of seemingly independent-minded individuals is governed by the dominant ideology of the institutions they identify with.



Fig. 1. Beaver Stadium During a “White Out” Game (Image Courtesy of Sports Illustrated)

INTRODUCTION

FACTS AND ICONS

Before We Begin

On November 5, 2011, Pennsylvania State University and the larger United States community was made aware of a long-term child abuse scandal involving former Nittany Lion assistant football coach, Gerald A. “Jerry” Sandusky.¹ After Sandusky’s arrest that

¹ Sandusky was found guilty on various charges relating to the sexual assault of 10 boys, but several others (no official number) came forward following the publication of two phone numbers for victims to call should they want to report personal accounts of Sandusky’s abuse. The abuse Sandusky was criminally charged for is reported to date back to around 1996 (according to Victim 7). This information comes

day, a firestorm of media coverage, university action, student activism, and outside investigation was unleashed on Happy Valley. In the end, it was not only Sandusky who was punished for his crimes, but also several Penn State administrators and the university's legendary head football coach, Joe Paterno, who faced sanctions and termination. These consequences were due in large part to corruption within the Penn State administration and football program, as senior administrators and coaches took part in an intricate cover-up of Sandusky's crimes for years. In the weeks following Sandusky's arrest, student gatherings were held around campus; Sandusky's organization, The Second Mile, was dissolved; Tim Curley, Gary Schultz, Graham Spanier and Joe Paterno all either stepped down from their roles at the university, were not rehired when their contract expired or were fired; and PSU launched a massive investigation, led by former FBI Director Louis Freeh, into the misconduct of all involved. Prior to any analysis of the Sandusky scandal, it is necessary to present a brief summary of the scandal's constituent events and characters.

courtesy of Tony Manfred's, "The Number of Potential Victims in the Penn State Scandal Has Doubled in the Last 24 Hours."

A Timeline of Events:

Table One. Timeline of Significant Events in Sandusky Scandal (Adapted from Louis Freeh's Investigative Report and CNN's Sandusky Scandal "Fast Facts")

DATE	EVENT
May 3, 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sandusky assaults Victim 6 in showers of Lasch Building
May 4, 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Mother of Victim 6 reports assault and police begin investigation
May 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Schultz opens communication with Spanier and Curley regarding incident (Paterno also conveys nervousness in talks with Curley) · University police decide not to write entry in crime log due to insufficient evidence of crime · Spanier does not notify Board of Trustees about investigation of Sandusky
June 1998	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · District Attorney declines bringing charges against Sandusky · University police meet with Sandusky and determine that nothing criminal took place (Sandusky admits to "hugging" the victim)

August 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sandusky granted emeritus rank at university following retirement (allowed special access to facilities, etc.)
December 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sandusky brings Victim 4 to Alamo Bowl and assaults him at team hotel
November 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Victim 8 assaulted by Sandusky in Lasch building · Assault witnessed by janitor but not reported (janitor feared losing job)
February 9, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sandusky assaults Victim 2 in Lasch Building showers · McQueary witnesses assault
February 10-12, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Feb. 10: McQueary reports incident to Paterno · Feb. 11: Paterno informs Curley and Schultz of report · Feb. 12: Spanier, Schultz, and Curley meet regarding the report, review events of 1998 (including asking University Police Department Chief Harmon if 1998 incident is still on file)
Feb. 25-26, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Spanier, Schultz, and Curley meet to devise action plan (which includes telling Sandusky to avoid bringing children into facilities and filing a report with the Department of Welfare)

Feb. 27-28, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Curley decides matter should be handled internally by speaking with Sandusky and offering professional help (Curley proposes going to officials at the Second Mile charity organization and Department of Welfare only if Sandusky is not cooperative)· Spanier and Schultz agree to the changed plan of action
March 5, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Curley meets with Sandusky to mention that he should no longer bring boys into athletic facilities and that Penn State administration was “uncomfortable” about the incident
March 16-19, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Mar. 16: Spanier does not make mention of incident at Board of Trustees meeting· Mar. 19: Curley meets with executive director of Second Mile and “shared information” regarding the incident, but Second Mile leadership deemed it a “non-incident”
August 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Victim 5 assaulted in Lasch Building shower by Sandusky
September 21, 2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Neither Spanier nor Schultz disclose any information regarding Sandusky at Board of Trustees meeting

January 7, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Subpoenas issued to PSU by Pennsylvania Attorney General for personnel records and correspondences with Sandusky
January 12, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Schultz, Paterno, and Curley testify before the Grand Jury
April 13, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Spanier appears before the Grand Jury· One PSU Trustee continues a correspondence with Spanier requesting that the Board be briefed about the details of the Sandusky investigation
May 12, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Spanier and then-Penn State General Counsel Cynthia Baldwin discuss status of the Sandusky investigation with Board of Trustees at Board meeting (with importance of investigation downplayed)· Spanier and Baldwin do not update the Board on the ongoing Sandusky investigation at the following two Board meetings (the Board no longer asks about the investigation)

**November 4,
2011**

- After being contacted by Wendell Courtney regarding a newspaper story about the Sandusky charges, Schultz mentions that he “was never aware that ‘Penn State police investigated inappropriate touching in a shower’ in 1998”
- Criminal charges filed against Sandusky in Centre County
- Criminal charges filed against Schultz and Curley in Dauphin County

**November 5,
2011**

- Sandusky is arrested
- Grand Jury presentment released mentioning that no attempt was made to protect Victim 2 or any other children from similar conduct of Sandusky’s
- Spanier issues press release expressing “unconditional support” for Schultz and Curley (only mentions child victims by stating that “Protecting children requires the utmost vigilance.”)

**November 6,
2011**

- At Board of Trustees meeting, Curley is placed on administrative leave and Schultz retires (for second time in career)
- Tension arises between Spanier and Board of Trustees as Spanier mentions in press release that Schultz and Curley voluntarily changed their employment status (Trustees upset with tone of press release)

November 7, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Pennsylvania Attorney General and Pennsylvania State Police Commissioner announce charges against Sandusky, Schultz and Curley
November 9, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· After announcing their “outrage” at the “horrifying details” of the Grand Jury presentment, Board of Trustees removes Spanier as President (Rodney Erickson named Interim President) and removes Paterno as Head Football Coach· Paterno notified over the phone of the Board’s decision· Board holds press conference announcing its actions· Penn State students demonstrate in protest on Penn State campus and in downtown State College
November 11, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Mike McQueary placed on administrative leave
November 14, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Sandusky asserts his innocence in a phone interview with Bob Costas claiming that all he did wrong was “showering with those kids”

November 16, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Penn State University and State College Police representatives mention that they have no record of receiving a report from McQueary about his witnessing a rape· New judge assigned to the Sandusky case after it is discovered that Leslie Dutchcot (the judge who freed Sandusky on \$100,000 bail) formerly volunteered for The Second Mile
November 21, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· It is announced that Louis Freeh will head an independent investigation for PSU in regard to the administrative responses to alleged child abuse
December 8, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· After being arrested on additional charges of rape (bringing victim total from eight to ten) one day earlier, Sandusky is released on \$250,000 bail and placed under house arrest
January 22, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Former Penn State head coach, Joe Paterno, dies at 85
June 11, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The trial begins
June 22, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Sandusky is found guilty on 45 counts and has his bail immediately revoked

July 12, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Louis Freeh publishes a report detailing his findings regarding Penn State's actions in response to Sandusky's abuse
July 23, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· The NCAA announces sanctions for Penn State University based on findings of Freeh Report· Sanctions include: \$60 million fine to Penn State, a four-year postseason ban on football, loss of 20 football scholarships per year for four seasons, and the immediate vacating of all Nittany Lion wins in football from 1998 – 2011· Big Ten Conference announces that Penn State's share of bowl revenue for the next four years (roughly \$13 million) will be donated to organizations working to prevent child abuse
October 2, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· McQueary files whistleblower lawsuit against Penn State
November 2012 – July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Spanier, Schultz, and Curley face charges regarding cover-up of Sandusky scandal (for example, endangering the welfare of children) and obstruction of justice
September 8, 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">· NCAA lifts Penn State's postseason ban and scholarship limitations

**January 16,
2015**

· NCAA agrees to restore 111 of Joe Paterno's wins as a Penn State football coach

· Panel of judges reverse charges against Spanier, Curley, and Schultz regarding obstruction of justice and conspiracy

· Same panel reverses perjury charges for Spanier and Curley

**May – July
2016**

· Another alleged victim comes forward with claims of being assaulted by Sandusky in 1971 and subsequently ignored by Coach Paterno because he "had a football season to prepare for"

**March 13,
2017**

· Curley and Schultz plead guilty to misdemeanor charges of endangering child welfare in exchange for other felony charges being dropped

June 2, 2017

· Spanier, Schultz, and Curley all sentenced for failing to report the 2001 allegations of sexual assault to the proper authorities

Thesis Goals and Scholarly Context

Although much has been said in the media and elsewhere about the events of the scandal, there has been little study of the cultural and institutional factors that shaped the cover-up and the PSU community's response to it. This thesis will first analyze the very different responses to the Sandusky scandal inside and outside the PSU community. It will examine the primary documents associated with this response to chart how the PSU football team and the university community positioned themselves as the victims of Sandusky's crimes rather than its enablers. While the sexual abuse itself was universally condemned, this thesis will analyze how the sharply polarized responses to its consequences were shaped by the tribal loyalties, fiscal realities, and gender/sexuality dynamics that underlie American culture and, more specifically, football culture. These forces will all be addressed in the second chapter of the thesis. To contextualize this incident, the third chapter will compare the PSU football scandal to both the Archdiocese of Boston's response to sexual abuse charges against its priests and the academic dishonesty scandal surrounding the University of North Carolina men's basketball team from 2011 to the present. Thus, the thesis will show how the seemingly spontaneous individual responses to the Sandusky scandal were heavily conditioned by political, economic, institutional, and gendered norms that pervade American culture.

Little academic analysis currently exists of the forces that enabled the collective displacement of Sandusky's victims and their replacement by Paterno and the PSU football program as the 'real victims' of the Sandusky affair. Within the State College community, the events have been so repressed that, even now, individuals are unwilling

to see PSU or Paterno as guilty of crimes. By using the tools developed in the academic fields of oral history, economics, psychology, and gender/sexuality studies, this thesis will show how seemingly spontaneous responses to a contingent situation are shaped by powerful cultural forces.

This work leads to several conclusions. By looking at the details of the cover-up specifically, the power of culture and institution in controlling individual behavior will be explored. Individuals at PSU would have behaved very differently had their football program or university not been in danger. This same concept also shows the larger cultural frameworks of Penn State and its football program taking precedence over the lives and trauma of individual victims. Additionally, the thesis will show how institutional allegiances have a role in shaping reactions to transgressions by showing the PSU community reacting to the scandal differently than they would have had it taken place somewhere else. This result is due to the implications of attacks to iconic figures/institutions and the disruptive power of the challenges to heteronormativity. By looking at discrepancies between reactions to the Sandusky scandal and its cover-up inside and outside the Penn State community, I will show just how vulnerable ethical standards are to commercial, community-based, and broader cultural pressures.

Literature Review:

Both the events and aftermath of the Sandusky child abuse scandal have been well documented. Thorough accounts of the scandal and its implications have been published in book (Moushey & Dvorchak 2012) and documentary film (Bar Lev 2014) form. Each

of these texts give their audiences an intimate understanding of the sequence of events that led to Sandusky's abuses and their cover-up by the Penn State administration. In addition, they present the reactions of insider and outsider factions following critical turning points in the saga including, but not limited to, Joe Paterno's dismissal, the publication of the Freeh report, and the announcement of NCAA sanctions against Penn State University. These accounts will be the foundation for all factual observations in this thesis.

Apart from analysis of the psychology of individual actors, group dynamics (including the silencing of non-dominant ideology and opinions) involving leaders, followers, and a specific environment/context all played a key role in allowing for Sandusky's transgressions to go unreported for so long (Thoroughgood & Padilla 2013). Community interaction also played a key role in promoting a culture of victim misidentification (as inappropriate stand-ins for the role of victim that rightfully belonged to the children assaulted by Sandusky were popularized) and criticism of those with negative perceptions of the university and its football program. In past years, groups that have been taken on as analytical subjects pertinent to the scandal itself include children's families and high school coaches, the Penn State football coaching staff, the Penn State senior administration, the Penn State Board of Trustees, the Second Mile charitable organization, the Centre County Pennsylvania criminal justice system, Penn State students, the Big 10 athletic conference, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (Alderfer 2012). Beyond the silencing effect of group dynamics when it came to initial decisions regarding reports of Sandusky's crimes, the flawed attempts at breaking this

silence have also been studied. In particular, euphemistic reporting language of Penn State administrators and coaches (Paterno, McQueary, etc.) has been pinpointed as one of the greatest contributing factors to Sandusky's assaults going unnoticed for over a decade. As reports of Sandusky's sexual assaults were passed up the chain of command, the actual crimes themselves became further shrouded in increasingly vague language, as Penn State officials were not only uncomfortable with the nature of the abuses themselves, but also may have been attempting to protect themselves and their football program (Lucas & Fyke 2013). Manipulative language is not the only factor helping to facilitate the cover-up that has been addressed, as the high status of the scandal's indirect perpetrators, specifically Joe Paterno, may have inadvertently enabled the cover-up of Sandusky's assaults (Wiley & Dahling 2013). By identifying some of the causes of Sandusky's actions being hidden from the public and law enforcement, scholars frequently mention a desire to help prevent similar situations from happening in the future. In fact, ways of adjusting Penn State's culture itself (for example, increased feminist ethic) have also been looked to in scholarly discourse as factors that could have led to the scandal and its cover-up being avoided entirely by the university or at least mitigated instances of institutional betrayal (Dowler, Cuomo, & Laliberte 2014).

Little work has been done on the range of responses to the scandal itself following its emergence into national consciousness. Beyond the mainstream media, the analysis of social media posts made by those who identify as Penn State fans (Brown, Brown, & Billings 2013) as well as individuals who are employed as sports journalists (Sanderson & Hambrick 2012) allows a clearer picture of collective response to the scandal and its

subsequent consequences. These authors' classification of particular psychological tactics and defense mechanisms put into play by fans and members of the sports media has provided a starting point for portions of this thesis. As mentioned above, reactions of the local community have also been recorded in several non-academic publications such as Amir Bar Lev's 2014 documentary, *Happy Valley*. What Bar Lev captures on screen in terms of PSU student and fan reaction has also been investigated, as several scholars have been intrigued by the notion of attachment to Penn State University motivating a particular response to the scandal (Bailey & Ferguson 2013).

This thesis will rely on much of this past work as a springboard for more nuanced understanding of the scandal as it relates to group dynamics and psychology. In doing so, it will move beyond mere descriptions of the scandal itself and reactions to it. Following a classification of distinct responses to news of the scandal by inside and outside factions respectively, I plan to analyze the culturally-constructed psychological forces that clearly played a role in conditioning not only the cover-up itself, but responses to it. While several scholars have described how the importance of Penn State's football program and the reverence for some of its key figures may have done this, my thesis will use economics, siege mentality theory, as well as gender and sexuality theory to rationalize the responses. Gender and sexuality theory will be included for its ability to demonstrate how hegemonic constructions of masculinity in an athletic context led individuals connected to Penn State to ignore the specific details of Sandusky's assaults. One result of this tendency was the elimination of the abused boys from public consciousness. In addition, the comparative nature of my thesis begins in the familiar territory of comparing

undergraduate institutions with prestigious athletic programs (Giroux & Giroux 2012) and begins to link the Penn State scandal with the child abuse scandal which took place in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston. By situating the 2011 Penn State child abuse scandal in a broader conversation of group dynamics, my thesis will help to define the predictability of the behavior of Penn State community members.



Fig. 2. Penn State Students Celebrate After Toppling WJAC News Van (Image Courtesy of Dave Cole)

CHAPTER ONE

NOT-SO-HAPPY VALLEY

Spectacles draw the attention of people. It's like a conjuror's trick. When you create one that is so powerful that it brings everybody out of the woodwork once a week, what happens then is people aren't looking around them. The rest of life is going on and they're not paying attention.

Penn State film professor Matthew Jordan, *Happy Valley*

Classification of Verbal and Nonverbal Rhetoric

The discursive fallout from the Sandusky scandal manifests a significant mismatch in the reactions inside and outside Happy Valley. In this chapter, this

difference will be detailed by looking specifically at the words and actions of individuals who can be positioned as “insiders” and “outsiders” based on their affiliation with Penn State University. Subgroups of the Penn State community, including fans, students, and local retail business owners most often used their voices to speak out against “outsiders” who were critical of Joe Paterno and the Penn State football program in general. These same subgroups could be seen employing several different psychological defense mechanisms in the wake of the scandal (including simple denial, incorporation, reminder, self-victimization, etc.). Subgroups of the larger community having no affiliation to Penn State had remarkably different reactions to the Sandusky scandal. For the purposes of this investigation, the Freeh report, the NCAA, and non-local media will serve as representatives of these “outsider” subgroups. These groups proved through their rhetoric that they were much more willing to criticize Penn State administrators, students, fans, and coaches, as well as investigate the underlying group dynamics that led to the cover-up and “insensitive” reactions of the Penn Staters. While these factions are often understood as more objective observers of the scandal, because they are not identified with the university, they also covered the scandal unevenly (for example, scapegoating incorporated into opinion pieces). In this section, not only words themselves, but also performances and rhetorical strategies employed by insiders and outsiders serve as evidence for the divide in perception of the Sandusky scandal and its cover-up by Penn State leadership. Showing this divide will help to prove that an individual’s affiliation, or lack thereof, with an institution plays an integral role in governing their seemingly independent behavior.

There were no entirely uniform opinions on the events of the scandal in any of the relevant groups, internal or external. Each subgroup analyzed below had its dissenters, or members who presented perspectives antithetical to the dominant collective view. However, there is a strong tendency for such groups to intentionally repress these dissenting opinions and keep them from the spotlight. Often, the better represented members of a subgroup were successful in silencing contrary voices leaving only the hegemonic or governing discourse. Therefore, while it is critical to compare the predominant messages of inside and outside groups following news of Sandusky's transgressions and Penn State being reprimanded, it can be just as important to analyze the conflicts *within* collectives.

Select Insider Perspectives

Penn State Student Body and Fan Base:

By far the most vocal and expressive insider factions during the aftermath of the Penn State child abuse scandal were the Penn State student body and the fan base of the university's football team. Although these two groups do not necessarily overlap perfectly, as not all students are fans of PSU football and not all PSU football fans are students or alumni of PSU, they share sufficient overlap to be handled in tandem. The dominant attitudes displayed by Penn State students and fans alike can be classified into several distinct categories. The most common means of expression for this subsection of Happy Valley's insiders was a passionate idolatry focused on Joe Paterno. These

individuals expressed love and concern for the legendary coach following announcements of the assaults and cover-up in State College.² This near-worship for “JoePa” even generated the common use of denial as a defense mechanism. Apart from this, many others engaged in scapegoating tactics, choosing to direct intense hatred and disappointment at Jerry Sandusky, Penn State administrators (apart from Joe Paterno), and the NCAA (following the sanctions handed down by President Emmert). Others chose to divorce themselves from the scandal even further than this by promoting a more positive perception of Penn State in broader communities.

An understanding of Paterno’s role in the State College and college football community is vital to comprehension of student and fan sentiment. Within Happy Valley, or even Pennsylvania more broadly, Paterno had grown over the years into a highly mythologized individual, iconic for his emphasis on “doing things the right way.” Beyond his staggering accomplishments as a head football coach at Penn State (which include putting Penn State football on the map in terms of big-time college football, 409 total victories at the helm, two national championships, and twenty-four total bowl victories), Paterno was always known for his personal integrity (Bar-Lev 2014). In fact, Paterno’s emphasis on ensuring academic success and character growth for all of his players was well documented during his tenure (Bar-Lev 2014). It is this attitude of Paterno’s that his role was about more than winning games that earned him nicknames like “Saint Joe” and the “Beacon of Integrity.” Paterno was also responsible for donating

² "Penn State Scandal - Live Outside Paterno's Home Rally." *YouTube*, uploaded by Matt Maisel, 15 Nov. 2011

millions of dollars to the university during his lifetime.³ Beyond his role as a coach, mentor, and father figure to his players, Paterno was also revered by Nittany Lion fans for remaining loyal to his university by turning down a lucrative offer to join the coaching staff of the NFL's New England Patriots. According to Jerry Sandusky's own adopted son, Matthew, Paterno (and his father) "could do what they wanted. And they could do no wrong" (Bar-Lev 2014). When one considers the long list of Paterno's achievements, it is easy to understand why fans were upset at his removal. Paterno's role as hero to Penn State University conditioned the discourse of so many to the scandal that broke first with Sandusky's arrest and intensified with the Freeh Report.

In psychological terms, those students and fans frequently engaged in simple denial and incorporation when responding to the Sandusky scandal in the late Fall and Winter of 2011-2012. These defense mechanisms, while powerful, are often employed unconsciously by individuals who experience trauma or perceive themselves to be under attack. Phebe Cramer explains denial as "a mental operation in which attention is withdrawn from external stimuli that, if recognized, would cause psychological pain or upset. The focus here is on a defense mechanism that functions to ward off external reality" (Cramer 37). In the case of Penn State students and fans, comments from within the group exemplify this notion of denial. Most notably, the protest that erupted in the streets of State College following the Board of Trustees' announcement of Paterno's removal was full of remarks manifesting simple denial. One male student made a point to interrupt an ESPN interview with his peer to assert that "There's no crime. We are Penn

³ Jan Murphy, "Joe Paterno: A Life – A Fundraiser Supreme"

State. There's no crime here" (Farrey 2011).⁴ Over time, declarations such as this one became more nuanced, as both the Grand Jury Presentment and Freeh Report showed Paterno's involvement in the cover-up of child abuse within football facilities. Even then, particular Penn State fans and students clung to the idea the Paterno was either uninvolved or minimally involved in the events of the Penn State cover-up. Cramer's comment implies that simple denial of JoePa's enabling behavior was rooted in a notion of psychological defense. Discussion of this manner of defense will be taken up in later sections of this thesis.

Developmental psychology can also help to elucidate Penn State student and fan implementation of incorporation: "With incorporation, the motive is to possess, to have, to become merged with the object. There is little or no distinction between the subject and the object; the boundaries are fluid and ambiguous" (Cramer 86). Students and fans of Penn State football manifested in their vehement and largely combative protection of Joe Paterno that they had incorporated the man into conceptions of their own identity. Even at a candlelight vigil being held for the victims of Sandusky's abuse, Leah Blasko, a Penn State junior at the time, commented, "Having [Paterno] taken away from us made us feel lost. Tonight really gave us a place to put ourselves back together" (CBS 2). Blasko's reflection was obviously shared by many of her peers on campus⁵ and illustrates this particular insider group's incorporation of Joe Paterno as an integral component of

⁴ Nate Schwerber's "Penn State Students Clash With Police in Unrest After Announcement" also contains examples of student denial from this protest.

⁵ Lori Shontz, "A Classroom Discussion on the Week's Events."

their relationship and identification with Penn State University. This incorporation is what motivated so many students to feel personally harmed by administrative action taken against their beloved coach. The most shameful part of the above quotation is that it took place at a vigil being held for victims. Even during an event meant to take the focus away from Paterno, students could not help but express concern for Paterno's well-being prior to acknowledging the young boys who had their lives shattered not only directly by Sandusky but also indirectly by Spanier, Curley, Schultz, and Paterno. The all-pervasive concern for Paterno reflects his incorporation into the personal identities of so many students and fans.

Another rhetorical pattern manifested by Penn State fans and students was a shifting of focus away from matters pertinent to the scandal itself. Many Penn State students and fans tried to reframe public perception of their institution to appear more positive. This reframing of their institution's reputation is based on "[a]n unquestioned belief in the group's inherent morality, inclining the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions" (Janis 174). In the days and weeks following the publication of the Freeh Report and NCAA sanction announcement, many students and fans attending rallies and football games boasted about things like Penn State student-athlete graduation rates (Bar-Lev 2014). This tactic helped to strengthen the bond between students, alumni, and fans of Penn State University and to further vilify outsiders condemning the football program, as they understood the program and university to be undeserving of punishment due to all of the good they had done. In addition, comments such as these served the invaluable role of reframing the broader

conversation surrounding Penn State more favorably. Brown et al describe this strategy using Coomb's notion of "reminding" during crisis communication: "[the reminder] strategy is meant to refocus attention from the scandal and place it on facts that shed Penn State in a more positive light" (Brown et al 302). In their study, which compiled and analyzed tweets from Penn State fans in the aftermath of the scandal, Brown et al came across examples of reminding such as "For your information, #PennState students are the number 1 employed grads in the nation. Fight on State!" (Brown et al 302). Others tweeted that people should not forget about all of Penn State's charitable work at events such as THON. Reminder claims of this nature, while true, clearly have nothing to do with Penn State's culpability for Sandusky's continued abuse, and, therefore, should be left out of a discussion focusing on the scandal and its cover-up. These claims are nothing more than irrelevant comments meant to distract people from the corrupt behavior of Penn State's principal leaders. All in all, students and fans alike chose to remind outsiders of Penn State's most impressive institutional qualities in an attempt to mitigate criticism from both insiders and outsiders.

Brown et al also describe a strategy called ingratiation employed by Penn State students and fans on Twitter that kept attention away from not only Sandusky's victims, but the scandal itself: "Penn state fans also used the ingratiation strategy to garner support from the Penn State fan base. These tweets are meant to celebrate what it means to be a true Penn State fan" (Brown et al 302). Rather than direct public attention to the more damning components of the misconduct at their institution, students and fans using ingratiation wanted to show appreciation for just how special it is to be a Nittany Lion. In

their research, Brown et al came across messages such as, “I will NEVER be ashamed to be a #NittanyLion. WE ARE bigger than the actions of a few. WE ARE the #NittanyNation. WE ARE #PENNSTATE” (Brown et al 299). The rallying cry “WE ARE,” heard at nearly every gathering of Penn Staters (including the riots following Paterno’s dismissal, football games following the scandal, etc.), is the perfect example of what Brown et al and Coombs identify as ingratiation. This unconsciously-used strategy of PSU students and fans differs very little from a notion of “reminding.” In both cases, individuals forced into a defensive position by internal and external scrutiny employ a variety of messages meant to distract from the shameful behavior. In the case of the Sandusky scandal, students and fans presented a united front of reminding and ingratiation to take some of the heat off their university.

Another popular psychological maneuver identified by Brown et al which was certainly present amongst Penn State students and fans during the scandal was scapegoating. In the expansive database of tweets compiled by these researchers, the four most commonly identified parties singled out for blame were, in order, the PSU administration (mentioned in 20.5% of tweets), sports media (mentioned in 8.2% of tweets), Jerry Sandusky (mentioned in 7.1% of tweets), and Mike McQueary (mentioned in 3.3% of tweets). One of the most startling implications of this is that the Penn State fan base was more reluctant to place blame on Jerry Sandusky for the criticisms and sanctions they encountered than their own administration or sports media. Additionally, this data shows Penn State fans readily criticizing the whistleblower who exposed the scandal, McQueary, exemplifying the insider-insider conflict that will be touched upon in

the following chapter. Another example of conflict embedded in this data was a large-scale attack on the outside entity of sports media. Notably, these scapegoating messages, which make up a significant amount of student and fan response to the scandal, make no mention of the involvement of the football program, Paterno, or even football culture.

Returning to Cramer, it can be said that these scapegoating tactics may be the result of attempted psychological projection of anxiety or guilt by students and fans. In her volume on defense mechanisms, while discussing symptoms of projection, she mentions:

Another component of projection may occur in connection with this ominous alteration of reality. As the world becomes more frightening, the individual may attempt to develop an 'explanation' for the disturbing happenings. In some cases, the explanation takes on a logically consistent form, with conclusions following closely from premises. In this case, projection contributes to the formation of a delusion, in which circumstantial reasoning and ideas of reference contribute to the further alteration of reality (Cramer 64).

What students and fans were doing by utilizing a scapegoating strategy was taking all of their responsibility or guilt by association and forcing them into their external surroundings in the form of scapegoats. They needed to develop an explanation for the criticism being brought upon their beloved university. While these explanations may look like delusional and denial-ridden assessments of the situation, it is important to remember that they made emotional sense to the students and fans themselves. As a largely ideologically homogeneous insider faction, students and fans used scapegoating to foster and maintain what Janis calls "[a] shared illusion of unanimity concerning judgments conforming to the majority view" (Janis 175). Therefore, this projected illusion of who was "really" at fault in the Sandusky scandal (the media, the administration, or

McQueary) served to buttress social bonds within the group and to increase the effectiveness of other tactics like ingratiation.

It is also possible to analyze Penn State students and fans being at odds with both insiders and outsiders in the wake of Sandusky's transgressions in conjunction with a description of their discourse. Beginning with insiders, students and fans were not shy about calling out dissenters amongst their peers. Although they were in the minority, there were members of the Penn State community who went on record criticizing Paterno and the university in general for their behavior. In an interview with ESPN during what is referred to as the "Paterno riot," one such student bravely spoke his mind: "The decision tonight, honestly I think it was the right one. JoePa could've done more. It's a terrible situation, but he should've done more. There's a lot more that could've been done... Look at what we're surrounded by, it's disgusting... I'm embarrassed for the university, for Joe Paterno, for everybody. It's a shame" (Farrey 2011). This same individual was interrupted and insulted by his peers in the surrounding area while on camera, and he even mentioned later in the interview that he did not feel safe holding and expressing such an opinion publically at the time of the riot. Another example of insider-insider conflict, when it comes to students and fans, occurred at Coach Paterno's now-removed statue outside of Beaver Stadium following his death. A self-proclaimed proud Penn State fan chose to stand by the statue for a large portion of a day holding a sign calling Joe Paterno an enabler of child molestation. Other Penn State fans who showed up at the statue to take pictures were caught on camera antagonizing and threatening this man, a fellow Penn Stater, for not moving from his position beside the sign (Bar-Lev

2014). Janis would frame these incidents according to groupthink theory as “Direct pressure on any member who expresses strong arguments against any of the group’s stereotypes, illusions, or commitments, making clear that this type of dissent is contrary to what is expected of all loyal members” (Janis 175). By lashing out against and attempting to silence group members with non-normative perspectives, Penn State students and fans showed an unwillingness to allow for diversity of views within their community. Whether this closed mindedness was rooted in anxiety, guilt, or outright fear, the uniformity of discourse it generates is what permits researchers to employ generalizations about the discourse of Penn State students and fans following the scandal (one dominant voice presented by community due to silencing).

Not surprisingly, Penn State students and fans also readily spoke out against outsiders criticizing an institution and athletic program with which they identified. As was mentioned in the discussion of scapegoating, these individuals were outspoken in their critique of the national media. Perhaps the two most illustrative examples of this came during the “Paterno riot.” Once word of Paterno’s dismissal broke, thousands of students took to the streets of downtown State College, causing massive destruction to cars, light posts, and signs. Significantly, these students also took the time to tip over a WTAJ news van parked in the streets as an act of aggression against outsiders framing the scandal in an unacceptable way. Also, that night, students outside Joe Paterno’s household on McKee Street threatened members of the media, uttering rhythmic chants like “Fuck the media!” and “Break the camera!” (Bar-Lev 2014). Local cameraman Pat Little went on record in an interview for the 2014 documentary, *Happy Valley*, saying

that the night of the “Paterno riot” was the first time he had ever felt unsafe in State College (Bar-Lev 2014). Even weeks after the events of that night, Penn State fans acted in a hostile fashion towards outside media outlets like ESPN, mentioning that these people “only show the bad” and that they “were not welcome” and should “take their story elsewhere” (Bar-Lev 2014). These Penn State students and fans were trying to discredit those they believed were looking to harm their institution and, thus, their identity. These comments also show Penn State students and fans planting the seeds for the unifying strategy known as siege mentality. Siege mentality will be covered at a later point in this thesis.

In conclusion, Penn State students and fans of Penn State football, when considered as a single subsection of the enormous PSU community, behaved like a group under attack. Rather than express widespread concern for the victims of Sandusky’s assaults, these individuals allowed their words and actions to be affected by their affiliation with Penn State. Students and fans made attempts to keep the focus on Joe Paterno as a martyr to avoid the issue of abuse and to scapegoat Jerry Sandusky, the PSU administration or the media. These patterns of behavior are primary indicators of the growing divide in perception of the Sandusky scandal between most Penn State students and fans and those outside that community.

Despite this general trend, attention must also be paid to the isolated instances of positive victim identification and empathy. The most obvious example of this was a large gathering held the Friday after Joe Paterno’s firing by the Board of Trustees to express sympathy for Sandusky’s victims. One of the vigil’s attendees bluntly said, “What I really

want to focus on is the victims right now” when being interviewed by CBS (CBS 2). This display of concern for the real victims of the scandal made by the Penn State student body show that generalizations about a population’s speech and behavior can be insightful at some times and harmful at others. At Penn State’s game against Nebraska the Saturday following the Grand Jury Presentment of November 2011, some fans followed up on the aims of the vigil by holding signs that read “For the kids” (but this was partially tarnished by an equal number of “For Joe Pa” signs in the stands). In terms of broader cultural symbols, the victims of Sandusky were also recognized when a lone blue ribbon, signifying victims of child abuse, took the place of Jerry Sandusky on a mural in downtown State College depicting major figures of Penn State University. Unfortunately, gestures such as these were few and far between in State College. Even mentioning concern for the victims became so normalized as to drop out of student comments over time. In *Happy Valley*, a featured student, Tyler Estright (‘13) said, “I hate how every time I have to share my opinion about Penn State football and what happened that I have to say, ‘I feel bad for the victims.’ No shit! That should just be common sense” (Bar-Lev 2014). Not every mention of Penn State requires recognition of Sandusky’s victims. What is shocking and unfortunate, however, is the startling number of individuals inside the Penn State community who failed to mention them at all. While important, these scattered acknowledgements of Sandusky’s victims will not be addressed here, as this thesis aims to analyze the *dominant* responses of members of the Penn State community. The resoundingly dominant response coming out of Happy

Valley at this time was the defensive backlash against criticism of JoePa and the program.

Local Retail Business Owners:

Yet another collection of insiders to the Nittany Lion community choosing to enter into the conversation surrounding Penn State University and its football program consisted of local shop owners, especially business owners responsible for selling merchandise with targeted messages regarding PSU and its enemies printed on it. While the act of selling t-shirts, car magnets, and other memorabilia is much different from the presentation of ideology through overt speech or performance, there can be no doubt that particular products were designed with specific rhetorical goals in mind. On one hand, these merchants were certainly taking advantage of a tumultuous situation and subsequent wave of sentiment regarding the university to increase profits. On the other, sale of products depicting messages like those shown in Appendix B represent a group of PSU insiders looking to take control of local discourse through the circulation of rhetorical iconography. In selling merchandise with such a clear ideological message, local retailers took stances regarding events of the scandal nearly identical to the students and fans they call customers.

Beginning again with Joe Paterno, shelves at stores in State College and surrounding municipalities soon became flooded with items depicting the number 409 (representing Paterno's 409 victories as a head coach). Establishments like the frequently visited Student Book Store in downtown State College made a strong push to sell a host

of other products making reference to the legendary coach. In doing so, retailers within the Penn State community positioned themselves as unwavering supporters of the popular student movements to pay homage to their mistreated coach. One of the most vital functions of merchandise like this was its ability to buttress local ideology and further reify already rigid local perspectives on the scandal. While it had already become not only commonplace but easy for Penn State supporters to express their perspectives on the scandal, these shirts, magnets, and other items now made it so that they could do so without words. For example, 409 shirts could now be worn like a badge of honor amongst Penn Staters or a uniform for those not gifted enough athletically to actually suit up for the Nittany Lions each and every Saturday. Furthermore, by keeping the spotlight on Paterno, retailers effectively cemented his role as a martyr and the scandal's most commonly-cited victim.

Yet another fascinating merchandise campaign came into play once the university announced the hiring of Bill O'Brien to take over as head coach of the Nittany Lion football team in 2012. The hiring of O'Brien, a graduate of Brown University (like Paterno), who had most recently been the offensive coordinator for the New England Patriots (the team Paterno rejected so many years earlier) made a splash in Happy Valley, as few Penn State fans believed any high-profile coaches would be willing to take on the role of Paterno's successor. However, O'Brien handled the opportunity with poise for a pair of seasons before leaving to become the head coach of the NFL's Houston Texans. The excitement in Happy Valley over O'Brien's arrival generated a growing interest in clothing displaying the messages "O'Brien's Lions" and "Billieve." Public interest in

apparel of this nature demonstrated O'Brien becoming a magnet for the love Penn State fans once felt for Paterno as well as loyalty to whoever coaches PSU. Perhaps O'Brien's success leading a Patriots offense that perennially dominated the NFL led many to view him as a savior, capable of ushering in a new era of success for the Blue and White. Thus, "O'Brien's Lions" and "Billieue" merchandise served the ultimate purpose of reestablishing a wounded community's faith in something (and in particular, football). After so much turmoil, Penn Staters had the opportunity to revel in some good news coming out of their beloved football team. Simply put, the Penn State community became desperate looking for a symbol to attach their energy to, and the sale of items referencing the new head coach simplified this process.

Finally, local retailers were also involved in attacks on entities and institutions deemed threatening to the Penn State community. Most notably, following the announcement of the NCAA sanctions levied on the Penn State football program, many fans and students could be seen walking around campus wearing apparel likening the NCAA to Soviet Russia. Gear like this, which replaced the "C" in NCAA with a hammer and sickle, expressed fan and student criticism of outsiders they perceived to be "out to get them." These shirts, which could be seen on many Penn State fans attending football games following the announcement of the sanctions, helped to bring these criticisms into the dominant ideological superstructure of Happy Valley. Interestingly, the message of this shirt positions the NCAA as an "evil" institution that is the natural enemy of American ideals (capitalism, freedom, etc.) that are often not far from the surface of a football context. Thus, to be a supporter of Penn State became, in Happy Valley,

implicitly an act of patriotism. They also expressed the retailers' sense of personal victimization by the NCAA sanctions, as they had the potential to reduce interest in Penn State University and its football program, therefore diminishing their success in the marketplace.

Although looking at retailers in the way outlined above may seem unorthodox, when their products are understood as cultural symbols, they can begin to be analyzed as part of the insider PSU community. Aside from making a profit by selling these products, shop owners in the State College area left their mark on the culture and rhetoric of an entire community. Their products ultimately served the purpose of further strengthening bonds between Penn State supporters through simplified and unspoken messages of solidarity. They also represent yet another group of individuals who, albeit indirectly, aided in hiding Sandusky's true victims from view by intensifying public interest in Paterno, O'Brien, and the NCAA.

The Paterno Family:

A third subsection of Penn State's insider population that grew to become especially vocal following the publication of the Freeh Report was the Paterno family. In particular, JoePa's wife, Sue, and two of his sons, Scott and Jay, spoke to protect Joe's legacy and prevent anyone from besmirching the Paterno name. In a series of public statements⁶ and interviews over the course of several years, the Paterno family made it

⁶ A full collection of Paterno family statements can be found at: <http://www.paterno.com/Family-Statements/Default.aspx>

clear that this was their highest priority. The Paterno family attempted to do this in three primary ways: a) attacking outside entities like Sandusky, PSU's Board of Trustees, the NCAA, and Freeh's investigation, b) attempting to justify Joe's lack of extensive action or follow-up when notified about Sandusky's assault, and c) rallying support for Paterno by positioning him as a morally upstanding victim.

The first of these scapegoats for the Paterno family was Jerry Sandusky. As Joe's son, Jay, mentioned in *Happy Valley*, "The truth is there was no enabling of Jerry Sandusky. The truth is this is not a Penn State issue, this is not a Joe Paterno issue, this is a Jerry Sandusky issue" (Bar-Lev 2014). This comment serves the dual function of first liberating coach Paterno (and Penn State writ large) from all suspected "enabling" of Sandusky and then positioning Sandusky as the scandal's truest monster. Other statements from the Paterno camp, which soon expanded to include a legal counsel led by Wick Sollers, continued to emphasize Sandusky's role as criminal, demonstrated in his careful grooming of victims and acquaintances before and after his assaults. This carefully-constructed, albeit truthful, vilification of Jerry Sandusky on the part of the Paternos was a strategy to sway the public into maximizing Sandusky's role as enemy to a point where there would be no more interest in investigating other potential offenders. Simply put, the family's amplification of Sandusky can be viewed as nothing more than a redistribution of blame away from Paterno, as an indirect actor, to the main culprit.

Beyond Sandusky, the Paterno family also criticized Louis Freeh, the Penn State Board of Trustees, and the NCAA in public statements. Following the publication of the Freeh report, the family famously launched their own investigation, led by Wick Sollers,

into problems with the Freeh report and the NCAA's treatment of Joe Paterno. The main conclusion of the subsequent report from Sollers and his team went far beyond a simple questioning of Freeh: "the observations as to Joe Paterno in the Freeh report are unfounded, and have done a disservice not only to Joe Paterno and to the Penn State University community, but also to the victims of Jerry Sandusky and the critical mission of educating the public on the dangers of child sexual victimization" (Sollers et al 1). The Paterno family, while being indirectly spoken for by Sollers here, clearly wanted to clear Joe Paterno's name by discrediting his main critic. Sollers spent a great deal of his report questioning not only the findings of Freeh's report, but also the manner in which it was conducted. Sollers and the Paterno's were so adamant about their critiques of the Freeh report because it was the most widely known and officially-licensed account of Paterno's culpability. If they were successful in popularizing a conception of Louis Freeh as unprofessional by unraveling his investigation, all voices criticizing Paterno would have to be silenced. In doing so, the Paterno family attempted to transfer understanding of Coach Paterno's role in the Sandusky scandal from the realm of morality and ethics and into the realm of legality (where Paterno had done everything he was obligated to do).

The second portion of Sollers' work against the Freeh report involved moving beyond a simple discrediting of Louis Freeh. In Sollers' report, the author also attempted to shift the label of immoral from JoePa to Freeh himself: "The Freeh report missed a critical opportunity to educate the public on the identification of child sexual victimization, and instead used the platform created by this scandal to sensationalize the blaming of Joe Paterno" (Sollers et al 3). By describing Freeh as a sensationalist, Sollers

not only reiterates his depiction of Freeh as a disreputable investigator, but also implies that he was not acting ethically in his publication of his report. Here, Sollers looked to promote a claim about Freeh that many had been making about Paterno in the months following the scandal: that he was actually hurting Sandusky's victims through his investigation. In this way, Sollers and the Paternos effectively transplanted Freeh into a preexisting conversation regarding indirect harming of the boys involved in the scandal. This was nothing more than another scapegoating tactic employed in order to defend Paterno from scrutiny.

Following from this, the Paterno family also repeatedly mentioned their disappointment in the NCAA for relying on the Freeh report while generating their sanctions to hand down to Penn State. In one such instance, the family issued a statement saying,

The release of the Freeh report has triggered an avalanche of vitriol, condemnation and posthumous punishment on Joe Paterno. The NCAA has now become the latest party to accept the report as the final word on the Sandusky scandal. The sanctions announced by the NCAA today defame the legacy and contributions of a great coach and educator without any input from our family or those who knew him best (Paterno Family 1).

While the family made similar comments pertaining to several decisions made on the part of the Penn State Board of Trustees (including the decision to remove Joe's statue outside Beaver Stadium), this written attack on the NCAA is the most telling. Like many others made by the Paterno family and their legal counsel, this statement positions Joe Paterno as the victim while adding the NCAA to the ever-lengthening list of Sandusky scandal scapegoats. Much like they did with Freeh, the Paternos used comments like this to

discredit Joe's critics. The Paternos also claim that acceptance of the Freeh report as the standard assessment of the events of the scandal by the NCAA, the media, and Penn State University actually harmed the victims by burying the truth about what actually happened to them. In this way, the Paternos justified their investigation as being in the service of the victims themselves: "We believe the only way to help the victims is to uncover the full truth. The Freeh report, though it has been accepted by the media as the definitive conclusion on the Sandusky scandal, is the equivalent of an indictment - a charging document written by a prosecutor - and an incomplete and unofficial one at that" (Paterno Family 1). Again, criticism of Freeh is present, but, in this case, it does not take center stage. This statement rallies support for the family's actions as a service to the victims. Invoking the victims in such a way, rather than expressing actual sympathy, exemplifies the Paterno family looking to reverse polarized perception of the scandal by labelling themselves, the insiders, as the heroes, and institutions like the NCAA as evil.

Aside from scapegoating, the Paterno family also sought to justify Joe's lack of follow-up with Sandusky in the wake of allegations that were brought to his attention. In conjunction with Sollers' investigation, the family also promoted testimony and analysis from a former FBI investigator and profiler, Jim Clemente:

Paterno, like everyone else who knew Sandusky, simply fell victim to effective 'grooming.' [Grooming is a dynamic process of seemingly innocent, positive public behaviors by the offender, aimed at gaining the trust of the targeted child, parents and the community.] As an expert behavioral analyst and based on my review of the evidence, Paterno did not believe that the information he received from McQueary amounted to Sandusky being a predatory child sex offender (Sollers et al 4).

Here, Sollers and his team appeal to their own FBI source to absolve Joe entirely of all blame. They essentially reported that Paterno did as anyone else would have in the same position. In this way, Sollers and the Paternos defended the coach's morality by moving beyond a discussion of legal obligation. Sue Paterno also corroborated this perspective in a 2013 interview with Katie Couric. In answering Couric's question regarding why her husband did not follow up more aggressively on McQueary's statements or confront Sandusky directly, she mentioned, "To us, that was Jerry being Jerry. Being with young children. We didn't have that mindset that he was doing anything more than teaching them, working out with them, and getting a shower... The people who saw Jerry every day had no clue. But Joe wouldn't confront him, he didn't work for Joe anymore" (Couric 2013). Again, a member of the Paterno family here promotes the idea that Joe could not have had any idea how serious Sandusky's behavior actually was. The Paterno family may have hoped that by framing Sandusky as masterfully manipulative they could impact outsider perception of JoePa for their benefit. Stances like these, backed by sources like Clemente, were rooted in the desire to give the legendary coach the "benefit of the doubt" by rationalizing his behavior.

A final pattern found in the rhetoric of the Paterno family appeals to his "strong character." In a message to all PSU Lettermen written in 2015, Sue Paterno did exactly this:

His legacy is his family and you his players. How you live your life speaks louder than any report. The great fathers, husbands and citizens you have become fulfill the dreams Joe had. All that we want - and what I believe we owe the victims, Joe Paterno and everyone who cares about Penn State - is the full record of what happened. On this point, I know the advice Joe would give. Don't

give up. Don't be afraid. Do the right thing. And make sure your actions serve the greater good (Paterno 1).

This statement of Sue's, which covertly takes a shot at Freeh's account of the scandal, makes JoePa sound nothing if not deserving of his distinction as "Saint Joe." It can be seen here that the Paterno family's stated goal to help the victims gets overshadowed by praise of JoePa's unmatched sense of ethics and leadership (in addition to scapegoating and justifying PSU's inaction).

The discourse of the Paterno family, much like all other groups dissected in this chapter, was obviously more complicated than these three tactics. Justice would not be done to the Paterno family if no mention was made about their statements which showed sincere sympathy for the victims. Sadly, statements like this were frequently dwarfed by comments and actions demonstrative of the aforementioned three tactics being employed in the same breath. One of the few examples of the Paterno family expressing sympathy for Sandusky's victims independent of other rhetoric came when Scott Paterno addressed the media outside his parents' home following Joe's dismissal. Scott mentioned, before making any other comments, that, as a father, he was devastated for the victims and their families. He went on to mention that primary focus and concern should be granted to them (Bar-Lev 2014). Apart from this, the Paterno family also issued a statement following the Board of Trustees' decision to fire Joe that assured everyone they had no intention of "condoning" or "minimizing" the plight of Sandusky's victims. Much like the fans and students of Penn State University, gestures such as these only existed as isolated incidents for the Paterno family. Their lack of frequency does nothing if not

identify the rhetorical priorities of the family. It is hard not to define the main goal of the Paternos as clearing the name of the former Nittany Lion head coach.

Select Outsider Perspectives

Outside Media:

The most prominent group of individuals not affiliated with Penn State University who choose to speak out regarding the Sandusky scandal, its cover-up, and reactions to both of these events has been the media. For the most part, media outlets independent from Penn State University were highly critical of Sandusky, the Penn State administration, Joe Paterno, and PSU fans/students in their presentation of new developments. However, just as it was key to acknowledge ideological dissonance within sub-groups connected to the university, it should be noted that external journalistic voices could be just as discordant. A dominant perspective on the events of the scandal and its motivating factors did eventually emerge from the broader media cohort and the minority voices were forced to occupy a liminal discursive space; in some cases, they were eliminated altogether in the outside media's process of presenting sobering and critical accounts of the scandal.

The most frequently employed rhetorical strategy of outside media sources in covering the happenings of the scandal was to be highly critical of seemingly all actors connected to the university. This was done in a number of ways from a number of different outlets, as individuals used social media posts, visuals (comics), and pointed

opinion pieces to achieve this goal.⁷ These three avenues likely became so heavily utilized because they involve more relaxed standards in terms of professional objectivity. Each of these rhetorical modes is highly subjective and therefore allows journalists and artists the opportunity to be more expressive of their opinion on a given event. In the case of the Sandusky scandal, these opinions were largely negative. Thus, national publications (social media posts, cartoons, and opinion pieces) frequently served as direct counters to Penn State insider sentiment.

Sanderson and Hambrick compiled a corpus constructed of Twitter posts from sports journalists related to the scandal at Penn State. One major conclusion of the textual analysis that they conducted was that sports journalists presented information in a much different way than they otherwise would when composing a more traditional journalistic piece: “Twitter also seems to elevate sports journalists’ willingness to step outside professional spheres. Many of the journalists uttered commentary that would be unlikely to appear in more traditional platforms...” (Sanderson & Hambrick 397). For example, sports journalists took advantage of the immediacy and informality of Twitter to offer candid critiques of some of the scandal’s actors like, ““Gee, poor Joe all upset he was red via a phone call. Had he made a phone call to police to prevent rapes he wouldn’t be in this spot’ (Jay Glazer- 730)” (Sanderson & Hambrick 391). Comments of this nature, which would be out of place in a more “traditional” method of publication for someone like Jay Glazer, were matched in the realm of cartoons surrounding the scandal. In

⁷ While select social media posts and opinion pieces will be highlighted in this chapter, sample editorial cartoons can be found in Appendix C.

Appendix C, sample cartoons demonstrate a general trend amongst graphic artists covering the scandal to visually represent some of the most scathing criticisms of those not affiliated with Penn State. Just as social media posts took advantage of conventions which permit presentation of discourse that is far from neutral, so too did cartoons representing particular facets of the saga.

Aside from these non-traditional forms of publication, many journalists from a variety of outlets (sports, national news, etc.) chose to write searing critiques of Penn State and its football culture in the form of sports commentary and opinion articles following news breaking of Sandusky's transgressions.⁸ In works such as these, reporters did not pull any punches, and almost universally condemned essentially all Penn Staters for their shameful behavior. Unlike insider populations, writers of these opinion pieces were also upfront about the emotion and personal conviction that they would allow to govern their ultimate message.

In Sanderson and Hambrick's terms, social media posts, cartoons, and opinion pieces relied on a "framing" strategy. The authors define framing as, "...a) strategically emphasizing certain aspects of a story to promote particular definitions, interpretations, evaluations, or recommendations; and b) invoking socially shared meanings that are

⁸ Mike Wise, "Penn State doesn't get to decide JoePa's legacy: I know."

Skip Bayless and Rob Parker, *ESPN First Take*. *YouTube*, uploaded by ESPN Player, 10 Nov. 2011

Bill Plaschke, "This should be the end of Paterno State."

Steve Rosenbloom, "Pedophilia State University idiots just don't get it."

Jennifer Rubin, "Joe Paterno doesn't get it, is fired."

consistent over time that symbolically structure and organize the social world” (Sanderson & Hambrick 387). If we accept that critiques of Penn State administration, coaches, fans, and students often relied on this strategy of framing, then it is clear that these journalists and artists presented just as slanted a perspective as insider populations. For this reason, observers of the scandal and its consequences wishing to remain as objective as possible should not solely gravitate towards this impassioned rhetoric (just as they would not think to only listen to Penn State fans and students). However, simply by being classified as independent social media posts or editorial in nature, these publications were more upfront about their inherent biases than the conversation coming out of Happy Valley.

Aside from these passionate, albeit biased, social media posts, cartoons, and opinion pieces, news outlets also printed more outwardly objective presentations of events as the Penn State saga unfolded. However, these sobering retellings of events transpiring in Happy Valley diverged from insider discourse as much as the aforementioned opinionated publications did, just in a different way. Many of these articles and interviews, in either title or in content (or both), served a function that was

largely absent in the discourse of insider populations.^{9 10} These articles and their titles, unlike the dialogue of Penn State insider populations, showed a willingness to present actual facts (rather than deny them), acknowledge the true victims of the scandal (rather than hide them from view), and interrogate the institutional mechanisms that not only enabled Sandusky's crimes but also kept them hidden for so long (rather than focus on redeeming institutional qualities).¹¹ In these more journalistic articles and interviews, Bob Costas, Katie Couric, and others were willing to factually dissect the scandal and reactions to it while avoiding the pitfalls of insider populations (for example, Bob Costas using careful and direct language in his interview with Jerry Sandusky). Therefore, just as social media posts, editorial cartoons, and opinion pieces prioritized different information and presented divergent messages from those provided by insider populations, so too did traditional journalistic pieces expose the duplicity of the insider discourse. Before any theoretical analysis of the scandal and the reactions to it, this divide in and of itself serves

⁹ Jerry Sandusky and Bob Costas, "Sandusky Speaks" Rock Center with Brian Williams November 14 2011

Sue Paterno and Katie Couric, "Exclusive: Was Joe Paterno Involved in a Cover-Up at Penn State?"

Mark Viera, "Former Coach at Penn State Is Charged With Abuse."

Associated Press and CBS, "Paterno fired over Penn St. child abuse scandal."

¹⁰ Even *BBC News* ran a short story regarding student response to Paterno's firing. The article was simply titled "Penn State students riot after coach Joe Paterno is sacked." Interestingly, this news outlet, which was clearly far removed from the situation in State College, found the word "riot" suitable in their title (as opposed to "gathering" or "protest").

¹¹ One interesting example of this came in 2011 when ESPN's David Lloyd shared his opinion on one Penn State student interviewed following Paterno's firing: "He was smart enough to allude to the victims first, because they do come first."

as proof of the pervasiveness of institutional allegiance and defense mechanisms that members of any community use when they feel their group is under attack.

The NCAA and Louis Freeh

The two other major outside parties involved in the “Sandusky conversation” were Louis Freeh and NCAA President, Mark Emmert. Both of these men were involved in some way with punitive measures being handed down to Penn State. Freeh’s investigation served as the basis for the NCAA’s decision to punish Penn State and its football program and, in the wake of the sanctions being decided upon, Emmert announced and defended the decision of the Executive Committee of the NCAA (Emmert was careful to mention that he did not have the authority to punish Penn State himself). The public involvement of Freeh and Emmert led to them being made into scapegoats by the Penn State community. Even years after the Freeh report was published and NCAA sanctions were announced, these two were almost universally vilified in the State College community for their involvement in supposedly tarnishing the once pristine reputation of Penn State football. Thus, following their initial condemnations of Penn State’s football culture, Freeh and Emmert spent most of their time reiterating their positions and defending themselves when confronted with criticism. They were unwavering in their opposition to the narratives coming out of the Penn State community.

The first category of comments made by Freeh and Emmert that differs from those of Penn State community members concerns the initial acknowledgement of the crimes that took place. These two, as outside observers of the scandal and its aftermath,

did not engage in any sort of denial or minimization of what happened at PSU and condemned not only those directly involved in the scandal, but also the indirect influence of State College's football culture in their comments. Freeh spelled out exactly what had happened within the Penn State administration: "I stand by our conclusion that four of the most powerful people at Penn State failed to protect against a child sexual predator harming children for over a decade. These men exhibited a striking lack of empathy for Sandusky's victims by failing to inquire as to their safety and well-being" (Freeh 1). Unlike virtually all Penn Staters, Freeh was never reluctant to implicate Joe Paterno for his involvement in the cover-up of Sandusky's assaults. Additionally, no amount of outside criticism could shake Freeh from his belief that these administrators had engaged in criminal behavior for which they deserved to be punished. When excerpts from Emmert's announcements of NCAA sanctions against Penn State are added to Freeh's statements, a broader picture of the problem in State College comes into focus: "Our goal is not to be just punitive but to make sure the university establishes an athletic culture and daily mindset in which football will never again be placed ahead of educating, nurturing, and protecting young people" (Emmert 2012). When the judgements of these two men are put into conversation with one another, it becomes obvious that not only the four men mentioned by Freeh, but also hundreds of thousands of fans, students, and alumni helped to make such a scandal possible. Together, their criticisms serve the important role of not only placing blame on the criminals involved, but also fans who helped to reinforce their prioritization of football.

Freeh and Emmert both frequently found themselves being discredited and criticized in statements made by Penn State insiders. Louis Freeh even faced a counter investigation launched by the Paterno family in an attempt to invalidate his initial report (which was both commissioned and agreed upon by Penn State University). Although Freeh's official response will be looked at in the second chapter of this thesis, the former FBI Director participated in several interviews where he mentioned that he and his team had done all they needed to, "Could we have done another six months of work? Yes. But we felt we had all the necessary facts that the board needed to make their decision" (Thompson 1). This particular comment of Freeh's not only shows confidence in his investigation, but also a certain humility that was largely absent in the discourse emanating from Happy Valley at the time. This humility and calm discourse so often manifested by Freeh is even more impressive when it is understood that he, just like Penn Staters, had a reputation at stake. However, Freeh's comments exemplify a level of professionalism and willingness to participate in two-sided conversations regarding the Penn State scandal that was generally absent in the discourse of Penn State insiders.

Emmert was also outspoken in his defense of the decision agreed upon by the NCAA Executive Committee. In a 2014 interview for *The Seth Davis Show*, Emmert commented: "What the executive committee was worried about was that the behavior around all of this as outlined in that report, and agreed to by the university, was clearly so orthogonal to, antagonistic to all of the values of intercollegiate athletics and the values that are codified in the NCAA's Constitution that they couldn't stand back and not act" (Emmert 2014). In the same interview, he continues, "Ask yourself, what would have

been the outcome if the NCAA would have said ‘Well we don’t care about this. This is irrelevant to us’? What would that have done to people’s faith in intercollegiate athletics? What would that have done to people’s belief that the NCAA has high values that they expect people to live by?” (Emmert 2014). Much like Freeh, Emmert was also able to embrace criticism regarding the decision of his organization and accept the fact that the somewhat unprecedented sanctions would undoubtedly shock many people. Rather than become frustrated or act outwardly defensive (as the NCAA also had a reputation at stake), Emmert consistently pointed to the potential results of inaction on the part of the NCAA as solid justification for the sanctions.

There are two general themes in Louis Freeh and Mark Emmert’s discourse. First of all, the two men, like other outsider subgroups, were outspoken in their critiques of Penn State’s administration, Joe Paterno, and the university’s football culture. In addition, Freeh and Emmert were also steadfast in their defenses of their comments, actions, and reputations. What separated their defenses from those affiliated with Penn State was an unmistakable amount of maturity and professionalism. While Penn State fans and students often had their responses to the scandal, Freeh report, and NCAA sanctions governed by anger and a feeling of being personally victimized, Freeh and Emmert remained calm and objective. This may initially be seen as obvious, as Freeh and Emmert have no direct ties to PSU, but it is impressive when one equates the feelings of the students to the scapegoating of Freeh and Emmert (as well as the whole NCAA). Internalizing critiques of an institution led many students to feel they were being personally and wrongfully attacked by outside factions (as their identity was wrapped up

in Penn State). However, this “normal” feeling (from a psychological standpoint) is no different from the personal attacks endured by Freeh and Emmert. The only difference was in the response to it.



Fig. 3. Shop Window in Downtown State College (Image Courtesy of CNN)

CHAPTER TWO

WE ARE!

We are Penn State! We're always gonna be Penn State, regardless of what happens to certain people.

Former Penn State Head Football Coach Joe Paterno addressing students outside McKee St. home

Penn State Forever

We can now interrogate exactly why this reactionary divide emerged between the Penn State community and those outside it. Of course, not all members of the State College community reacted in a way that could be deemed “immoral” or “wrong” from an outsider’s perspective. It is worth remembering that particular PSU students were responsible for sparking more widespread support for the victims of Sandusky’s abuse, while others spoke out against legendary figures like Joe Paterno who were implicated in

the cover-up. Even at riots and rallies following the announcement of Joe Paterno's firing, students willing to buck the ideological status quo could be found. Sadly, instances such as this were few and far between in Penn State circles, as a significant majority of Penn State supporters followed the trends discussed in the first chapter. This behavior showed numerous members of the PSU community falling in line with the normative discourse surrounding the Sandusky scandal. Penn State fans and students promoting and buying into such a narrative was due in large part to the significant portion of their identity defined by the institution itself. The psychological splitting required to separate oneself from the components of their identity rooted in Penn State culture (and not associate external condemnations of the university with personal attacks) is a technique that can only rarely be put into practice. Thus, large swaths of individuals affiliated with Penn State in various ways, regardless of race, gender identification, social class, education level, and sexual orientation, did the psychologically "natural" thing, and began to employ defense mechanisms.

The goal of this thesis is to interrogate the community level forces that condition such behavior in all group settings. The unconscious forces at work in Happy Valley would have been almost the same in many other contexts.¹² In fact, further explanation of

¹² While the two tragedies are in no way similar in magnitude or nature of crimes committed, the Holocaust and Penn State scandal converge at this notion of objectively immoral behavior and sentiment of insiders not seeming that way to them. Scholars like Dominick LaCapra have worked to understand the role of Nazi culture in developing contextual morality during the Holocaust (for example, how good German husbands and fathers could be the same people slaughtering countless innocent human beings). While doing just that, LaCapra praises the work of Daniel Goldhagen because it "provides documentation for an involvement in outlandish transgression...that doesn't seem to be intelligible from any 'rational' point of view. One has to try to approximate an understanding of why this was happening, because I don't think this was unique to the Germans but was something that had happened elsewhere" (LaCapra 168).

why Penn State members should not be criticized on the grounds of “ethics” will be fleshed out in the third chapter of this thesis, when the Roman Catholic Church’s child abuse scandal and the University of North Carolina’s history of academic fraud take center stage. Denial and other defense mechanisms to be analyzed later in the chapter are accepted by professional psychologists to be unconscious and therefore uncontrollable ones. For this reason, Penn State fans who associated themselves with the dominant discourse coming out of Happy Valley at the time should not be perceived as monsters seeking only to protect themselves by intentionally shifting public attention.

This introductory section will consider how the breaking of such news was a highly traumatic experience for this entire community. By classifying the scandal in such a way, one can begin to understand why so many Penn State supporters acted so inappropriately. Individuals who identified with Penn State felt that they were betrayed by their football program (Sandusky) and outside media/relationships (for example, the media blamed Paterno for enabling child abuse). There is an extensive body of research on responses to trauma and betrayal at both the individual and community levels, especially about the concept of “betrayal blindness”:

Although the betrayal blindness of bystanders is terrible in its way, it is also understandable. Just as victims may have a need not to see the betrayal they experience, so, too, may bystanders have such a need...Both fairness and caring can be violated by others, and when that happens, it can create a sense of betrayal not only in the victim but also in the minds of bystanders, who experience a betrayal of justice, of *what is right*. Yet we may remain blind to this betrayal for all of the reasons we have already discussed -- to see the betrayal might risk too much (Freyd & Birrell 46).

In the case of the Penn State community, what Freyd and Birrell call betrayal blindness, or “the unawareness of information that is present but is somehow ‘whooshed’ away” (Freyd & Birrell 9), was necessary for the preservation of the sanctity of an institution they held dear. In addition, the betrayal blindness exhibited by “bystanders” to the Sandusky scandal was maintained both unconsciously on an individual level, and socially by the existence of a largely ideologically homogeneous community (individuals were unlikely to encounter people taking opposing stances). The latter of these forces has been discussed in myriad contexts following the exposure of immoral acts.¹³

In Freyd and Birrell’s volume on betrayal blindness, they even go into specific detail regarding the Penn State scandal,

Even after Paterno’s death and the conviction of Sandusky, there are those who support Paterno... Paterno, by his blind eye, had created the context for Sandusky to repeat his acts of abuse on child after child. The initial cover-up of the abuse and the later protests from some people are examples of institutional and societal betrayal blindness (Freyd & Birrell 39).

According to comments such as this, betrayal blindness exhibited by the Nittany Lion supporters was used as a defense mechanism (unconscious denial) for trauma they felt. Judith Herman’s *Trauma and Recovery* corroborates this assessment in its discussion of collective trauma. Initially, Herman lines her theory up with Freyd and Birrell when discussing defense mechanisms that seem

¹³ Jourdin Hermann, "No One Cried For Help: The Integration of Groupthink into Modern Rape Culture."

Elizabeth Wolfe Morrison and Frances J. Milliken, "Speaking Up, Remaining Silent: The Dynamics of Voice and Silence in Organizations."

to differ from betrayal blindness only in name: “The knowledge of horrible events periodically intrudes into public awareness but is rarely retained for long. Denial, repression, and dissociation operate on a social as well as an individual level” (Herman 2). Long before Freyd, Birrell, and Herman, Anna Freud’s *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence* asserted that: “...the ego is victorious when its defensive measures effect their purpose, i.e., when they enable it to restrict the development of anxiety and unpleasure...” (Freud 176). The assertions of Freyd, Birrell, Herman, and Freud all fit the responses of the Penn State community, which led to the perfectly “natural” reactions generalized in the preceding chapter.

Herman’s work goes on to identify particular remedies to feelings of trauma sought by those exposed to distressing realizations like the ones in Happy Valley in 2011: “The emotional support that traumatized people seek from family, lovers, and close friends takes many forms, and it changes during the course of resolution of the trauma... The survivor who is often in terror of being left alone craves the simple presence of a sympathetic person” (Herman 61). Along with a sense of community, Herman also cites a desire for control as a symptom of psychological stress. Each of these solutions has a role in shaping the response of the Penn State community. The reliance upon these two widespread desires in Happy Valley was a primary cause for the discursive dissonance between the rhetoric and responses within and outside State College.

Beginning with a sense of community, Penn State supporters involved themselves in many acts of social unification. A network recognized for the

rallying cry “WE ARE!” reacted to psychological dissonance by coming together both literally (for example, riots) and in terms of discourse. However, this reification of community is something that can become problematic, and has been considered in the realm of groupthink. Irving Janis, a pioneer in the world of group psychology, defines it in the following way: “Groupthink refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures” (Janis 9). For Janis, such behavior is negative, as it has the potential to cripple individual judgement in contexts similar to the Sandusky scandal. He goes on to claim, “Over and beyond all the familiar sources of human error is a powerful source of defective judgment that arises in cohesive groups -- the concurrence-seeking tendency, which fosters overoptimism, lack of vigilance, and sloganistic thinking about the weakness and immorality of out-groups” (Janis 12). This implies that traumatized individuals receding into shared components of their identity may be comforting, but is also rather dangerous. In State College, distressed witnesses to the moral ineptitude of their cultural leaders in need of the comfort of solidarity never thought to speak out against the frequent disregard of Sandusky’s victims among other things.

Once this joining together became commonplace amongst Happy Valley residents and members of the Penn State network, many may have felt trapped by the need to remain perfectly cohesive in a time of collective trauma. This phenomenon is far from uncommon: “Members of a group may choose to not express dissenting opinions in the interest of maintaining consensus and

cohesiveness in the group. Thus, silence can be caused by fear, by the desire to avoid conveying bad news or unwelcome ideas, and also by normative and social pressures that exist in groups” (Morrison and Milliken 1). Once it is accepted that, on some level, the Penn State community was exposed to a great deal of psychological distress as one of their beloved institutions fell under scrutiny, this need to rally together makes perfect sense. As can be seen in the previous chapter, rallying together resulted in the promotion of a communal message far removed from that of outsider groups.

The need for reasserting control by the threatened community can also be understood from a theoretical standpoint. By situating the insider community’s response in the context of oral history, more light can be shed on the group’s need for narrative and recollective control. Oral history’s work with memory, in particular, is exceedingly helpful in the Penn State setting. In her volume of oral history theory, Lynn Abrams writes:

...an individual’s memory is always situated within a collective or group consciousness of an event or experience. Memory might feel personal to us, but it is always influenced by shared memories, whether at a family, community or even national level ... the function of memory is to unite us socially, which means that commonly agreed upon memories will tend to predominate and alternative ones will receive little recognition and therefore fade (Abrams 96).

By defining communal memory as an entity shaped by social networks, we can begin to understand the Penn State community’s desire to stay unified and to

reassert control over the narrative about the scandal.¹⁴ In order to analyze the Penn State scandal, memory should be understood as something that effectively governs perspective on and coverage of an event. In scenarios where group dynamics are idealized due to constituent members (especially traumatized ones) needing to fall back on a strong sense of shared identity, discursive control slides further away from individuals whose beliefs may not align exactly with the majority (for example, Morrison and Milliken's work with silencing). Abrams extends this, noting that individual memorialization or opinion of events is frequently trumped in group settings (Abrams 96). Thus, the subconscious need for control over the presentation of traumatic events is both buttressed and limited by a need for the comfort of community. In Happy Valley, such homogeneous ideology surrounding the public presentation or memorialization of the Sandusky scandal, along with its actors, could have been due in large part to initial trauma (of betrayal and outsider attacks on identity) necessitating a joining together of those positively affiliated with the university and a tightening of the ideological ranks.

Following from this foundational analysis of particular theoretical and psychological forces at play in local circles in the aftermath of the 2011 Penn State scandal, more specific influences can be put under the microscope. In

¹⁴ Abrams is not alone in this conceptualization of communal memory, as Ignacio Brescó and Brady Wagoner discuss the phenomenon in a similar way, "Moreover, remembering always takes place within a particular context, against the background of a group's values, traditions and practices...From this perspective there is no such thing as a purely individual activity; we are always dealing with the individual within a certain set of contextual conditions..." (Brescó & Wagoner 69).

particular, examination of the siege mentality, gender, masculinity, sexuality, and economics can further explain the ideological split between Penn State supporters and outsiders. In the following sections, it will be assumed that, while the Penn State community did experience trauma in the form of betrayal, the true victims of the Sandusky scandal were the boys assaulted by the former Nittany Lion assistant football coach. Each of the more specific forces introduced above seemed to allow for these victims to be silenced or even partially eliminated from local consciousness.

The Siege Mentality: Who Are the Real Victims?

As the Sandusky scandal developed and began to be digested by different audiences, a phenomenon known colloquially as “siege mentality” began to manifest itself equally as a symptom of and evidence for the divide in reception in/out of the immediate Penn State community. Siege mentality can be most simply understood as the initial formation and subsequent opposition of an in-group and external communities.¹⁵ It is manifested in the perspective of insiders perceiving the rest of the world to constantly be attacking, oppressing, or isolating members of their specific institution: “...the content of Siege Mentality belief refers to perception of group members that the outgroups have intentions to do wrong or inflict harm on their group...Thus, Siege Mentality should be

¹⁵ Daniel Bar-Tal, "Siege Mentality." *The Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology*

Bar-Tal, *Shared Beliefs in a Society: Social Psychological Analysis*.

James R. Lewis, editor. *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*.

viewed as reflecting...such beliefs as ‘No-one will help us in time of need,’ ‘The world should be glad to get rid of us,’ ‘We cannot rely on others advice,’ and so on” (Bar-Tal & Antebi 1). The Penn State community responded to the Sandusky scandal with the belief that outgroups existed to threaten their reputation and existence. Therefore, the community felt the need to reify their connections to one another in order to survive an assault on their ideology and culture.

Countless theorists have recognized siege mentality in the realm of sports, religion, and politics, amongst many others, but the response to the Sandusky scandal is a clear example. The two primary characteristics of siege mentality evident following the 2011 reveal of years of administrative cover-up of Sandusky’s crimes are the transference of victimhood onto several, perhaps undeserving parties, and vehement attacks against those perceived as threatening to the Nittany Lion community. In this situation, during which control of the narrative became the ultimate goal of so many individuals, the credibility of parties like the NCAA and Louis Freeh’s investigative team were attacked while Joe Paterno, Penn State University, the Nittany Lion Football Program, and the students of the university themselves claimed the role of victim. Each of these forces, which were difficult to scrutinize from within an ideologically homogeneous Penn State community, led to the redemption narrative largely denied to the true victims of Sandusky’s transgressions, the boys who were sexually abused.

Louis Freeh can certainly be pinpointed as the single individual put under the most fire by the Penn State community for his investigation into the scandal. As discussed previously, the product of this investigation, universally referred to as the

“Freeh Report,” criticized Joe Paterno, Gary Schultz, Graham Spanier and Tim Curley for their, “total and consistent disregard ... for the safety and welfare of [JERRY] Sandusky's child victims” (Freeh 14). As siege mentality theory anticipated, the direct allegations launched in the Freeh Report were not met with positive response in State College. Although Louis Freeh, as the former Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigations, was absolutely qualified for this investigation, countless Penn State community members refused to accept the conclusions of this outsider-become-scapegoat. In fact, Penn State alumni such as Ray Blehar (Class of 2008) and Eileen Morgan (Class of 1990) (along with the organization, Penn Staters for Responsible Stewardship) went so far as to publish scathing critiques of Freeh’s assessment of the situation.¹⁶ Blehar went on record critiquing Freeh’s investigation for its “bias,” deeming his final report nothing more than “FactFreeh Fiction.” The Paterno family, following the death of Joe Paterno, also commenced their own investigation into Freeh’s process, hoping to undermine the credibility of both Freeh and his analysis. In an official statement following the removal of Joe Paterno’s statue from outside of Beaver Stadium, the Paterno family stated, “We believe the only way to help the victims is to uncover the full truth. The Freeh report, though it has been accepted by the media as the definitive conclusion on the Sandusky scandal, is the equivalent of an indictment -- a charging document written by a prosecutor -- and an incomplete and unofficial one at that” (Rittenberg 1). Louis Freeh responded to this attempted legal and rhetorical ambush in

¹⁶ Posts regarding assessments of the Freeh Report and other matters of the Penn State scandal can be found at notpsu.blogspot.com (Website entitled, Second Mile - Sandusky Scandal: “Searching for the Truth Through a Fog of Deception”).

the following way, “I respect the right of the Paterno family to hire private lawyers and former government officials to conduct public media campaigns in an effort to shape the legacy of Joe Paterno. However, the self-serving report the Paterno family has issued today does not change the facts established in the Freeh Report or alter the conclusions reached in the Freeh Report” (Freeh 1). Although Freeh’s comments here appear to be much more measured than some of the allegations made against him by members of the Penn State community, they were unlikely to have much effect against the self-protective narratives emerging from Penn State. After all, Freeh and his team were nothing more than unwanted outsiders. One can also presume that a majority of this network (represented by individuals like Blehar, Morgan, and the Paterno family) saw outsiders as hostile. As Bar-Tal and Antebi remark, “The characterization [of Siege Mentality] implies that a significant majority of group members hold the belief about negative intention of the world as a *central* belief attributing to it *high confidence*” (Bar-Tal and Antebi 1). Thus, the siege mentality in State College in the wake of the Sandusky scandal could be viewed as a nearly insurmountable force for investigators like Freeh and those assigned the task of reprimanding the perpetrators (the NCAA).

The second component of the siege mentality that was manifested in Happy Valley was the transference of victimhood. As David Brooks mentioned in *The New York Times*, the Siege Mentality, “...gives people a narrative to express their own superiority: We may be losing, but at least we are the holy remnant. We have the innocence of victimhood. We are martyrs in a spiteful world” (Brooks 2). This mechanism was employed in several cases following the Sandusky scandal, as certain actors presented

Penn State University, its students, its football program, and its head coach as the true “victims.” This perception of an external vendetta also embodied the gendered and sexualized fears of our culture at large. The true victims of the Sandusky scandal, the boys Jerry Sandusky raped, were not properly acknowledged by a majority of Penn State supporters because of the taboo (for example, homosexual and symbolically incestuous) implications this recognition would elicit.

With this conception of the university as the real victim of the Sandusky scandal in place, it is important to return to the euphemistic dialogue surrounding the assaults as they transpired and were kept from the public and police. Towards the top of the linguistic smokescreen employed by Penn State officials, President Graham Spanier decided that Sandusky should be reprimanded for “improper use of university facilities.”¹⁷ The rhetoric used here by the Penn State University president situates the university as the party most under attack and it hides Sandusky’s real crime entirely. Not only does this comment convey that Sandusky is not at all a threatening figure, but it may also lead the public to question what the need to punish him was at all. It is nothing short of shameful that Spanier opted to minimize Sandusky’s crimes to the point where he could be equated to someone bringing food into a training room (or any other minor example of improperly used athletic facilities). Even before the cover-up was exposed to the public, siege mentality was causing university officials to shirk responsibility and minimize culpability.

¹⁷ Krisen Lucas and Jeremy P. Fyke, “Euphemisms and Ethics: A Language-Centered Analysis of Penn State’s Sexual Abuse Scandal.”

This was also manifest in the treatment of Penn State students and the football program as victims. This began following the NCAA's decision to fine Penn State \$60 million, impose a scholarship reduction and four-year postseason ban, as well as vacate all wins the Penn State football team earned under the tenure of Jerry Sandusky. In videos of students learning about these punishments, a heavy majority of students can be seen gasping, groaning, or with jaws dropped. While one student interviewed by the Big Ten Network judged it, "sad and wrong to punish people who had nothing to do with it," others were left speechless by the NCAA's ruling.¹⁸

Most of all, the boys who were raped by Sandusky were unconsciously denied the role of victims in the wake of the scandal because the position was already taken by (or tactically given to) Joe Paterno. Paterno was deemed a martyr by his family and the larger Penn State community. He also embraced the role himself, performing as a victim on several occasions. Beginning with responses apart from the coach's, thousands of students expressed their frustration with the university's decision to fire Paterno and the NCAA's choice to take away so many of "his" wins by taking to the streets and causing significant damage to downtown State College during a series of impassioned riots.¹⁹ Public displays of disgust continued when Paterno's statue was removed by order of interim university president Rodney Erickson because it constituted a "recurring wound"

¹⁸ "Fan Reaction to Penn State Sanctions." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Ten Network, 23 July 2012

¹⁹ According to a December 21, 2011 report by Sara Ganim of *The Patriot News*, \$190,000 of property damage was done during the riots following Joe Paterno's firing. This made the "Paterno riot" the most costly in terms of destruction that Penn State University had seen since fifteen years prior: Sarah Ganim, "Riot at Penn State is most costly, destructive in 15 years, State College police chief says."

and “obstacle to healing.”²⁰ In addition to public gatherings, Paterno’s role as the injured/attacked party also led to widespread support of things like the 409 campaign.²¹ The number 409 can still be seen all throughout State College as a way to display the number of wins Paterno earned as a head coach and should be credited with by the NCAA. One Penn State student effectively summarized the sentiment of much of the student body with regard to Paterno’s removal: “ever since I was born I’ve lived and breathed Penn State. All I’ve known is Joe Paterno being the head coach. It’s not right if he won’t be there” (Big Ten Network 2011). In much the same way, the Paterno family themselves went to great lengths (especially following Paterno’s death) to redeem him from any responsibility. Brooks also explains how siege mentality can breed behavior like that of Penn State students and Paterno’s family: “The siege mentality also excuses the leader’s bad behavior. When our very existence is on the line we can’t be worrying about things like humility, sexual morality, honesty and basic decency. In times of war all is permissible. Even molesting teenagers can be overlooked because our group’s survival is at stake” (Brooks 2). All in all, Paterno was perceived by the State College community as a quasi-religious figure, and therefore, was deemed a victim undeserving of blame by all who worshipped his team.

Additionally, Paterno’s own actions following his removal as coach demonstrate a performative desire to be viewed as martyr. During several of the student gatherings

²⁰ Rodney Erickson, "Statement by Penn State President Rodney Erickson related to Joe Paterno Statue."

²¹ One Penn State fan even took to Twitter to say, “Sad and unfair. But also true: 409 wins wiped out by one pervert. #Paterno scandal” (Brown et al. 303).

following Paterno's firing, students ended their nights by congregating outside of the Paterno home on McKee Street in State College to show their support for the wrongly treated coach. Paterno greeted these students several times, beginning his speeches with comments like: "We still got things to do. I'm out of it, maybe, now if they put me out of it, but we'll go from there," and "Get some rest. Go support the football team on Saturday. Beat Nebraska!" (Paterno 2011). These comments reveal a lot about how siege mentality functions. The former is a clear appeal for a bit of sympathy from his student body (thus positioning himself as a victim). The latter, on the other hand, attempts to rally support for a football program he is no longer a part of (perhaps to remind people that the team is what really matters). In neither case does Paterno acknowledge the boys who were assaulted by Sandusky until *after* turning his back to leave the crowd. In these statements, the true victims of Sandusky's were treated as an afterthought, far less important than the targeted coach.

It is also necessary to analyze how Penn State's siege mentality continued to dominate the community's response on a mythological level. Specifically, it allowed the Penn State University Football Program to write a redemption narrative tethered to the idea of "us" versus "them." Countless coaches, players, and journalists involved with Penn State football have grown fond of mentioning how the team has "beaten the odds" or "shocked the world" for their ability to win a Big Ten Conference championship (2016) and Fiesta Bowl title (2017) in such a short time following the "unfair" or "harsh" reparations levied by the NCAA (which were largely softened over time). Along with this, some Nittany Lion players were honored with the status of "legend" for the

character they showed in remaining on the team following the NCAA punishments rather than transferring. One such individual, Michael Mauti, is specifically referred to in State College as a football “legend,” although he does not rank remarkably high historically in any of Penn State’s statistical categories. This rhetoric depends for its effect on the fact that a team cannot “beat the odds” unless the odds are stacked against them. Without accepting the role of falsely-accused victim, a team can never rise from the ashes to regain its heroic status (and all the power that comes with it). Thus, siege mentality has bled into events which can technically be categorized as outside of the scope of the Sandusky scandal. Interestingly enough, this redemption narrative was something never afforded to the boys assaulted by Sandusky (at least, not in the State College community). While some of the victims have gone on to publish moving accounts of their experiences and be interviewed by major media outlets, they will always only be recognized as “Victim One, etc.” or a blue ribbon sitting in the former position of Coach Sandusky (to signify child abuse) on a downtown mural in State College. On one hand, this fact alone shows just how much the siege mentality has taken root for Penn State supporters, as the boys are actually only explicitly identified as “victim” but still have their role overtaken by other figures and entities. On the other, it shows that they do not have the cultural might to “beat the odds” in the context of the Penn State community due to the fact that they are largely swallowed up by the very same siege mentality sentiment that the crimes committed against them stirred up.

To summarize, siege mentality was clearly demonstrated in Penn State circles following the Sandusky scandal. It is no wonder that a belief in widespread assault on a

beloved in-group was adopted by this faction, as Brooks explains the utility of such a concept in the following way, “It gives them a clear sense of group membership and a clear social identity. It offers a ready explanation for the bad things that happen in life” (Brooks 2). Adopting an emotional and rhetorical approach anchored in the fetishization of the few (as victim or perpetrator) allowed for the breathtakingly self-involved and insensitive appropriations of victimhood by Penn State and Joe Paterno. Rather than interrogate the program’s responsibility for the awful crimes that occurred, the Nittany Lion faithful did as most groups would, and latched onto a more palatable narrative of battle for ideological superiority to keep a major component of their own identity from being corrupted. As Penn State professors Laurie Mulvey and Sam Richards put it in their classroom lecture on responses to the scandal:

Human beings, college students, Penn Staters in particular, invest an extraordinary amount of personal energy into everything that is this school around them. You all come here. This isn’t just Penn State. ‘This is my identity’...Some of what we’re dealing with, that loss and grief that some of you feel, is that sense that something deep has been taken away from you. Something has been taken away from your identity (Shontz 3).

It may, in fact, have been the aim of so many adopting a siege mentality in State College to prevent this “something” from being taken away from their identities.

Gender: Associative Emasculation of the “Unspeakable” Offense

Another means to analyze the community-wide repression and carefully constructed understanding of the Sandusky scandal within the Penn State population involves gender, sexuality, and masculinity. When using these categories, the specifics of

Sandusky's crime itself become increasingly powerful in their ability to condition behavior. Not only were Sandusky's assaults blatant legal wrongdoings, but they were also violations of implicit codes of heteronormativity in a hyper masculine athletic environment. Consequently, Penn State's football program was stained more by its affiliation with Sandusky's homosexual acts than it may have been in an instance of fraud or misconduct in recruiting. The nature of Penn State's scandal prevented the institution from falling into the long line of scandals in big-time collegiate athletic programs. Rather than "fit in" with institutions like Miami (improper benefits), Boston College (point shaving), and Michigan (paying players), Penn State was more harshly looked upon by the sporting world which now held the perception of PSU football as weaker or non-masculine. In such an environment, where the dominance of one type of masculinity over any other is fetishized to an unmistakable degree, Sandusky's repeated sexual assaults on male youth (which positioned the coach in a homosexual role) were bound to have significant repercussions in terms of community level reaction as well.

In order to fully understand the gendered implications of the Sandusky scandal, we must address the inseparability of football and machismo attitudes. In Mariah Burton Nelson's, *The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football*, the acclaimed journalist, speaker, and sports writer explains the obvious signification of sports as masculine endeavors: "Sports are male; to be male, and to earn male privilege, one must enter the sporting arena. A boy watches a baseball game on T.V. not because it is inherently interesting but because he is desperately seeking Daddy -- if not a real Daddy, then the idea of Daddy: male authority" (Burton Nelson 106). However, this male

authority, according to Burton Nelson, is not without its quirks. While it is true that big-time sport has long been constructed, at least for men, as a quest for a level of machismo unbridled by female interference (which can be understood as a weakening/tainting force), Burton Nelson is careful to remind her readers that sports are also invaluable for men due to their ability to give them a safe arena for emotional displays. Shortly after discussing male authority, she remarks: “While sport offers a man a place to worship traditional manhood, paradoxically it also offers a man a place to loosen the rigid masculine role without losing status. In sports, men can exhibit emotions for other men” (Burton Nelson 115). The performative aspects of sport, while dripping with testosterone, are not without a level of latent homosociality. In a way, this careful balance between thinly veiled, yet acceptable, homosocial behavior and brutish indulgence in pure male power sets up an understanding of football that has become normalized over decades of competition. This concept of normalization or the creation of a master narrative surrounding acceptable male behavior in the world of athletics relates quite strongly to the theoretical anchor of Judith Butler’s essay, “Critically Queer”:

Gender is...the effect of a regulatory regime of gender differences in which genders are divided and hierarchized *under constraint*. Social constraints, taboos, prohibitions, threats of punishment operate in the ritualized repetition of norms...for the subject only comes into intelligibility through the matrix of gender. Indeed, one might construe repetition as precisely that which undermines the conceit of voluntarist mastery (Butler 22).

This shows how hegemonic social mechanisms effectively condition the behavior and gender performance of all individuals. By analyzing Burton Nelson’s aforementioned observations through a Butlerian lens, one can begin to construct a fairly refined

conceptualization of how males are *permitted* to behave in a sporting context without subjecting themselves to policing. While, in a sense, the widespread tolerance of a certain amount of homosociality on the playing field does, as Burton Nelson describes, allow men an opportunity to dodge particular emotional and performative expectations (if only while competing), it is vital to remember that this slack can only be given up to a certain threshold in specific contexts. For example, spectators would certainly raise no issue at the sight of their beloved athletes holding hands or locking arms in solidarity during a dramatic moment in a contest. However, backlash would inevitably ensue should these same men celebrate a tremendous victory with a kiss. Additionally, as Burton Nelson points out, the sporting world will only allow mild homosocial performance in the wake of masculine violence (Burton Nelson 123). In this way, recognition of this macho violence and prowess which takes place in the realm of excessive heteronormativity (for example, in the presence of half-naked cheerleaders and bookended by beer ads) helps spectators to swallow the pill that is homosociality.

In the case of Jerry Sandusky, the former Nittany Lion assistant coach's transgressions were deemed unacceptable (beyond their understanding as rape carried out on powerless young boys) for their performative manifestations. Although several of the assaults took place in the showers, a long-accepted venue of homoerotically suggestive dialogue and action, the overt sexuality of them went way beyond towel snapping or, to put it in Sandusky's words, "horseplay." Thus, the homosexuality of Sandusky's actions certainly violated normalized understandings of action acceptability rooted in governing notions of performative gender discourse. However, this explains neither why the crimes

were perceived differently in/out of Happy Valley nor why they were met with silence, diversion, and/or repression in the Penn State community. To get a firm grasp on the particular motivating forces of these outcomes, it is necessary to return to Burton Nelson's writing on male-centered sports:

To affiliate with the biggest, strongest males...is symbolically to reduce the risk of male-on-male violence; to align oneself with the winning team is to acquire 'protection'...By taking a ringside seat in the sports-war spectacle, men and boys may obtain a sense of collective male power (Burton Nelson 109).

It is no stretch to assume that members of the Penn State community (especially the males) looked to the university's football team to provide for them this vicarious form of power. Unfortunately for them, this affiliation could have been largely corrupted by the observation of "one of their own" acting in a "reproachable" way sexually. Thus, Sandusky's deviant behavior not only corrupted the masculine sanctity of the Penn State Football Program's immediate members, but also symbolically emasculated countless individuals who knowingly or unknowingly tethered a portion of their identity to the Nittany Lions. Such emasculation inevitably would come as traumatic to these community members, thus motivating a certain existential or identity crisis. Eve Sedgwick discusses this notion of "homosexual panic" in *Between Men* when she addresses any given individual's internal fear of the arbitrary and often-terroristic policing of heteronormativity (Sedgwick 89). As fans of the Penn State Football Program likely began to pick up on the implied affiliation with Jerry Sandusky that came with their living vicariously through the Nittany Lions, they may have experienced Sedgwick's conception of homosexual panic first hand. Hence, this logically could have

led to a community-wide shifting of focus away from Sandusky's crimes themselves in exchange for a cathexis anchored in love of Joe Paterno and hatred for the NCAA and Louis Freeh. These easily observable actions themselves, when analyzed through the lens of gender theory, can be classified as defense mechanisms employed by members of the Penn State community to quell internal panic and prohibit external policing.

While Sedgwick makes countless brilliant rhetorical gestures in *Between Men*, one of the most powerful is directly applicable to the Penn State community's reaction to news of Sandusky's acts:

To put it in twentieth-century American terms, the fact that what goes on at football games, in fraternities, at the Bohemian Grove, and at climactic moments in war novels can look, with only a slight shift of optic, quite startlingly 'homosexual,' is not most importantly an expression of the psychic origin of these institutions in a repressed or sublimated homosexual genitality. Instead, it is the coming to visibility of the normally implicit terms of a coercive double bind. For a man to be a man's man is separated only by an invisible, carefully blurred, always-already-crossed line from being 'interested in men' (Sedgwick 89).

Interestingly enough, this quotation echoes Butler and Burton Nelson's conceptions of acceptability of gender performance. Its ties to homosexual panic also help to illuminate the processes at work in conditioning how many reacted to the Sandusky scandal. Simply put, Sandusky's actions took the "invisible" or "carefully blurred" characteristics of the spectrum of male behavior (including homosociality and homosexual behavior) and brought them into the light of immediate public attention and scrutiny. Suddenly, the homosocial actions common in the realm of sports were to become obvious and, potentially, negatively marked. Therefore, Sandusky's crime effectively tarnished not only the machismo of Penn State and their fans, but also threatened the patriarchal nature

of football writ large. Sedgwick utilizes Heidi Hartmann's definition of patriarchy in *Between Men*, "relations between men, which have a material base, and which, though hierarchical, establish or create interdependence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women" (Sedgwick 3). This definition provides yet another example of what exactly was at stake for the Penn State Football Program and its supporters when word of the cover-up broke. Sandusky's actions can be perceived using gender theory as nothing more than "unnatural" acts which threatened football's ability to reify patriarchal values and Penn State's perception as a strong and dominant athletic program.

Beyond issues of masculinity at play in the conditioning of the local response to Sandusky's crimes, the inability, or lack of desire, to accurately name Sandusky's crimes must also be analyzed. Sedgwick also discusses the "unspeakability" surrounding homosexual performance: "Sexuality between men had, throughout the Judaeo-Christian tradition, been famous among those who knew about it at all precisely for having no name -- 'unspeakable,' 'unmentionable.' Of course, its very namelessness, its secrecy, was a form of social control" (Sedgwick 94). During the years of cover-up and subsequent testimony of the major players involved in the Sandusky scandal, this "unmentionable" nature of Sandusky's actions manifested itself as the propagation of euphemistic language surrounding the crime. While it is undoubtedly important to understand the role vague reporting language played during the years of Penn State coaches and officials attempting to keep the assaults under wraps, such language could also be latched onto by the larger university network as a means for defense. The work of Kristen Lucas and Jeremy P. Fyke serves as a significant contribution to the

understanding of the impact of phrases like “over the lines,” “horsing around,” “activity in the shower area,” and “something was going wrong” (among many others) on the scandal. As stated by the authors, “...euphemistic language impairs ethical decision-making, particularly by framing meaning and visibility of acts, encouraging mindless processing of moral considerations, and providing a shield against psychological and material consequences” (Lucas and Fyke 551). Each of these ramifications of the employment and repetition of euphemistic language are present in the cover-up and applied to analysis of responses to the cover-up. Not only would the proliferation of inexact phrasing allow community members to pardon certain actors in the scandal (for example “Paterno did not *really* understand what was going on”), but it would allow them a certain amount of ethical wiggle room which, in turn, further veils Sandusky’s rapes for the sake of rhetorical palatability. Essentially, euphemistic language, likely born from the general discomfort with naming homosexual (and especially violent homosexual) acts, aided in the dissociation Penn State community members employed in regard to Sandusky’s actions and their ramifications for the football team. Indirectly, the widespread acceptance of double-speak demonstrated a public desire to rhetorically police heteronormativity by acknowledging that deviance was being approached. Therefore, psychologically burdensome repression of the scandal (outlined above) can be eased by the employment of language as a defense mechanism by shifting victims, obscuring actions, and relieving mythological heroes of culpability (adopting and acceptance of vague language much easier than ignorance). Just as the employment of euphemistic language helped Penn State officials to internally contain Sandusky’s

assaults (by allowing them to exert social control), its acceptance in Happy Valley exemplified the public becoming complicit in the construction of a new rhetoric serving the purpose of suppressing social problems.

The usage of euphemistic language can also be connected back to masculinity and sexuality by way of Sedgwick's theoretical writing on triangulation. Essentially, triangulation refers to the presence and positioning of a woman in literature or the real world to quell anxieties about homosociality. To put it into the context of football, all of the seemingly unacceptable male-male interactions that take place on the field are made "okay" or are "negated" by the presence of scantily clad cheerleaders (operates similarly to violence). In this way, all homosocial tension can be either ignored or diverted to a female sex object, thus allowing for the preservation of hegemonic gender expectations. In the case of Sandusky, the former Nittany Lion defensive coordinator could be subjected to public scrutiny for what could realistically be perceived as both homoerotic and incestuous performances in a football setting (as the player-coach relationship mirrors father-son relationship). However, these visibly unacceptable homoerotic and incestuous tensions were deflected, or triangulated, by Sandusky's young male victims. By assaulting these boys, Sandusky established a Sedgwickian triangle between himself, his players/coaching colleagues, and the boys themselves. He chose to operate in a manner that simultaneously silenced and feminized young male bodies in order to defuse deviant sexual tension. Unfortunately for Sandusky, and Penn State fans everywhere, he did not prey upon *actual* female bodies, like those of cheerleaders (although even this is clearly a horrible thought). Precisely because the boys being mentored by Sandusky *also*

represented homoerotic and incestuous desire, they could not be discussed. This is exactly where euphemistic language returns to the equation. The vague language surrounding Sandusky's transgressions represented a collective attempt to "make things okay" or put back together the dominant gender discourse Sandusky blew to pieces.

Along with this, a second level or iteration of deflection had to occur at a community level. Just as the victims themselves were once positioned and feminized in a way that would deflect homoerotic tension, they too had to be silenced and replaced in their own role as victims. Just as was mentioned in previous discussions of siege mentality, it is important to note here how other stand-ins for the role of "victim" were necessary for the Penn State community to handle the trauma they were exposed to (for example, Paterno, local economy, etc.). In fact, this transference of victimhood proved to be remarkably powerful, as individuals named "Victim One, Victim Two," and so on were largely not recognized as such in State College. In summary, a two-tiered deflection of sexual tension was at play during Sandusky's rapes and their unveiling. First, male-male homosocial and homosexual tensions had to be deflected from Sandusky and his players/coaching colleagues by his chosen sex objects. By choosing to transfer this more-public tension into assaults of young male boys, Sandusky effectively set up another problematic sexual relationship. Therefore, Penn State officials and community members had to replace the actual victims of the violent crimes with ones that would not cause a panic in the realm of gender expectations. In doing so, the State College community enacted a secondary deflection (or replacement following deflection) for their own well-being.

In conclusion, theory regarding gender, sexuality, and masculinity can be applied rather easily to the context of Happy Valley's response to the Penn State scandal both to describe *why* people would want to psychologically eliminate the problem (associative emasculation and threats to the patriarchy) and *how* they went about doing so (adopting euphemistic language). The Nittany Lion fan base, after symbolically being emasculated by association with Sandusky, were aware of the fact that their power and prestige could be targeted by fans of other programs or outsiders more generally (fear of being lumped in not only with a criminal, but a sexually deviant criminal). Once the potential for Jerry Sandusky as a metonymy for the entire population of Penn State supporters was generated, anxiety over Penn State's iteration of a hegemonic patriarchy being assaulted by outsiders (possibly subconscious anxiety) clearly conditioned behavior and understanding of the scandal. Thus, there was more at stake for Penn State football fans than their counterparts in other parts of the country. The confluence of theoretical constructs of gender, sexuality, and masculinity, when encountered in the real world, proved to be yet another remarkably powerful factor in divergent responses to Sandusky's assaults.

The Financial Engine

Analyzing the forces responsible for governing the behavior of Penn State supporters following the Sandusky scandal would be incomplete without a discussion of economic factors. As is the case in many other college towns housing elite athletic

programs, the local economy of State College, Pennsylvania and surrounding municipalities is strongly affected by the local football team. Beyond the direct expenditures of the football program itself, the financial engine that is Penn State football is an important generator for indirect local economic activity. During home football weekends, hotels for miles around State College are packed, restaurants are flooded with activity, gas stations see an uptick in demand, and other local businesses are treated to increased foot traffic (Kistner n.p.). Additionally, property owners in and around State College have begun to use platforms like Airbnb to list and rent their homes to out-of-town Nittany Lion fans on home football Saturdays.

Understanding just how valuable the Penn State University Football Program is to the economies of State College and its neighboring communities was the task of a 2009 economic impact study commissioned by the university and conducted by Tripp Umbach & Associates. The findings of this study (of business volume, tax revenue, and employment impact) are nothing short of staggering, as the Pittsburgh-based consulting firm found the “total business volume” of Penn State football to be \$161.5 million during that year. More specifically, out of state visitors to Happy Valley spent \$51.1 million during football season (\$34.1 million of that in Centre County). The study also found that Penn State football generated approximately \$690,000 in taxes for Centre County alone (\$5.7 million for Pennsylvania) and created 2,147 jobs (1,130 directly tied to the team and 1,017 related to local business staffing).²² These astonishing numbers are

²² Tripp Umbach study is no longer available, but statistics/findings are presented in Kistner article: Kistner, Lesley. "The Power of Penn State Sports' Economic Engine."

corroborated by the accounts many local officials and business owners. One such business owner, Jimmy Bellis, manager of Wegman's Food Markets in State College, mentions that during football season, "Our catering business picks up tremendously. It creates a lot of fun and excitement for both our customers and employees" (Kistner n.p.). It is also worth noting that a majority of local businesses adorned their storefronts with signs reading "Proud to Support Penn State Football" in the wake of the Sandusky scandal. Clearly, the owners of these businesses are aware of just how much the health and good standing of the football program means to their bottom lines. Interestingly enough, very few, if any, businesses in the State College area could be found expressing support for victims of child abuse following the scandal. Rather than implementing some sort of support for victims, they created new ways to make money by launching campaigns centered around the town's designated martyr, Joe Paterno (409 campaign sells magnets, shirts, and other memorabilia). The promotion of these advertisements by local businesses exemplified the beginning of a cultural impact of financial anxieties.

Yet another example of the Penn State football program proving itself a valuable asset to local workers and companies comes in the form of a relatively recent facilities arms race across the country at major college football hubs. According to Mark Yost, "Penn State completed a renovation of Beaver Stadium in 2001 that increased seating from about 93,000 to more than 107,000, making it the second-biggest facility in college sports" (Yost 101). Beaver Stadium has undergone several transformations since then, all requiring massive undertakings in terms of labor and supplies. While it is true that these renovations were primarily planned by agencies located outside Happy Valley, the actual

implementation of projects would certainly be an endeavor contracted out to local construction firms. In this way, Penn State football, through its desire to possess the most grandiose cathedral for college football in the nation, has helped to generate enormous amounts of economic activity.

Beyond local shop owners displaying support for Penn State football in the form of posters in their windows, former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett also latched onto economic issues when responding to the Penn State scandal. At a January 2, 2013 press conference held at the Nittany Lion Inn, Corbett announced his plan to sue the NCAA over the sanctions levied upon the university and its football program. Corbett primarily cited economic concerns, as he delivered his public address with several local business owners by his side: “these sanctions are an attack on past, present and future students of Penn State, the citizens of our commonwealth and our economy... Just as we stand up every day and fight for the victims, we should stand up and fight for those who have been punished unfairly... As governor of this state, I cannot and will not stand by and let it happen without a fight” (Horne n.p.). Comments such as these demonstrate Corbett employing the now-familiar tactic of transferring victimhood onto seemingly undeserving parties. Yet again, entities such as the local economy, the Penn State student body, and the citizens of Pennsylvania are mentioned in the same breath as (and equated to) the victims of Sandusky’s assaults. Further, the language used by Governor Corbett while speaking out against the NCAA sanctions is a perfect example of siege mentality as discussed earlier. The true victims of the Sandusky scandal were again forced to step out of the spotlight and be replaced by the more popular and palatable merchants of State

College. Ultimately, Corbett's suit was a legal and public relations failure. Not only was the lawsuit quickly thrown out, but NCAA Executive Vice President and General Counsel Donald M. Remy remarked,

We are disappointed by the Governor's action today. Not only does this forthcoming lawsuit appear to be without merit, it is an affront to all of the victims in this tragedy – lives that were destroyed by the criminal actions of Jerry Sandusky. While the innocence that was stolen can never be restored, Penn State has accepted the consequences for its role and the role of its employees and is moving forward. Today's announcement by the Governor is a setback to the University's efforts. (Balis n.p.)

Comments of this nature by “outsiders” emphasize the already-obvious divide between perspectives on the Sandusky scandal and its repercussions. In trying to rally support for the more popular victims of Sandusky's crimes, Corbett, as a political leader responsible for acting on behalf of the community, perfectly exemplified siege mentality thinking. Notably, the crime he chose to speak about was the monetary loss and not child abuse.²³

When dealing with the economic impact of Penn State football, it is important to remember that the actual economic impact suffered by the surrounding community is not what was driving this lawsuit (for example, less than \$1 million in ticket sales was lost from 2010-11 to 2011-12 seasons). When attempting to pinpoint forces potentially responsible for motivating community level response to the Sandusky scandal, it is of much greater significance to understand the local perspective on what has the potential to happen. Local business owners and employees had no way of knowing how their revenue

²³ In a way, Corbett's actions represent a certain policing of capitalistic values no different from the football community's defense of masculinity and heteronormativity.

streams would be impacted by the Sandusky scandal. However, sentiments expressed like those by Jimmy Bellis prove that local residents were cognizant of how much business Penn State football generates and, rationally, would fear the possibility of taking damage to their profit margins due to the scandal. Thus, it can be said that shop owners displaying their support for Penn State football and Corbett suing the NCAA for potentially unleashing local economic devastation are performative examples of negative local sentiment being directed at outsiders. Due to the fact that there was so much at stake for the local economy (as well as a level of appreciation for past positive economic impacts of Penn State football), it is no wonder that so many felt the need to “blind” themselves to the faults of the program brought to light by individuals like Louis Freeh.

To local business owners, students, and even politicians, economic criteria were focused on as definitive of one of the “real” scandals of the entire Sandusky affair. When analyzing the Sandusky saga with this economic “scandal” in mind, an entirely new set of “victims” are created, as local business owners become positioned as a massively injured party (similarly to students, fans, and players in other contexts). The ultimate impacts of this identification of false victims were the elimination of the abused children from view and Penn State’s responsibility for the consequences of the scandal being repressed. Additionally, misdirected outrage on the part of local business owners and politicians like Corbett helps to reveal one of the true purposes of big-time college sports (once the fog of cliché goals like “character building” is lifted): making money. When institutions like the NCAA or individuals like Louis Freeh attempt to get in the way of the financial

engine that is big-time college sports (and in this case, Penn State football) it is not surprising that they are met with a fury of insults on the part of economic “victims.”



Fig. 4. University of North Carolina Football Helmet (Image Courtesy of CNN)

CHAPTER THREE

BEYOND BEAVER STADIUM

I mean we're still National Champions and that's really what matters the most to me.

UNC undergraduate student Drew Gourley, *The News and Observer*

Introduction to Comparative Analysis

As polarizing and gripping as the Penn State scandal was for so many in the late Fall and early Winter of 2011, comparative analysis proves that neither the events themselves nor reactions to them were at all unique. Both the academic fraud that recently gripped the University of North Carolina and the serial child abuse that took place for years in the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston show that the Penn State abuses, cover-up, and visceral reactions all fall into a predictable pattern of behavior

characterized by institutional conditioning and group mentality. This chapter will identify pertinent connections between UNC, PSU, and the Catholic Church in the realm of collective action and cover-up. Aligning these three ‘incidents,’ as they are so often called, and illuminating their overlapping characteristics will prove that individuals of all communities react in a similar way when institutions they identify with become implicated in a scandal. Use of these defense mechanisms will be shown to happen regardless of the institution currently handling crisis. Although it is highly unlikely that events such as these can be avoided in the future, by bringing these nearly universal defense mechanisms to light, people of all societies can be estranged from their place in groups. By becoming hypersensitive to the power of their identification with a particular institution, group members will more readily engage in psychological splitting (not letting identity or behavior be wholly tied up in groups) when taking stances on controversial issues. A higher frequency of psychological splitting may ultimately aid in reducing the frequency of both immoral action and silent bystanders.

The University of North Carolina

The Scandal in a Nutshell:

As early as August 2011, allegations began to circulate regarding University of North Carolina student athletes being involved in what are now commonly referred to as “paper classes.” These fake classes began to attract the attention of investigators following the NCAA declaring in 2010 that former UNC football player Michael McAdoo (along with some of his teammates) would be permanently ineligible because of

academic misconduct. A series of investigations between the years 2012 and 2014 found that nearly 3,100 UNC students (approximately half of these students were athletes, primarily from the football and men's basketball teams) had enrolled in fake classes since they began being offered in 1990 (Wainstein 42). Although non-student-athletes had the opportunity to take these same classes (as they often found out about them by word of mouth), athletes represented just under fifty-percent of their enrollment over the years, which is staggering considering only approximately four-percent of UNC students are involved in varsity athletics (Wainstein et al 2014). These paper classes, which required no attendance from class participants over the course of the semester and assessed students based on a single final paper (which was often highly plagiarized or written entirely for student athletes by tutors who were allegedly promised UNC tickets and apparel),²⁴ were offered by the university's African and Afro-American Studies department and facilitated by Department Chairman Julius Nyang'oro and AFAM Student Services Manager Deborah Crowder.²⁵ The AFAM department was not the only one to come under fire, as the scandal's initial "whistleblower," former UNC learning specialist Mary Willingham, and UNC professor of history Jay M. Smith also condemned the university's drama, geology, and philosophy departments in their 2015 publication *Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time*

²⁴ According to former UNC basketball star Rashad McCants' 2014 interview for ESPN's "Outside the Lines."

²⁵ Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to explain the racial dimension of the UNC academic scandal, it is worth mentioning that the African and Afro-American Studies Department being implicated allows for race to serve the same polarizing effect gender/sexuality did at Penn State.

College Sports. According to Willingham and Smith, these departments, while not offering fake classes, did provide easy classes and relaxed assessment standards for UNC students and student-athletes (Smith & Willingham 34). Willingham also caught the attention of the media by frequently commenting on the low reading levels (often below fourth-grade level and sometimes outright illiteracy) and SAT scores of many student-athletes she worked with over the years (Goldberg 2014). After looking into the academic misconduct at Chapel Hill, the NCAA did not hand down any sanctions to the university's athletics department, stating that "[w]hile student-athletes likely benefited from the courses, so did the general student body. Additionally, the record did not establish that the university created and offered the courses as part of a systematic effort to benefit only student-athletes" (Sankey 2017).

The Influence of Big-Time College Sports:

The most apparent tie between the Penn State child abuse scandal and North Carolina academic scandal is that of premiere athletic programs being involved in misconduct that went unreported for so long due to their prestige. As celebrated as football is in Happy Valley, basketball plays a similarly prominent cultural role in Chapel Hill. Interestingly, for all of the similarities these two occurrences share, they involve dramatically distinct crimes (child abuse and administrative concealment vs academic fraud and administrative concealment). In Smith and Willingham's book on the scandal at UNC, they remark "Through negligence, willful blindness, and some degree of conscious intent, key actors at the university first permitted the development of

widespread academic fraud and then covered up the reasons behind that fraud when the wrongdoing at last came to light” (Smith & Willingham xiv). This broad description of the underpinnings of the UNC academic scandal follows a very similar trajectory to the Sandusky scandal. The fact that the crime itself can be rendered almost “irrelevant,” as different ethical lapses were motivated by similar forces, speaks to the apparent universality of some group dynamics addressed in previous sections of this thesis.

The notion that the importance of an athletic program at a university can breed unethical behavior on the part of coaches, administrators, players, and fans alike is nothing new. Countless volumes have been written documenting the moral shortcomings endemic to the world of big-time college sports. Peter French parses the mission statements of athletic departments connected to various state universities and concludes that many major athletic programs define their role as ranging from “molding good characters in the participating athletes to a fiscal justification to the effect that regularly putting on a good show, a winning record, on the playing field improves the potential for raising the level and amount of donations to the institution . . . making possible higher levels of support for the traditional academic programs” (French 2). Upon further examination of the conduct of many big-time athletic departments (like Penn State and UNC), French comes to the opposite conclusion: “The business of entertainment and all that entails is what football and men’s basketball, and, to a lesser degree, women’s basketball is really all about . . . If that primary mission of those programs is denied or masked in the rhetoric of academics or ethics education, nothing makes much sense at all” (French 104). To French and others, it is clear to see that major college sports

programs operate according to a desire to attract fans, win games, and generate esteem and financial earnings for their university. This “win-at-all-costs” mentality was on display at Penn State as coaches and administrators veiled reports of sexual abuse to protect their football team. Former UNC basketball standout Rashad McCants cited a similar motivation behind his team taking advantage of paper classes to remain eligible. In an interview with ESPN, McCants commented, “You’re not there to get an education. You’re there to make revenue for the college. You’re there to put fans in the seats. You’re there to bring prestige to the university by winning games” (McCants n.p.). Clearly, for both the UNC basketball program and PSU football program (along with most other big-time college sports programs)²⁶, generating “revenue” and “prestige” for the university by winning games was important enough that moral judgement was cast aside in order to do so. It was, and always will be, more important than the individual players, than the boys who were assaulted by Jerry Sandusky, than the academic reputation of the University of North Carolina, than the coaches and even competition (opposing teams forced to play against athletes who should be ineligible):

With all the money at stake, the increasingly addictive high quality sport entertainment on offer, and the ever more deeply entrenched sporting interests crowding the seats of power at the big-time universities, the corruption in college athletics took on the character of an immovable object. The UNC experience would certainly seem to provide a case in point. In Chapel Hill the instinct to dig in and stonewall, to cut losses and “move on” so as to return to athletics business as usual as quickly as possible, was pervasive. Administrators misled the public and denied the deeper realities of which the individual wrongs of tutors, players, and professors were only symptoms. Students on campus remained apathetic and

²⁶ Another powerful example is brought to light in Jon Krakauer’s *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town* (2015).

detached throughout the saga. Faculty leaders either ignored the institutional risks posed by the imperative to succeed athletically or celebrated small-bore reform measures that only underscored UNC's avoidance of bold action. With the exception of the *Raleigh News & Observer*, local media showed by their stubborn indifference to the scandal that they valued their continuing access to Athletic Department insiders more than they valued the public's right to know the truth. Resignation (or happy compromise) in the face of the athletic machine was the default setting in and around UNC - Chapel Hill between 2010 and 2014 (Smith & Willingham 239-40).

This passage presents what exactly is at stake for an athletic program, a university, and a local community when it comes to situations like those being analyzed here. For any actor (student, journalist, administrator, coach, player, etc.) to both recognize and condemn the unethical behavior that has plagued college athletics for so long would be to deny him or herself all of the benefits that can be generated by the athletic machine. While this is a simple concept, it has become so pervasive in American collegiate athletic culture that it must be addressed. Additionally, these same identity politics and potential benefits for affected individuals help to explain just how easy it is for members of other collegiate athletic communities to point fingers at other institutions, all while their own program may well be mired in infractions.

The Involvement of Legendary Coaches:

A second obvious parallel between the scandals at Penn State and North Carolina is the alleged involvement of legendary coaches. Joe Paterno's status as both an icon and legend in Happy Valley is mirrored in the Tar Heels' head men's basketball coach, Roy

Williams. After a decade of being groomed as the successor to Dean Smith (another Carolina hoops legend), Williams actually accepted a head coaching position in the equally famous Kansas University basketball program in 1988. After having incredible success leading the Jayhawks, including two national championship game appearances and an .805 winning percentage, Williams returned to his alma mater in 2003 to become the head coach of the UNC men's basketball team. Since returning, Williams has accrued 423 wins (his 400th coming against Bucknell on November 15, 2017) to go along with his 418 victories at Kansas. Also, Williams has led three separate Tar Heels squads to NCAA National Championship Game wins (2005, 2009, 2017). While the UNC academic scandal did indirectly involve a high-profile coach in Williams, he was never directly implicated in the academic fraud by an officially-conducted investigation (although his former player, McCants did mention in several interviews that Williams was aware of the misconduct). Also, the UNC scandal did not solely involve one athletic program, as UNC's football and women's basketball teams also reportedly took advantage of paper classes.

That being said, Roy Williams was not entirely removed from the UNC scandal, as he often found himself fielding questions from local and national media outlets pertaining to his involvement. In fact, he even acknowledged in one interview with ESPN's Kevin Negandhi that, had he not been such a well-established coach at UNC, he would not have "survived" the scandal (Williams 2014). This all seemed to begin for Coach Williams after, as he would put it, his "integrity was attacked" by his former player Rashad McCants. Although Williams denied the accuracy of his claims

vehemently, McCants reported to ESPN that he was certain Williams knew about the fake classes in which his players were enrolled, as well as the plagiarized papers they were submitting. When given a chance to respond, Williams told ESPN's Jay Bilas, "I have no idea. I don't sit in the class, I don't turn in their papers. But I find that impossible to believe" (Williams 2014). In this comment, in which Williams is responding to his players being allowed to submit plagiarized or poor quality work, the Tar Heel head coach uses evasive language to distance himself from the scandal as much as possible. In addition, he made a repeated effort in his interviews to express his commitment to his players earning their degrees and succeeding in all walks of life. Much like Paterno did for his players at Penn State, Williams mentioned time and time again that he would willingly revise practice and travel schedules for his players if their academics were not properly accommodated.

Over time, Williams became outwardly frustrated when responding to the seemingly endless string of questions from the media regarding his players' classroom experience. It was not before long that, like Coach Paterno, Williams began to position himself as one of the academic scandal victims. Also while speaking with Negandhi, Williams eventually arrived at a high point of frustration, "If you wanna talk basketball, I'll talk basketball. That other crap is gonna have to be taken care of. We made some mistakes, we're not proud of it. I'm very very sad, I'm very very hurt. But I'm not gonna rehash all that crap. If you wanna talk basketball, we'll do that. I've already had a hundred million press conferences I think on the other stuff" (Williams 2014). Here, Williams makes direct reference to the tireless questioning he has been subjected to due

to the misconduct in the UNC AFAM Department. Although few others described Williams as an injured party, this self-victimization harkens back to his earlier mentioning of himself as being under attack by individuals such as McCants. In addition to assuming the role of victim, which was similarly occupied by Joe Paterno in Happy Valley, Williams also frequently attempted to rally support for himself while being interviewed, stating that he would “bleed [Carolina blue] if you cut me open” and had devoted much of his life, as a player, student, and coach to the University of North Carolina (Williams 2014). Each of these tactics (self-victimization and reference to commitment/service to the institution) mitigated his responsibility and echoed Joe Paterno.

Roy Williams clearly manifested siege mentality by feeling personally slighted by many of the comments McCants made at his expense and by his growing frustration with reporters’ attempts to tie him to the academic fraud taking place. Williams’ words and performances connect him to Paterno easily, as the Nittany Lion coach (and his passionate legion of supporters) also implied that he was wronged by PSU and certain reporters. It is no surprise that this shared sense of victimization existed, as the iconic status of these men within their programs renders it nearly impossible to separate institutional critiques from personal attacks (for example, Paterno *is* Penn State football, so any criticism of the program appears as a slight to him -- the same is true for Williams at North Carolina).

Williams, like many of Joe Paterno’s supporters in Happy Valley, was also not shy about pointing fingers and shifting blame for what took place at UNC. The coach was

adamant in all interviews about his role as a coach not necessarily involving direct check-ins about academics. In a press conference held in the wake of the publication of Kenneth L. Wainstein's Investigative Report detailing the academic misconduct at UNC (one he did not entirely agree with), Williams mentioned, "Guys, I think that I would have been run off if I had tried to go into any department at the university and told them to try to have a run at it. That's not my job. I took care of my guys. If there's something that a coach doesn't like he should try to do the right thing. I think I tried to do the right thing" (Williams 2014). Later in the same press conference, he stressed that he was okay with his lack of involvement in UNC academics, as he believed in full academic freedom for professors and would not be happy if professors and administrators began telling him how to coach his team (Williams 2014). He had "[n]ever known a basketball coach to be in charge of the university" (Williams 2014). In all of these comments, Williams is quick to point out that problems with UNC academics are the fault of professors and administrators, not coaches. He also mentioned that much more could have been done by the university to prevent this fraud from taking place. In fact, one of his final statements from that same press conference went as follows: "I wish I would've been chancellor for a day. Maybe I would have solved all of the problems in the world" (Williams 2014). When under fire, Williams was not only willing to position himself as a loyal Tar Heel and victim, but also to pass blame off to other university employees.

The true problem created by the involvement of legendary coaches in scandals such as these is that they serve as nothing more than distractions from both the true victims of immoral behavior and the institutional shortcomings that facilitate said

behavior. It is not until successful coaches like Paterno and Williams are treated as accountable for their programs that we may begin to see change in the world of college sports when it comes to corruption. In Paterno's case, his status in the local community actually absolved him of all blame for his involvement in the scandal in the eyes of his fans. In the case of North Carolina, although Williams was not actually brought up in investigations of the academic fraud, few even thought to question the manner in which he ran his program (for example, academic progress reports, checking grades, following up with players thoroughly). The enterprise of college sports puts too much emphasis on winning games, generating revenue, and hanging banners in the rafters. The symptoms of this attitude seem to be three-fold. First, coaches become so distracted with on-field goals that they have little time to worry about what their players and colleagues are doing in the locker room, classroom, or any other arena. Secondly, when certain athletic programs come under fire, successful coaches oftentimes evade consequence due to their winning traditions. Finally, the real victims of unethical behavior are always hidden from view, as men given legendary status simply for winning amateur athletic contests serve as magnets for public attention, due in part to the manner in which they conduct themselves during a scandal's fallout period (for example, self-victimization).

Community Defense:

Analysis of the UNC scandal in relation to the PSU scandal would not be complete if only conducted from an institutional standpoint. Much like in Happy Valley, the UNC saga infected the surrounding Chapel Hill community, leading to defensive

reaction from many students and others affiliated with the university. Individuals associated with UNC utilized some of the tactics seen just a couple of years prior in Happy Valley following the Sandusky scandal. These tactics included a siege mentality, silencing and discrediting the voices of insiders and outsiders speaking out against the university's conduct, and outright denial of the conclusions of professional investigations (not unlike Roy Williams mentioning that he did not agree with all aspects of the Wainstein Report).

Once word of the long-standing academic fraud in Chapel Hill was broken and a flurry of voices emerged criticizing the university and its Athletic Department, many students felt the need to express their feelings of personal victimization at the hands of an outside world "out to get them." Many UNC faithful took to social media to tweet about this unfair external condemnation. One of the most illustrative of these posts, in terms of siege mentality, read, "So basically, the NCAA held a 5-7-year grudge against UNC basketball, ruined their recruiting, all to find out they did nothing wrong" (UNC Gameday 2017). The issue of recruiting was systematically brought up in conversations with students (Toth 2017) as well as Roy Williams (Hyman 2017) following the emergence of the scandal. Although the Tar Heels were still able to win a significant majority of their games, including another National Championship (2017) in the years following Wainstein's allegations and other investigations into academic misconduct, Tar Heel supporters still felt that the bad publicity was being used as a tool by outsiders to keep strong recruits from committing to play basketball at UNC. All in all, attitudes like these, when paired with acceptance of victimhood on the part of students, helped to paint

a clear picture of siege mentality taking hold in Chapel Hill. Following the NCAA's announcement not to punish the UNC athletic programs implicated by Weinstein for their misconduct, students went on record expressing their feelings of relief and that it felt as if a cloud had been lifted from over the university (Toth 2017). These statements simply imply that the UNC student body felt personally antagonized by the ongoing NCAA deliberation, which resulted in nothing more than the encouragement of an "us vs them" perspective on campus.²⁷

The siege mentality that plagued Chapel Hill in a manner reminiscent of what was seen at Penn State for so many years clearly involved a heavy dose of anger being directed by insiders toward those outside the UNC community. The "outside," however, was not the only community attacked by those affiliated with UNC, as other insiders with "unacceptable" opinions on the scandal were silenced at North Carolina much like they had been in the wake of the Sandusky scandal. Willingham details this process with the help of Jay M. Smith in *Cheated*,

...a great many people, including well- informed insiders, have known for a long time that the system of college sport is badly broken. Yet college campuses are not exactly teeming with whistle- blowers and crusaders for reform— and the reasons for the collective silence are perfectly understandable. The system seeks to crush those who would make waves, and every ounce of institutional leverage is mobilized to silence or punish the people who threaten the golden goose. Mary Willingham was ignored, shunned, demoted, harassed, publicly humiliated by the university's provost, viciously attacked in social media by UNC faculty and staff, and treated so badly in her new position that she ultimately felt forced to resign. Sadly, the Willingham example is all too familiar, as recent outspoken critics of the athletic machines

²⁷Although some students did express the opinion that the entire institution of college athletics was broken and deserved to be put under the microscope (Toth 2017).

at Georgia, Tennessee, Auburn, Minnesota, Florida State, and Marshall could all attest. Courageous insiders are destined to remain an endangered species (Smith & Willingham 241).

The behavior of Penn State students at rallies and games, when encountering community members criticizing PSU football, was therefore not unique at all, but actually very predictable. Threatening figures are typically cast out as scapegoats by institutions due to the fact that their very existence and message has the potential to not only bring punishment but also dismantle a sense of community built sometimes over generations. The ideological homogeneity, which existed in Happy Valley and Chapel Hill alike, was one of the largest sources of fuel for emergent scandals and their cover-ups.

Denial, like the other strategies discussed above, is not related to any particular scandal, but actually is deeply rooted in institutional behavior and community-level reaction to scandal. In *Beer and Circus*, Murray Sperber spells this out,

For TV viewers, the perfect mind-set for watching *SportsCenter*, particularly when seeing clips from college sports events and knowing all about the corruption in intercollegiate athletics, was the equivalent of what George Orwell defined in *1984* as ‘doublethink’: the ability to believe contradictory ideas simultaneously, for example, acknowledging the dysfunction of college sports while fervently following its teams and games (Sperber 42).

Sperber’s point identifies the pervasive cultural problems in the world of college sports. Even in cases where a high profile athletic program is called into question and found guilty of certain unethical behavior without a shadow of a doubt, the fans and affiliates of the program consistently either deny, minimize, or ignore claims made against their beloved programs. This denial operated in exactly the same manner at Penn State as it did at North Carolina, and it would not look any different at any other university with a major

athletic program that has fallen under fire. The psychological splitting that is required of an individual to not internalize and personalize critiques of institutions they call their own has long been proven as a remarkably difficult task to carry out. Unfortunately, as was the case at PSU, few in the UNC community proved capable of pulling off this feat, leading to the propagation of a largely uniform rhetoric riddled with denial.

Conclusion: College Sports Creating Community

Comparative analysis of these two scandals involving high profile athletic programs at large public universities serves several purposes. First of all, the comparison helps to understand the behavior of fans, administrators, students, and others as “normal” when threats to beloved institutions emerge. In addition, it can also be seen that, because corruption and reactions to its unveiling are so similar from one context to another, the world of big-time college sports has generated a culture that frequently leads to unethical behavior on the part of institutions, administrators, players, and fans. A culture that has led to many lives being ruined for the sake of ticket sales and wins on the field of play.

Smith and Willingham also address this systematically employed toxic behavior in their book, “...the pressures and conditions that made the scandal possible... are endemic to the college-sport enterprise... The incentive to turn a blind eye, to wallow in denial, is all the greater when high reputations are at stake” (Smith & Willingham 205). In the cases of PSU and UNC, reputation played a significant role in the rhetoric surrounding each scandal. Just as the stark contrasts between discourse of insiders and outsiders could be witnessed at Penn State, so too were different perspectives expressed

in the UNC context. Less than fifteen miles from Chapel Hill, at North Carolina State University, students readily criticized the NCAA for not levying sanctions upon the Tar Heels (a decision that seemed fair in Chapel Hill). NC State undergraduate students (as well as many other journalists around the country²⁸) expressed the opinion that it was unfortunate that UNC had gotten away with their academic fraud and that they should have been punished, although they “all knew they weren’t gonna give them any punishment” (Willett 2017). By looking at the disharmony that exists between the discourse of those with and without emotional ties to an institution mired in controversy, onlookers are given a front row seat to the “pressures and conditions” that are “endemic to the college-sport enterprise” and, really, all major institutions.

The situations at UNC and PSU show that big-time college sports teams foster a seemingly unbreakable sense of community for their followers. Even in the face of heinous allegations, long-term investigations, NCAA sanctions, and firestorms of outside criticism, fans of teams like the Nittany Lions and Tar Heels remain loyal. Rather than to do what most outside observers consider “logical” or “rational” (although we have proven these terms to be problematic) and take issue with the crimes facilitated and/or committed by their beloved teams, students and fans universally seem to dig in their heels, close the ranks within the local community, and fight against outsiders they deem threatening. The unifying force of college sports and their ability to generate immense

²⁸ Abbie Bennett, “How the hell did North Carolina get away with this?’ Media react to NCAA ruling on UNC.” *The News & Observer*

pride within a community can be a wonderful thing, but it can also be dangerous.²⁹ It is this same unification and pride in programs that has led to athletic machines subordinating educational values and the lives of countless victims for market values and victories (Giroux & Giroux 2012).

The Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

A Crisis in the Archdiocese:

Towards the end of the 20th Century, branches of the Catholic Church across the globe began to fall under scrutiny, as hundreds of allegations of priests sexually abusing children in the United States and abroad began to surface. In the United States, the growing scandal played out most prominently in Boston. The Boston saga began in July 2001 when Cardinal Bernard Law admitted to having received a letter in 1984 which alerted him to allegations involving Father John J. Geoghan's molestation of children. In January 2002, Judge Constance Sweeney ordered that Cardinal Bernard Law of the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston hand over 10,000 pages of church records (NCR Staff 2015). Law's initial acknowledgement of widespread criminal activity within the Archdiocese was soon magnified when an investigative team at *The Boston Globe* used the records as evidence in a series of articles detailing years of child abuse and subsequent child endangerment within the Boston Archdiocese. As the initial subject of

²⁹ This notion takes center stage in the documentary *Schooled: The Price of College Sports* (Finkel & Paley 2013).

The Boston Globe's Spotlight Team, Geoghan was reported to have sexually abused nearly 130 individuals over his thirty-year tenure (before being defrocked in 1998), most of whom were young boys (Rezendes 1). Although Law admitted to knowledge of these allegations, he oversaw and approved of Geoghan's transfer to St. Julia's parish in Weston (Rezendes 1). After being put on trial and sentenced to 9-10 years in prison on convictions of molestation, Geoghan was murdered by a fellow inmate in August 2003. Law officially resigned as the Cardinal of the Archdiocese of Boston in December 2002 but was reassigned to the Basilica di Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome (McCarthy 2015). Aside from their initial report, the Spotlight Team went on to publish nearly six-hundred articles pertaining to the abuse scandal in the Catholic Church.

Sadly, Geoghan's sentencing was only the beginning for the Archdiocese of Boston, as the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General published a chilling report on July 23, 2003. The document, which will hereafter be referred to as the "Boston Report," reported just how severe the child abuse crisis in Boston's branch of the Catholic Church had been for years. The report's most serious finding was as follows:

Widespread sexual abuse of children was due to an institutional acceptance of abuse and massive and pervasive failure of leadership: 1) top Archdiocese officials knew the extent of the clergy sexual abuse problem for many years before it became known to the public, 2) the Archdiocese's response to the reports of sexual abuse of children, including maintaining secrecy of reports, placed children at risk, 3) the Archdiocese officials did not provide all relevant information to law enforcement authorities during criminal investigations, 4) the Archdiocese did not notify law enforcement authorities of clergy sexual abuse allegations, 5) the Archdiocese failed to conduct thorough investigations of clergy sexual abuse allegations, 6) the Archdiocese placed children at risk

by transferring abusive priests to other parishes, 7) the Archdiocese placed children at risk by accepting abusive priests from other Dioceses, 8) the Archdiocese placed children at risk by transferring abusive priests to other Dioceses in the United States and abroad, 9) the Archdiocese failed to adequately supervise priests known to have sexually abused children in the past (Boston Report 2003).

More specifically, the introduction of the report, written by Massachusetts Attorney General Thomas F. Reilly, mentioned that the Archdiocese had withheld records containing complaints of sexual abuse from 789 victims (Reilly 1). In addition, approximately 250 priests and church workers had been accused of raping or sexually assaulting children over nearly six decades (Reilly 1). Later in the document, Reilly mentioned his motivations for publishing the report: “The mistreatment of children was so massive and so prolonged that it borders on the unbelievable. This report will confirm to all who may read it, now and in the future, that this tragedy was real” (Reilly 2). In the report, countless senior members of the Archdiocese of Boston, including Cardinal Bernard Law, Bishop Thomas Daily, Bishop Robert Banks, Bishop Alfred Hughes, Bishop William Murphy, and Bishop John McCormack (among others) were mentioned for their failure to report sexual abuse, transfer of abusive priests to other locations, failure to investigate allegations of sexual abuse, and inactivity in limiting the roles of abusive priests who had been evaluated by psychological professionals (Boston Report 31-9). The report also named ten priests in the Archdiocese who had been involved in sexual misconduct. In the years following both the Boston Report and subsequent articles from *The Boston Globe*’s Spotlight Team, many victims

continued to come forward as well as take legal action against the Archdiocese of Boston, leaving it, at times, in financial trouble (NCR Staff 2015).

Religion and Sport:

Scholars have identified and analyzed the parallels between the spheres of religion and sport for many years. Rebecca Alpert succinctly describes some of them in

Religion and Sports: An Introduction and Case Studies:

Elements such as the special language (my description contains phrases as incomprehensible to the uninitiated as one finds in any religious tradition), the fallible hero who makes good, the ritual celebrations, the connection to a historic tradition, the meticulous keeping of records, the loyalty of fans across generations, and the sense of a cosmic connection to something outside oneself—all are markers of religious experience as it is commonly understood (Alpert 2).

As Alpert explains, there is perhaps more connecting the cultures of religion and sport than there is separating them. In the case of Penn State football, several reporters were quick to draw comparisons between the football program and religion in the wake of the Sandusky scandal. For example, in an opinion piece published in the aftermath of Joe Paterno's firing, Bill Plaschke commented,

...for 46 years it was not really Penn State University, it was Paterno State University. It was a school that sold its soul to football coach Joe Paterno for the sake of riches and recognition, a school that found its identity in his plain uniforms and lived its life by his corny pep talks. Paterno was allowed to play God, and so his longtime assistant coach Jerry Sandusky was allowed to do whatever he wanted, wherever he wanted ... Penn State created Joe Paterno, worshiped Joe Paterno, and stunningly required four long days to finally throw the phony out into the street Wednesday

when public furor forced the school's board of trustees to fire him for not reporting Sandusky to police (Plaschke 1).

By using overtly religious language and implying themes of Christ being embodied by Paterno (iconic “uniforms” and pep talks as scripture), Plaschke comments ironically on Penn State’s football culture. It is hard to fault Plaschke for having this perception of Penn State football culture, as the university community often embraced and even encouraged this view of their local football program. From the elevation of their head coach through nicknames like “Saint Joe,” to a widespread belief in the inherent morality of the program itself, to the treatment of Paterno’s statue being removed as the denigration of religious monument, the line between the football program and a religious institution grew blurrier with each passing season.

The experience of college football in the United States has also been readily compared to the sacred world by many academics.³⁰ Indeed, the apparently ritualistic tailgating and viewing of college football contests on Fall Saturdays is not dissimilar from weekly attendance at mass or other ceremonial religious gatherings. Especially in Happy Valley, the quasi-religious feel of gameday at Beaver Stadium is difficult to ignore, as crowds of fans and students almost perfectly exemplify what Émile Durkheim called “collective effervescence” in his ethnographic work focused on Australian tribal religions:

It seems to him that he has become a new being. The decorations with which he is decked out... represent this inward

³⁰ Eric Bain-Selbo, "Ecstasy, Joy and Sorrow: The Religious Experience of Southern College Football."

transformation...And because his companions feel transformed in the same way at the same moment, and express this feeling by their shouts, movements, and bearing, it is as if he was in reality transported into a special world entirely from the one in which he ordinarily lives, a special world inhabited by exceptionally intense forces that invade and transform him (Durkheim 220).

This passage, which could just as easily describe the Penn State student section in Beaver Stadium as it does a tribal ceremony, helps to demonstrate how the *experience* of sport and religion can be linked just as simply as their general culture. Whether individuals are congregating for religious or athletic purposes, there is no denying the sense of collective identity that emerges when members of a community come together to participate in a spectacle of any kind.

While these connections between religion and sport are clear, the tie between the specific instances of child abuse at Penn State and within the Archdiocese of Boston lies in how these cultures, as well as public identification with each of them, not only enabled the transgressions, but also kept them hidden and conditioned responses to the crimes ultimately being revealed. These two public tragedies share common themes of sexual marginalization and repression and a shared desire to preserve a reputation of institutional purity on the part of constituent members. The example of the abuses carried out within the Archdiocese of Boston was larger in scale and in the resultant public rejection of the institution at fault, but still manifested denial and distraction in the response of religious officials like Pope John Paul II. Like the UNC scandal, it serves as another tragic example of crisis response and collective identity in the context of Penn State's own child abuse scandal.

The Culture of Cover-Up:

It is entirely reasonable to wonder just how knowledge of such abhorrent crimes could have been kept contained for so long. The simple answer to this question lies in the power of institutions in conditioning individual behavior. Just as Penn State administrators sought to conceal Sandusky's assaults for the sake of preserving a glorified image of their football program, so too did members of the clergy in the Archdiocese of Boston. In his discussion of clergy response to sexual abuse allegations, Paul Dokecki reinforces this point: "This pattern of church actions seems to convey an overarching message: We must avoid scandal, protect the church's standing as a 'sinless' institution, and preserve our power at any cost. So, in defending against clergy sexual abuse allegations and suits, the ends justify the means" (Dokecki 78). With so much at stake for members of the religious order, it is no surprise that they acted to defend their organization. This behavior was modeled almost perfectly in the Penn State case, as administrators had no interest in dealing with the degradation to their university that would come with publicizing Sandusky's assaults. Thus, they had no choice but to cover-up the crime in an attempt to preserve the reputation of their institution.

Beyond the preservation of reputation, the leaders of many groups engaging in cover-ups justify their behavior as serving the members of their institution. In describing the culture of concealment within the Archdiocese of Boston, Marie Keenan validates this feeling of public service, "The approach, based on a 'theology of scandal,' implied that giving scandal would undermine the faith of the people and the credibility of the Church. Church leaders believed that they must protect the people from being

scandalized... They believed it was better for everyone if this information did not reach the public realm” (Keenan 206). In the case of Penn State, administrators likely quelled moral anxiety stemming from the cover-up by acknowledging how damaged the campus and broader State College community would be by knowledge of Sandusky’s transgressions. These justifications are not unique to the Archdiocese of Boston or Penn State University, as the rationalization of criminal action as beneficial for the community is a common strategy of the perpetrators of cover-ups.

Those directly involved in the cover-up of criminal behavior are not the only ones who have the potential to have their behavior governed by institutional interests. In State College and Boston alike, community members enabled cover-ups through attitudes of deference to their beloved institutions. The Spotlight Team went to great lengths in their novel to explain how a largely Catholic population in Boston exemplified these attitudes:

Given the predominance of Irish Catholics in Massachusetts law enforcement circles, it’s not surprising there had been little appetite to prosecute priests for anything, including the sexual abuse of children ... It was the same in politics, where the names that dominated city hall and the State House, and those who represented the city and state in Washington, were Curley, McCormack, O’Neill, Flynn, and, most famously, Kennedy (Spotlight Team 120).

In this passage, the Spotlight Team makes an argument that harkens back to discussion of the Penn State loyalists. In a community where so many individuals uniformly subscribe to the ideology of a similar group (Penn State football culture or Catholicism), interrogation of that same institution is rarely allowed. A lack of intellectual dissonance in a community may also stem from individuals fearing a loss of the benefits their institution can provide should they choose to dissent. In the case of the Catholic church

“children are socialized from their earliest years to see the church (‘mother church’) and the priest (‘father’) as trusted means to achieving their most important ends -- the salvation of their immortal soul, the avoidance of eternal punishment in hell, and the achievement of the perfect end to a good life...” (Dokecki 58). While it is true that the institutional weight and reach of the Penn State football program pales in comparison to the Catholic church, there is a great deal that the program itself can offer its fans.

Whether one is seeking a sense of pride, a feeling of belonging (many Penn Staters have grown fond of saying they attend home football games with “110,000 of their closest friends”), or even financial rewards, there are significant benefits that can be lost by calling the behavior of an institution into question. In this sense, members of the State College and Boston communities can not only be considered similar for the ideological indoctrination they may have been subjected to (through ideological homogeneity) but also for their consideration of the benefits offered to them by their institution. Thus, a culture of silence is allowed to infect the general population of a community, not just its most powerful members.

Masculinity and Power:

Another shared component of these scandals is the institutional marginalization of non-normative sexuality. The homosexual nature of Sandusky’s assaults represented a breach of hegemonic conceptions of masculinity in the world of football. This “unacceptable” behavior contributed to vague reporting language and a public elimination of the victims themselves. In the case of the Archdiocese of Boston, sexual

assaults by clergymen also represented a deviation from institutional conceptions of appropriate sexuality. The fact that a majority of the victims of individuals like Geoghan were male (Rezendes 1) makes the scandal doubly abhorrent in terms of Catholic doctrine (non-heteronormative and violation of celibacy). Thus, through their sexual assault on male victims, priests of the Archdiocese of Boston portrayed imperfect masculinity in a religious context, much like Sandusky had in a football setting. In her volume on the issue of child abuse in the Catholic Church, Keenan outlines the expectations of masculinity codified in the priesthood:

Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity is the form of masculinity that is in the hegemonic position and promoted by the Catholic Church as the 'ideal' type. It is a version of clerical masculinity in which perfection is the goal and perfect celibacy and chastity is the norm. Perfect Celibate Clerical Masculinity invites ways of living premised on emotional, social, and sexual perfection. Human transgressions and failure to achieve perfection are seen as personal failures and sinful weakness (Keenan 244).

The role of celibacy in defining Clerical Masculinity above operates in the same way that enthusiastic displays of heterosexuality do in an athletic setting (although thinly veiled homosociality is also present). In both cases, hegemonic conceptions of acceptable sexuality and masculinity exist to govern the behavior of community members. It is when key figures within an institution fail to obey normalized conceptions of masculinity and sexuality, as the two are intertwined, that institutional leaders often take it upon themselves to remediate issues of deviance. Unfortunately, this remediation almost always necessitates a cover-up, as handling the deviance internally will allow institutions to maintain good standing in terms of public image.

While the sexual deviance at the core of each of these scandals can be viewed as a motivating factor for leaders' concealment of criminal behavior, the issue of sexuality is more complicated than this. In both cases, responses to allegations of sexual abuse had the potential to condition public response to scandal by generating a shared discomfort in naming the crimes committed by clergymen like Geoghan. Victim survivors of sexual abuse perpetrated by officials of the Catholic Church around the globe often mention this uneasiness in their parish communities following knowledge of their trauma being circulated.³¹ One such member of the Church discussed this trend when recounting the aftermath of their being abused, "Some people, though not many, avoided me. Not, I think, because of indifference but because of their personal discomfort at the nature of my transgression" (Heggen 141). In this way, discomfort with deviant behavior emerges as a pattern across multiple instances of child abuse and can lead to ineffective responses from community members in terms of addressing problematic and criminal behavior.

Responses to the Boston Scandal:

Responses to the child abuse scandal in the Archdiocese of Boston were predominantly much different than those in Happy Valley following the Sandusky scandal. In the Penn State case, many members of insider subgroups (fans, students, retail shop owners) were shown going to great lengths to ignore Sandusky's crimes and speak out against groups they felt were out to get them. The general population of Catholics

³¹ Carolyn H. Heggen, "Congregational Support for Victims of Sexual Abuse"

largely deviated from this response once they were informed of the crimes perpetrated by their once-trusted clergymen. In particular, Catholics did not seem to engage in any widespread denial as Penn State supporters had, nor did they attempt to appeal to an inherent sense of morality that their institution possessed. That being said, certain members of the Catholic church did partake in the familiar tactic of self-victimization because of a feeling of institutional betrayal.

The Spotlight Team of *The Boston Globe* outlined a general feeling of outrage amongst American Catholics following the news of the scandal in Boston:

For many, the clergy sexual abuse scandal was the final straw in their relationship with the Church hierarchy, a relationship that had been fraying for several generations as U.S. Catholics struggled to balance their American values of democracy and egalitarianism with their Catholic understanding of authority and clericalism. Thousands had simply left the church...Those who formed organizations to push for change were defined by Church leaders as marginal, fringe, even non-Catholic (Spotlight Team 186).

This widespread movement away from a formerly trusted institution and push for institutional reform³² is a pattern that initially distinguishes the response to the scandal in the Archdiocese of Boston from the response to crisis at Penn State. The above quotation also mentions that many Catholic Americans already had weakened religious devotion prior to the sexual abuse. This element of a prior movement away from an institution helping to position an instance of scandal as a “final straw” is absent in the Penn State

³² Harvard professor Mary Jo Bane helped to promote this sentiment in saying, “I will give no money to the archdiocese until steps are taken to remedy structural and cultural flaws that created the current crisis, I urge my fellow Catholics to do the same. Perhaps then the cardinal will pay attention to those of us who love the Church, who grieve for what has happened to it, but who hope for what it can become” (Spotlight Team 185).

case, as Nittany Lion fans were not wrestling with their willingness to identify with the football program prior to the Sandusky scandal. The Penn State football program also did not lose followers en masse after the Sandusky scandal. On the contrary, supporters of the program actually became more vocally loyal to their Nittany Lions. In spite of this distinction, American Catholics did engage in certain behavior we have grown to expect from members of a group found in a crisis situation.

By breaking parish communities into focus groups and inquiring about their feelings regarding child abuse in the Catholic Church, Paul Kline and his team found that, “[f]our major themes were identified within the groups: (a) a deep hurt in response to perceived betrayal by church leaders, (b) a reawakening of pain connected to past injuries by clergy, (c) an effort to cope by separating relationship with God from relationship with the church, and (d) a concern for the spiritual well-being of other family members” (Kline et al 290). This style of response should look familiar, as members of these focus groups responded to an institutional crisis by shifting focus to their role as victims. These parishioners were concerned first and foremost with how they had been betrayed and subsequently victimized by their religious leaders. In these types of responses, no concern is expressed for the true victims (those assaulted in the Archdiocese of Boston) and, therefore, the crime itself is indirectly buried or ignored by Catholic community members. At Penn State, reactions of this nature took center stage, as students, fans, shop owners, and other community members felt the need to comment upon their victimization (for example, siege mentality, institutional betrayal, etc.).

Aside from reaction of the general population of Catholic citizens, another controversial response to the criminal activity in the Archdiocese of Boston came from the Vatican. In an address to American Cardinals, Pope John Paul II promoted what was widely received as a problematic stance on the issues at hand:

The abuse of the young is a grave symptom of a crisis affecting not only the Church but society as a whole. It is a deep-seated crisis of sexual morality, even of human relationships, and its prime victims are the family and the young. In addressing the problem of abuse with clarity and determination, the Church will help society to understand and deal with the crisis in its midst. It must be absolutely clear to the Catholic faithful, and to the wider community, that Bishops and superiors are concerned, above all else, with the spiritual good of souls. People need to know that there is no place in the priesthood and religious life for those who would harm the young. They must know that Bishops and priests are totally committed to the fullness of Catholic truth on matters of sexual morality, a truth as essential to the renewal of the priesthood and the episcopate as it is to the renewal of marriage and family life (John Paul II 1).

In this excerpt of his address to American Cardinals, Pope John Paul II uses specific language to paint the Catholic Church in a positive light as well as reassert the Church's claim to proper definitions of morality. His address to American Cardinals does little to acknowledge the crisis that had just been uncovered in Boston or its victims. Pope John Paul II seems to use this address as a tool to direct public focus toward the positive attributes of the Catholic Church. This apparent function of the address relates to strategic comments made by insiders and leaders at Penn State and North Carolina. Consequently, it functions as a vital component to any argument being made that the discourse surrounding the child abuse scandal in the Archdiocese of Boston largely mirrored that at PSU and UNC during the aftermath of each of their scandals.

The reaction of Cardinal Seán Patrick O'Malley (the current Archbishop of Boston) to the cinematic portrayal of the scandal that took place in his Archdiocese prior to his tenure can also be analyzed as a compelling response to crisis. Following his viewing of director Tom McCarthy's Oscar winning *Spotlight*, O'Malley was quick to praise the film, "By providing in-depth reporting on the history of the clergy sexual abuse crisis, the media led the Church to acknowledge the crimes and sins of its personnel and to begin to address its failings, the harm done to victims and their families and the needs of survivors. In a democracy such as ours, journalism is essential to our way of life." (O'Malley 2016). O'Malley's comment largely surprised the public, as few expected the Cardinal to have such celebratory things to say about a film that is so critical of the Catholic Church. By having such a positive perception of the film, Cardinal O'Malley displayed his ability to engage in psychological splitting (separate himself from the institution he identifies with so as not to internalize critiques of the Catholic Church) and recognize the true victims of the scandal. As previous discussion has demonstrated, members of other institutions (PSU or UNC) rarely responded so positively to reminders of scandal surrounding their institution. Interestingly, the film, which producer, Michael Sugar, hoped would give a voice to the victims of scandal that would "resonate all the way to the Vatican," was widely recognized as not anti-Catholic (Glatz 1). Therefore, the Catholic community, including certain prominent clergymen, separated itself from the Penn State and North Carolina communities for its ability to take proper ownership of criminal activity and recognize true victims without being bogged down by frustration or institutional allegiance (at least in the context of this particular film).

While some responses to the child abuse scandal in the Archdiocese of Boston were shown to deviate from trends outlined in the cases of Penn State and UNC, many of the same strategies were employed by members of the Catholic Church as fans of Penn State football or students at the University of North Carolina. Catholic parishioners took part in typical instances of self-victimization and shifting of public attention away from the true victims of the scandal. Pope John Paul II's address to American Cardinals also engaged in the latter of these discursive strategies in its attempts to assert the value of practicing Catholicism all while reifying the Church's grasp on morality. What made the discourse surrounding the Boston scandal unique was the widespread recognition by Church members and leaders that what happened in their Archdiocese was a tragedy that could have been prevented. In speaking out against or leaving the church, or supporting artistic production that served as a reminder of the scandal, the Catholic Church's constituent members were able to free themselves from the pattern of reactions put on display at PSU and UNC. Doing so represented a widespread ability amongst the Catholic community to not only hear critiques of their beloved institution but also generate their own.

Conclusion: What is to be Done?

The striking similarities between responses to scandal in the Catholic Archdiocese of Boston and at Penn State University help to exemplify the universality of group dynamics and crisis responses discussed in the second chapter of this thesis. In either case, individual identification with an institution allows for the widespread conditioning

of member behavior (for example, groupthink, siege mentality, shifting of victimhood, etc.). The distinction between the secular and sacred nature of these institutions invites both a discussion of how religion and sports intertwine and also an understanding of the cultural force of sports in American culture. The fact that fans of all sports attribute quasi-religious significance to their teams is certainly something that contributes to the resemblance of fan and parishioner response to scandal in some cases. In both the case of religion and sport, individuals likely look to larger groups/institutions for benefits (for example, eternal salvation or bragging rights) and a sense of belonging. These benefits, (which lead individuals to invest large portions of their identities into an institution) are what lead to such vehement protection of an institution on the part of its members, whether that institution is a religious organization or a football team.

In an athletic setting, fans of big-time college sports have grown accustomed to hearing about scandals surfacing at institutions like Penn State and North Carolina. The echoes of scandal still ring in the ears of University of Miami and University of Michigan fans. More recently, Rick Pitino's Louisville men's basketball program has come under fire for major recruiting violations.³³ Also, Michigan State has gained national attention not only for sexual assault allegations targeted at their football and men's basketball programs but also for its connection to Larry Nassar.³⁴ This list of prestigious athletic

³³ The University of Louisville men's basketball program was forced to vacate 123 wins (including a 2013 National Championship Title) and return nearly \$600,000 in revenue due to a sex-recruiting scandal. According to Gary B. Graves of the Associated Press, strippers and prostitutes were hired for parties attended by men's basketball recruits in order to entice them to attend Louisville.

³⁴ An ESPN "Outside the Lines" investigation has uncovered a culture of sexual assault cover-up and denial at Michigan State University involving the men's basketball and football programs. MSU has also been

programs mired in scandal is far from complete, as many other programs have had moral lapses sully their reputations. The prevalence of scandal in the world of big-time college sports points to a toxic culture of denial, cover-up, and general acceptance of corruption for the sake of money and prestige. Although blame for these scandals falls almost entirely on the shoulders of high-profile “monsters” like Sandusky, Nassar, Crowder, and Nyang’oro, the problem extends to more than just these vilified individuals. Fans, students, administrators, and business executives, among others, should also be held accountable for their implicit involvement in enabling academic fraud, sexual assault, and other crimes. In other words, responsibility for scandal should not rest solely with those mentioned in investigative reports.

The high frequency of corrupt behavior being undertaken by the leaders of large groups and enabled by their constituent members demonstrated in this thesis ultimately leads to two major questions: Why do we care about these issues and what can we possibly do about them? The answer to the first question raised seems obvious, but is also important. By reducing the number of occurrences like the PSU, UNC, or Catholic Church scandals, fewer victims and victim survivors will have their lives irreparably damaged by criminals who are largely only allowed to operate due to the cultural weight of their institutions. It is nothing short of tragic when the amount of wins a coach is recognized with or institutional reputation take precedence over the life of a young boy. The remedy for our second question is certainly more complicated. While the

criticized for mishandling reports of sexual abuse directed at Larry Nassar, who served as a trainer for the women’s gymnastics program (although he also sexually abused athletes in his role with USA Gymnastics).

psychological and social dynamics discussed in this thesis serve as factors that condition the behavior of individuals are powerful when they emerge, they are not unique to one particular environment. Even as context changes from the world of sports to the realm of the sacred, similarly widespread negative attitudes toward what group members see as threatening “outsider” ideology can be discerned. In addition, the shifting of victimhood and pervasiveness of denial manifest themselves in myriad institutional crisis scenarios.

These parallels can actually be leveraged by those looking to mitigate instances of institutional corruption. More popularized identification of these nearly universal dynamics at play could be the first step towards a solution. Simply by making more individuals aware of these group dynamics, it may be more likely that these same people are willing and able to take a step back from their institution and not allow identification with a particular group to entirely govern their behavior. Individuals should never be silenced for having opinions that do not fit into an institution’s normalized discourse. Following from this potential for more common psychological splitting and identity interrogation, group members can adopt more scrutinizing perspectives of their high-status leaders. In sporting cases, popular or successful coaches and players should not have the ability to overshadow the victims of scandal. These same individuals should also not be exempt from common moral standards for their ability to bring prestige to an institution or generate revenue for a community. In any other context, the leaders and popular figures of an institution should not be treated as infallible. Although these are two tasks that likely will not be able to be undertaken in all groups, the more common

they become, the less often the public will be presented with information on scandals that, sadly, no longer shocks anyone.

Works Cited

- Abrams, Lynn. *Oral History Theory*. London, Routledge, 2010.
- Alderfer, Clayton P. "Not Just Football: An Intergroup Perspective on the Sandusky Scandal at Penn State." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Originally published in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 117-33.
- Alpert, Rebecca T. "Why Study Religion and Sports, Anyway?" Introduction. *Religion and Sports: An Introduction and Case Studies*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2015, pp. 1-38.
- Associated Press. "Penn State students hold candlelight vigil." *CBS News*, 12 Nov. 2011. Accessed 22 Mar. 2018.
- Associated Press, and CBS. "Paterno fired over Penn St. child abuse scandal." *CBS News*, 10 Nov. 2011, www.cbsnews.com/news/paterno-fired-over-penn-st-child-abuse-scandal/. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Bailey, Sarah F., and Amanda J. Ferguson. "Not Just Intergroup: The Role of Status Within Groups in the Sandusky Scandal." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Originally published in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 149-52.
- Bain-Selbo, Eric. "Ecstasy, Joy and Sorrow: The Religious Experience of Southern College Football." *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture*, vol. 20, no. 1, Fall 2008.

- Balis, Drew. "NCAA Issues Statement in Response to Corbett Lawsuit." *Onward State*, 2 Jan. 2013. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Bar-Lev, Amir, director. *Happy Valley*. 2014.
- Bar-Tal, Daniel. *Shared Beliefs in a Society: Social Psychological Analysis*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2000.
- . "Siege Mentality." *The Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology*, edited by Daniel J. Christie, vol. 1, Malden, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 996-1000.
- Bar-Tal, Daniel, and Dikla Antebi. "Siege Mentality in Israel." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*. Originally published in *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, vol. 16, no. 3, Summer 1992, pp. 251-75.
- Bayless, Skip, and Rob Parker, performers. *ESPN First Take*. YouTube, uploaded by ESPN Player, 10 Nov. 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=b42N5-zA8AU&t=5s. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018. Performance.
- BBC News. "Penn State students riot after coach Joe Paterno sacked." *BBC News*, 10 Nov. 2011, www.bbc.com/news/av/world-us-canada-15683505/penn-state-students-riot-after-coach-joe-paterno-sacked. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Bennett, Abbie. "'How the hell did North Carolina get away with this?' Media react to NCAA ruling on UNC." *The News & Observer*, 16 Oct. 2017, www.newsobserver.com/sports/college/acc/unc/article179133761.html. Accessed 29 Mar. 2018.
- Boston Globe. *Betrayal: the Crisis in the Catholic Church*. Boston, Little, Brown, 2002.

- Brescó, Ignacio, and Brady Wagoner. "Context in the cultural psychology of remembering: Illustrated with a case study of conflict in national memory." *Contextualizing Human Memory: An interdisciplinary approach to understanding how individuals and groups remember the past*, edited by Charles Stone and Lucas Bietti, New York, Routledge, 2016.
- Brooks, David. "The Siege Mentality Problem." *The New York Times*, 13 Nov. 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/11/13/opinion/roy-moore-conservative-evangelicals.html. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018. Editorial.
- Brown, Natalie A., et al. "'May No Act of Ours Bring Shame': Fan-Enacted Crisis Communication Surrounding the Penn State Sex Abuse Scandal." *Communication & Sport*, vol. 3, 2015, pp. 288-311.
- Bruty, Simon. Beaver Stadium White Out. *Sports Illustrated*, 20 Oct. 2017, www.si.com/college-football/photo/2017/10/20/penn-state-nittany-lions-lavar-arrington-whiteout#1. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- Butler, Judith. "Critically Queer." *The Routledge Queer Studies Reader*, edited by Donald E. Hall and Annamarie Jagose, New York, Routledge, 2012, pp. 18-30.
- Caruth, Cathy. *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- CNN Staff. "Penn State Scandal Fast Facts." *CNN*, 28 Nov. 2017, www.cnn.com/2013/10/28/us/penn-state-scandal-fast-facts/index.html. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

- Cole, Dave. A news van lies on its side amidst the Joe Paterno firing protests. *Onward State*, 2011, onwardstate.com/2014/10/17/violence-on-campus-how-president-eric-walker-was-driven-from-his-home-in-1970/. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- Cramer, Phebe. *The Development of Defense Mechanisms: Theory, Research, and Assessment*. New York, Springer-Verlag, 1991.
- Darcy, Jeff. *Jerry Sandusky horsing around: Editorial cartoon*. 18 Nov. 2011.
- . *Paterno fumbles moral obligation: Editorial cartoon*. 12 Nov. 2011.
- . *Penn State penalty severity: Editorial cartoon Print Email Jeff Darcy, cleveland.com*. 25 July 2012.
- Dokecki, Paul R. *The Clergy Sexual Abuse Crisis*. Washington, D.C., Georgetown University Press, 2004.
- Douglas, Tom. *Scapegoats: Transferring Blame*. London, Routledge, 1995.
- Dowler, Loraine, et al. "Challenging 'The Penn State Way': a feminist response to institutional violence in higher education." *Gender, Place & Culture*. Originally published in *Gender, Place & Culture*, vol. 21, no. 3, 2014, pp. 387-94.
- Emmert, Mark. "The Seth Davis Show | Mark Emmert On The Penn State Decision." Interview by Seth Davis. *YouTube*, uploaded by Stadium, 13 Jan. 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0YiX-gKvrw. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.
- Erickson, Rodney. "Statement by Penn State President Rodney Erickson related to Joe Paterno Statue." *Penn State News*, 22 July 2012, news.psu.edu/story/147826/2012/07/22/penn-state-president-issues-statement-related-paterno-statue. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.

- Evoke Apparel - Penn State Pride - We Are More Than Football... *Pinterest*,
www.pinterest.co.uk/evokeapparel/penn-state-pride-graphic-tees-hoodies-tanks/.
 Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- "Fan Reaction to Penn State Sanctions." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Ten Network, 23 July
 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=G75yi527X8U. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.
- "409 Legendary Shoes Tee-Men's." McLanahan's, pennstateroom.com/72-joe-paterno-merchandise. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- Freeh, Louis. *Report of the Special Investigative Counsel Regarding the Actions of The Pennsylvania State University Related to the Child Sexual Abuse Committed by Gerald A. Sandusky*. Freeh, Sporkin & Sullivan, 12 July 2012.
- Freeh, Louis J. "Statement of Louis J. Freeh." *ESPN*, 10 Feb. 2013,
www.espn.com/espn/otl/story/_/id/8933344/louis-j-freeh-statement-response-paterno-family-report. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.
- French, Peter A. *Ethics and College Sports*. Lanham, Rowman & Littlefield, 2004.
- Freud, Anna. *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defence*. London, Karnac Books, 1993.
- Freyd, Jennifer, and Pamela Birrell. *Blind to Betrayal: Why We Fool Ourselves We Aren't Being Fooled*. Hoboken, Wiley, 2013.
- Ganim, Sara. "Riot at Penn State is most costly, destructive in 15 years, State College police chief says." *Penn Live*, 21 Dec. 2011,
www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2011/12/riot_at_penn_state_is_most_cos.html. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.
- Gifford, Charley. *Wait, JoePa Was Fired?* 13 Nov. 2011.

- Giroux, Henry A., and Susan Searls Giroux. "Universities Gone Wild: Big Money, Big Sports, and Scandalous Abuse at Penn State." *SAGE Publications*. Originally published in *Cultural Studies, Critical Methodologies*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2012, pp. 267-73.
- Glatz, Carol. "Spotlight is not anti-Catholic, Vatican newspaper says." *Catholic News Service*, 29 Feb. 2016,
www.catholicnews.com/services/englishnews/2016/spotlight-is-not-anticatholic-vatican-newspaper-says.cfm. Accessed 20 Mar. 2018.
- Graves, Gary B. "Louisville must vacate basketball title, NCAA denies appeal." *AP News*, Associated Press, 20 Feb. 2018,
www.apnews.com/c2c67d13ef72450894095dc3369ee185. Accessed 24 Mar. 2018.
- Heggen, Carolyn H. "Congregational Support for Victims of Sexual Abuse." *Sexual Abuse in Christian Homes and Churches*, Eugene, Wipf and Stock, 2006, pp. 136-52.
- Herman, Judith. *Trauma and Recovery*. New York, BasicBooks, 1992.
- Hermann, Jourdin. "No One Cried For Help: The Integration of Groupthink into Modern Rape Culture." *Themis*. Originally published in *Themis: Research Journal of Justice Studies and Forensic Science*, vol. 2, no. 1, 2014, pp. 47-63.
- Horne, Kevin. "Governor Corbett Introduces NCAA Lawsuit." *Onward State*, 2 Jan. 2013, onwardstate.com/2013/01/02/governor-corbett-formally-announces-ncaa-lawsuit/. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

"Intelligent student is interviewed by ESPN, interrupted by idiot after Joe Paterno firing."

Interview by Tom Farrey. *YouTube*, uploaded by Lattestone671, 11 Nov. 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZOrHNbjkeU&t=24s. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

Janis, Irving L. *Group-Think*. 2nd, rev. ed., Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983.

Keenan, Marie. *Child Sexual Abuse & the Catholic Church: Gender, Power, and Organizational Culture*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012.

Kistner, Lesley. "The Power of Penn State Sports' Economic Engine." *Graphcom*, 2014, digital.graphcompubs.com/publication/?i=233537&article_id=1859975&view=articleBrowser&ver=html5#%22{%22issue_id%22:233537,%22view%22:%22articleBrowser%22,%22article_id%22:%221859975%22. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.

Kline, Paul M., et al. "The Impact of the Clergy Abuse Scandal on Parish Communities." *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*. Originally published in *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, vol. 17, no. 3, 2008, pp. 290-300.

Krakauer, Jon. *Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town*. New York, Anchor Books, 2015.

LaCapra, Dominick. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Lavigne, Paula, and Nicole Noren. "OTL: Michigan State secrets extend far beyond Larry Nassar case." *ESPN*, 1 Feb. 2018, www.espn.com/espn/story/_/id/22214566/pattern-denial-inaction-information-suppression-michigan-state-goes-larry-nassar-case-espn. Accessed 24 Mar. 2018.

- Lewis, James R., editor. *The Oxford Handbook of New Religious Movements*. Vol. 1, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Lucas, Kristen, and Jeremy P. Fyke. "Euphemisms and Ethics: A Language-Centered Analysis of Penn State's Sexual Abuse Scandal." *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 122, no. 4, July 2014, pp. 551-69.
- Manfred, Tony. "The Number of Potential Victims in the Penn State Scandal Has Doubled in the Last 24 Hours." *Business Insider*, 8 Nov. 2011, www.businessinsider.com/jerry-sandusky-victims-2011-11. Accessed 1 Apr. 2018.
- Martin, Trevor, and Ross Finkel, directors. *Schooled: The Price of College Sports*. Epix, 2013.
- McCarthy, Tom, director. *Spotlight*. Open Road Films, 2015.
- Morrison, Elizabeth Wolfe, and Frances J. Milliken. "Speaking Up, Remaining Silent: The Dynamics of Voice and Silence in Organizations." *Journal of Management Studies*. Originally published in *Journal of Management Studies*, Sept. 2003, pp. 1353-58.
- Moushey, Bill, and Bob Dvorchak. *Game Over: Jerry Sandusky, Penn State, and the Culture of Silence*. New York, HarperCollins, 2012.
- Murphy, Jan. "Joe Paterno: A Life - A Fundraiser Supreme." *Penn Live*, 24 Jan. 2012, www.pennlive.com/specialprojects/index.ssf/2012/01/joe_paterno_a_life_-_a_fundrai.html. Accessed 1 Apr. 2018.

- "NCAA President Sanction Statements." *YouTube*, uploaded by Big Ten Network, 23 July 2012, www.youtube.com/watch?v=qa7D8L4jCMQ. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- NCR Staff. Timeline of a crisis. *National Catholic Reporter*, 6 July 2015, www.ncronline.org/blogs/ncr-today/timeline-crisis. Accessed 19 Mar. 2018.
- Nelson, Mariah Burton. *The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football: Sexism and the American Culture of Sports*. PerfectBound, 2001.
- "O'Brien's Lions" T-Shirt. *Ebay*, 23 Feb. 2018, www.ebay.com/itm/OBRIENS-LIONS-T-SHIRT-SIZE-SMALL-PENN-STATE-/263500276103. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- Paterno, Sue. "Exclusive: Was Joe Paterno Involved in a Cover-Up at Penn State?" Interview by Katie Couric. *YouTube*, uploaded by Katie Couric, 11 Feb. 2013, www.youtube.com/watch?v=6I5-oH2jLms&t=3s. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Paterno Family. "Paterno family statement on the tearing down of Joe Paterno statue." *Paterno: The Record*, 22 July 2012, www.paterno.com/family-statements/post/Paterno-family-statement-on-the-tearing-down-of-Joe-Paterno-statue.aspx. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- . "Statement by the Paterno Family in response to NCAA Sanctions." *Paterno: The Record*, 23 July 2012, www.paterno.com/family-statements/post/Statement-by-the-Paterno-Family-in-response-to-NCAA-Sanctions.aspx. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Paul II, John. "Address of John Paul II to the Cardinals of the United States." *The Holy See*, 23 Apr. 2002, w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-

ii/en/speeches/2002/april/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20020423_usa-cardinals.html.
Accessed 19 Mar. 2018.

"Penn State fan interviewed." *YouTube*, 9 Nov. 2011,
www.youtube.com/watch?v=HpMdK2IcSzU&t=5s. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

"Penn State Scandal - Live Outside Paterno's Home Rally." *YouTube*, uploaded by Matt Maisel, 15 Nov. 2011, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZeRDKM14OJs. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.

Plaschke, Bill. "This should be the end of Paterno State." *The Los Angeles Times*, 9 Nov. 2011, articles.latimes.com/2011/nov/09/sports/la-sp-plaschke-paterno-fired-20111110. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

"RAW VIDEO: Joe Paterno talks to Penn State students from his window." *YouTube*, uploaded by Dailycollegian, 8 Nov. 2011,
www.youtube.com/watch?v=4O0EeTDWVPc. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.

"Reaction from NC State's campus to the NCAA ruling in Chapel Hill." Interview by Robert Willett. *The News & Observer*, 13 Oct. 2017,
www.newsobserver.com/news/local/education/unc-scandal/article178779926.html. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.

Reilly, Thomas F. *The Sexual Abuse of Children in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston: A Report by the Attorney General*. Boston, The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, 23 July 2003.

Reino, Mark. "Cartoons of the Week." *SC6*, 15 July 2012,
sc6.blogspot.com/2012/07/cartoons-of-week_15.html. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.

- Rezendes, Michael. "Church allowed abuse by priest for years." *The Boston Globe*. *The Boston Globe*, www.bostonglobe.com/news/special-reports/2002/01/06/church-allowed-abuse-priest-for-years/cSHfGkTlrAT25qKGvBuDNM/story.html. Accessed 18 Mar. 2018. Originally published in *The Boston Globe* [Boston], 6 Jan. 2002.
- Rittenberg, Adam. "Paterno family statement on statue removal." *ESPN*, 22 July 2012, www.espn.com/blog/ncfnation/post/_/id/63131/paterno-family-statement-on-statue-removal. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.
- Rogers, Rob. *Paterno Statue*. 12 May 2014.
- . *Pope JoePa*. 10 Nov. 2011.
- Rosenbloom, Steve. "Pedophilia State University idiots just don't get it." *Chicago Tribune*, 10 Nov. 2011, www.chicagotribune.com/sports/rosenblog/chi-penn-state-idiots-dont-get-it-20111110-column.html. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Rubin, Jennifer. "Joe Paterno doesn't get it, is fired." *The Washington Post*, 9 Nov. 2011, www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/right-turn/post/joe-paterno-doesnt-get-it/2011/11/09/gIQAnrhZ6M_blog.html?utm_term=.d1fa3dba7dfb. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Sanderson, Jimmy, and Marion E. Hambrick. "Covering the Scandal in 140 Characters: A Case Study of Twitter's Role in Coverage of the Penn State Saga." *International Journal of Sport Communication*, vol. 5, 2012, pp. 384-402.
- Sandusky, Jerry. "Bob Costas and Jerry Sandusky 'Sandusky Speaks' Rock Center with Brian Williams November 14 2011." Interview by Bob Costas. *YouTube*,

uploaded by Defend a Child, 11 Dec. 2015,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKQdhfPuKQY. Accessed 19 Sept. 2017.

Schwerber, Nate. "Penn State Students Clash With Police in Unrest After

Announcement." *The New York Times*, 10 Nov. 2011,

www.nytimes.com/2011/11/11/sports/ncaafball/penn-state-students-in-clashes-after-joe-paterno-is-ousted.html. Accessed 1 Apr. 2018.

Second Mile - Sandusky Scandal: Searching for the Truth Through a Fog of Deception.

notpsu.blogspot.com/. Accessed 21 Mar. 2018.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial*

Desire. New York, Columbia University Press, 1992.

Shontz, Lori. "A Classroom Discussion on the Week's Events." *Penn Stater*, 11 Nov.

2011, pennstatermag.com/2011/11/11/a-classroom-discussion-on-the-weeks-events/. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

Smith, Jay M., and Mary Willingham. *Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time College Sports*. Lincoln, Potomac Books, 2015.

---. *Cheated: The UNC Scandal, the Education of Athletes, and the Future of Big-Time*

College Sports. E-book, Lincoln, Potomac Books, 2015.

Sollers, Wick, et al. *Critique of the Freeh Report: The Rush to Injustice Regarding Joe*

Paterno. Washington, D.C., King & Spalding, Feb. 2013.

Sperber, Murray. *Beer and Circus: How Big-time College Sports is Crippling*

Undergraduate Education. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 2000.

- Thompson, Charles. "Louis Freeh defends his work on Penn State and Sandusky scandal in interview." *Penn Live*, 25 July 2013, www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2013/07/louis_freeh_defends_his_work_o.html. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.
- Thoroughgood, Christian N., and Art Padilla. "Destructive Leadership and the Penn State Scandal: A Toxic Triangle Perspective." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Originally published in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 144-49.
- Tim Curley. *The New York Times*, 6 Nov. 2011, www.nytimes.com/2011/11/07/sports/ncaafootball/in-penn-states-sex-abuse-case-a-focus-on-how-paterno-reacted.html?mtrref=www.google.com&gwh=82911F5B6B4B500E6D1E217756E6EDD9&gwt=pay. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- Tornoe, Rob. *Penn State Fan Crying*. 2012.
- UNC Football Helmet. CNN, 25 Feb. 2015, www.cnn.com/2015/02/25/us/unc-academic-fraud/index.html. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.
- "UNC students express relief in NCAA ruling on academic scandal." Interview by Casey Toth. *The News & Observer*, 13 Oct. 2017, www.newsobserver.com/sports/college/acc/unc/article179133761.html. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.

Unlicensed T-shirt likens the NCAA to a Communist entity. *Yahoo Sports*, 9 Aug. 2012, sports.yahoo.com/blogs/dr-saturday/unlicensed-t-shirt-likens-ncaa-communist-entity-142414885--ncaaf.html. Accessed 25 Mar. 2018.

Viera, Mark. "Former Coach at Penn State Is Charged With Abuse." *The New York Times*, 5 Nov. 2011, www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/sports/ncaaf/football/former-coach-at-penn-state-is-charged-with-abuse.html. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

Wiley, Shaun, and Jason J. Dahling. "Being Penn State: The Role of Joe Paterno's Prototypicality in the Sandusky Sex?Abuse Scandal." *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Originally published in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 6, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 152-55.

Williams, Roy. "How did Roy Williams react to news of no NCAA sanctions against UNC?" *The News & Observer*, 17 Oct. 2017, www.newsobserver.com/sports/college/acc/unc/article179370381.html. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018. Interview.

---. Interview. By Kevin Negandhi. *YouTube*, uploaded by NCAA Highlights, 29 Oct. 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=GJCPQXhOJ48&t=5s. Accessed 15 Mar. 2018.

---. "Roy Williams Bothered by Allegations." Interview by Jay Bilas. *YouTube*, uploaded by SportsToday, 7 June 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=ner22itWcig. Accessed 15 Mar. 2018.

---. "UNC Men's Basketball: Roy Williams Comments on Wainstein Report." *YouTube*, uploaded by UNC Tar Heel Athletics, 24 Oct. 2014,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=KWwQOgqGEVE. Accessed 15 Mar. 2018.

Interview.

Willingham, Mary. "Real Sports with Bryant Gumbel: NCAA Academics Web Extra #1 (HBO Sports)." Interview by Bernard Goldberg. *YouTube*, uploaded by HBOBoxing, 26 Mar. 2014, www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WeTd7V1I5c. Accessed 16 Mar. 2018.

Wise, Mike. "Penn State doesn't get to decide JoePa's legacy: I know." *The Undefeated*, ESPN, 18 Sept. 2016, theundefeated.com/features/penn-state-doesnt-get-to-decide-joe-paternos-legacy/. Accessed 28 Mar. 2018.

Yost, Mark. *Varsity Green: A Behind the Scenes Look at Culture and Corruption in College Athletics*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2010.

Appendices

Appendix A: Dramatis Personae:

Gerald A. Sandusky - Former assistant coach of the Pennsylvania State University football program under Joe Paterno. Sandusky coached the Nittany Lions from 1969 to 1999 and was twice recognized as the NCAA's "Assistant Coach of the Year." In 1977, Sandusky founded The Second Mile non-profit organization in order to serve local at-risk youth. Later in his life, Sandusky was convicted on various charges regarding his serial sexual assault of young boys.

Graham B. Spanier - Served as the sixteenth President of Pennsylvania State University (September 1, 1995 - November 9, 2011) before being forced to resign by the Penn State Board of Trustees following Sandusky's arrest.

Gary C. Schultz - Spent fourteen years as Pennsylvania State University Vice President for Finance and Business before retiring in 2009. Once his successor left the university to accept a new position, Schultz reclaimed his role at Penn State before resigning amid the Sandusky scandal.

Timothy M. Curley - Former Pennsylvania State University Athletic Director (active 1993 - 2013). Curley left PSU after the university elected not to rehire him once his contract expired in 2013.

Joseph V. Paterno (December 21, 1926 - January 22, 2012) - Former Head Coach of the Pennsylvania State University football program. Paterno served as the Nittany Lions' Head Coach from 1966 to 2011. Before being dismissed by the PSU Board of Trustees in November 2011, Paterno tallied 409 wins, giving him the most of any coach in NCAA FBS history.

Louis J. Freeh - Served as the fifth Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigations (active 1993 - 2001). Freeh was commissioned by the Penn State Board of Trustees to lead a team in an investigation of the role of the university and its administration's culture, policies, and practices in allowing Sandusky's abuse to take place and go unreported for years.

Mark A. Emmert - Currently serving as President and CEO of the National Collegiate Athletic Association. Emmert was responsible for handing down sanctions for Pennsylvania State University and its football program following the Sandusky scandal.

Appendix B: Sample Merchandise Sold Following Scandal:

Fig. 5. Novelty t-shirt which reads, “National Communist Athletic Association - Overstepping their bounds and punishing the innocent.” This shirt was sold in many outlets in State College, including the popular local Student Book Store and evidences direct attacks against perceived outsiders.



Fig. 6. Popularly sold t-shirt referencing Bill O’Brien, the successor to Joe Paterno at the helm of Penn State’s football program.



Fig. 7. References to Joe Paterno's 409 career victories as a head coach could be seen all over State College on shirts, bumper stickers, and other merchandise. This design became popular following the NCAA's decision to vacate a significant portion of Paterno's victories.



Fig. 8. Designs such as this also became popular following the Sandusky scandal. Essentially, expressing pride in Penn State University became very “trendy” once outsiders began to attack the university. Mention of fans “still” being proud even after the scandal was also seen frequently on their shirts.

Appendix C: Sample Cartoons Published Pertaining to Scandal:



Fig. 9. Untitled Cartoon by Rob Tornoe (2012)



Fig. 10. *Pope JoePa* by Rob Rogers (November 10, 2011)



Fig. 11. *Wait, JoePa Was Fired?* by Charley Gifford (November 13, 2011)



Fig. 12. Untitled Cartoon posted on SC6 “Cartoons of the Week” by Mark Reino (July 15, 2012)

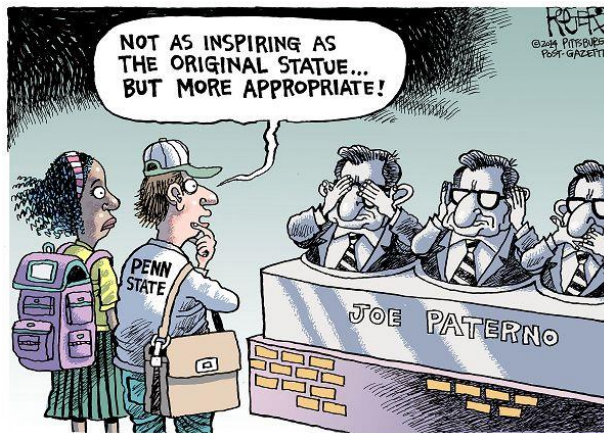


Fig. 13. *Paterno Statue* by Rob Rogers (May 12, 2014)

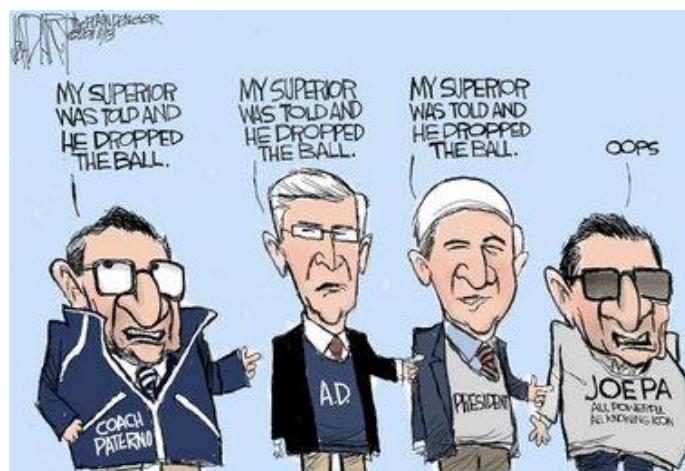


Fig. 14. *Paterno fumbles moral obligation* by Jeff Darcy (November 12, 2011)



Fig. 15. *Jerry Sandusky horsing around* by Jeff Darcy (November 18, 2011)

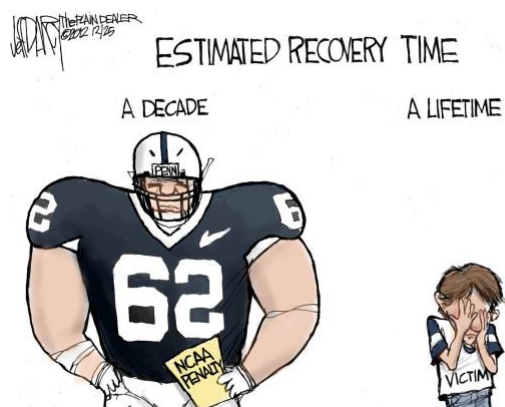


Fig. 16. *Penn State penalty severity* by Jeff Darcy (July 25, 2012)